

The Armenians in the Ottoman Empire
After the First World War (1918-1923)



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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a historical study of the Ottoman Armenians in the Ottoman Empire from 1918-1923. It seeks to delineate how the Ottoman Armenians reorganised their political position against the massive socio-political crises that led to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. The thesis analyses the transformation of the Armenian political position by examining the Ottoman Turkish and Armenian press. The study contends that the Ottoman Armenians struggled to reorganise their political and social life after the First World War and established alliances with the Allied Powers to create an independent 'Western Armenia', which would ultimately unite with the Armenian state in the Caucasus. The Ottoman Armenians developed a patriotic approach that sought unification with their compatriots in the Caucasus. However, after the defeat of the Greek army by the Nationalist troops in Anatolia in 1922, the collective approach among the Ottoman Armenians changed significantly. After the Nationalist victory had become inevitable, the Ottoman Armenians sought reconciliation and peace with the Turks. This reconciliation was only possible through the acceptance of 'Turkish supremacy' by the Ottoman Armenians. In other words, the Armenians who chose to remain within the boundaries of Turkey preferred to pledge loyalty to the newly established Nationalist government in Ankara. The establishment of the *Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti* (Turkish Armenian Ascent Association) and the reconciliation attempts of the Ottoman Armenians with the Muslim Turks is an example of the transformation of the Armenian collective position among the Ottoman Armenians. This study employs Armenian and Ottoman Turkish media sources published in Istanbul and Anatolia during the Armistice years (1918-1923) to track the post-war interrelationship of Ottoman society in general and the Armenian community in particular, the social and political reorganisations of the Armenian community and the transformation of the Armenian political position in the last years of the Ottoman Empire. By doing so, the thesis challenges both Ottoman/Turkish and Armenian historiographies, and attempts to bring these two historiographic approaches together with a new approach to understand this historical period.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a historical study of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire from 1918-1923. It seeks to delineate how the Ottoman Armenians¹ reorganised their political and social position within the mass socio-political crises that led to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. This work is guided by the following research questions: How did the Armenian community in the Ottoman Empire recover and reorganise after the genocide suffered through the wartime? How did the political position of the Ottoman Armenians change during the Armistice years? How was the Ottoman Turkish and Armenian public opinion influenced by the developments concerning the Ottoman Armenians?

This thesis analyses the transformation of the Ottoman Armenian political position and the impacts of social and political developments of the period on the Ottoman Armenian community by examining primary sources from the Ottoman Turkish and Armenian press. The study argues that the Ottoman Armenians struggled to reorganise their political and social life after the wartime catastrophe, choosing to establish alliances with the Allied Powers to create an independent ‘Western Armenia’ to ultimately unite with the existing Armenian state in the Caucasus. This shared vision among the Ottoman Armenians crystallised a new political agenda, which I call the collective political position of the Ottoman Armenians.

¹ I classify those Armenians who were the subjects and inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire during the Armistice years as ‘Ottoman Armenians’, which includes the Armenians in Istanbul, Central Anatolia, Izmir, the Cilicia (Adana) region, the Black Sea region, and the *Vilayât-ı Sitte* (the Six Provinces). It excludes those Armenians in the Caucasus who were citizens of the Armenian Republic, established in 1918.

During the wartime, through the spring and summer of 1915, in all areas of the Ottoman state, including cities far from the conflict zones, the Ottoman government ordered the deportation of the Armenian population to the Syrian desert. Convoys of civilians—including women, elderly, and children—were marched hundreds of miles without food, shelter, or proper clothing. The Armenian men were conscripted into the Ottoman army and were worked to death in the labour battalions. While the Ottoman government claimed that the Armenians were being deported from the areas close to the Russian border in order to prevent a possible Russian-Armenian alliance, Armenians living in the Marmara region and Thrace, over a thousand miles away from the Russian border, were also deported. For instance, the Armenians of Tekirdağ, a town located in Eastern Thrace, were made to walk more than one thousand miles until they reached their final destination, the Syrian desert. Thus, the deportation process soon transformed into a ‘death march’ in which thousands of innocent Ottoman Armenians perished, killed by bands, infectious diseases, and exposure to the harsh elements. Most of the properties of the Ottoman Armenians were confiscated by the state.² Churches, schools, and community buildings were either destroyed or plundered. The Armenian intellectuals in Istanbul were arrested and sent to isolated prisons in Central Anatolia, where most of them were killed. In the end, more than half of the entire Armenian population was annihilated in this period.³ After the Armistice of Mudros was signed in 1918, an atmosphere of

² Taner Akçam and Ümit Kurt, *The Spirit of the Laws: The Plunder of Wealth in the Armenian Genocide*, trans. Aram Arkun (New York: Berghahn Books, 2015); Uğur Ümit Üngör and Mehmet Polatel, *Confiscation and Destruction: The Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013).

³ The literature on the Armenian genocide has grown significantly over the last two decades. Below is a selective list of academic works written on the topic. Ronald Grigor Suny, *They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else’: A History of the Armenian Genocide* (Princeton University Press, 2015); Donald Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Raymond Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History* (I.B.Tauris

insecurity still permeated the Ottoman state, and the Armenian community still reeled from the collective trauma experienced.

From the beginning of the Armistice years, this atmosphere of insecurity shaped the political position of the Ottoman Armenians. The policymakers—the political party leaders, the press, elected members of the Armenian National Assembly, and prominent opinion leaders—together with the Armenian Patriarchate, devised a collective political strategy to ensure the survival of their community. Initially, the Ottoman Armenians developed a nationalist approach that sought unification with their compatriots in the Caucasus. However, following the defeat of the Greek army by Nationalist troops in Anatolia in 1922, the collective strategy among the Ottoman Armenians was revised significantly. Once it was clear that the Turkish Nationalists would claim victory, the Ottoman Armenians sought reconciliation and peace with the Turks. This reconciliation was only possible through the acceptance of Turkish superiority by the Turkish-Armenians—to choose to remain within the lands of Turkey was to pledge loyalty to the newly established Nationalist government in Ankara as a means of guaranteeing personal safety. A comprehensive analysis of the dailies of the period illustrates this evolution of public opinion among the Ottoman Armenians. This transformation of the political position among the Ottoman Armenians is at the core of this thesis.

& Co Ltd, 2011); Taner Akçam, *From Empire to Republic: Turkish Nationalism and the Armenian Genocide* (London; New York: Zed Books, 2004); Taner Akçam, *The Young Turks' Crime Against Humanity: The Armenian Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013); Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict From the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus* (Providence, RI: Berghahn Books, 1995); Richard G. Hovannisian, *Remembrance and Denial: The Case of the Armenian Genocide* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998); Richard G. Hovannisian, *Looking Backward, Moving Forward: Confronting the Armenian Genocide* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 2003); Fatma Müge Göçek, *Denial of Violence: Ottoman Past, Turkish Present, and Collective Violence against the Armenians, 1789-2009* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

Armenian and Ottoman Turkish media sources published in Istanbul during the Armistice years (1918-1923) are employed to track the post-war relationship between Ottoman society in general and the Armenian community in particular, the social and political reorganisations of the Armenian community, and the gradual change in political position in the dying years of the Ottoman Empire—a primary theme in this work. The Armistice of Mudros and the occupation of Ottoman lands by Allied troops influenced the collective political position of the Ottoman Armenians, who viewed themselves as crucial to the unification with their compatriots in the Caucasus. However, after the defeat of the Armenian government in the Caucasus in 1920 and that of the Greek army in Anatolia in 1922, the Armenians who stayed in their native lands in Istanbul and Anatolia began to identify themselves as loyal citizens of the newly established Republic of Turkey. The *Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti* (Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association)⁴ and the reconciliation attempts of Ottoman Armenians with the Muslim Turks are examples of the change in political position among the Ottoman Armenians, which will be examined in depth.

This thesis challenges both Ottoman and Armenian historiography of the period. In the Ottoman Turkish historiography, the Armistice period has been mostly ignored, with the emphasis being placed on the War of Independence and the Turkish National movement in Anatolia, which ultimately resulted in the establishment of the Republic of Turkey. Turkish historians, in turn, have overlooked the social, political, and cultural dynamics of the period. In modern Armenian historiography, the vast majority of academic works have focused on the Armenian genocide of 1915, leaving

⁴ The Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association was established on 24 October 1922, with the intention of creating new connections between Armenians and Turks. According to the constitution of the association, the primary aim was to re-establish ‘openness and friendship’ between the Armenians and Turks, and to support the activities of the Ankara government. The Armenian members of this association were native Istanbul Armenians, and the Turkish members as well were mostly from Istanbul.

the post-war Ottoman Armenian community insufficiently explored. This thesis also challenges the fact that in neither the Turkish nor Armenian historiographies has a comparative historical approach been employed while researching the Ottoman Armenians. The Turkish historiography has mostly employed Turkish-language sources, while the Armenian historiography has similarly relied upon Armenian- and Western-language sources. No academic study to date has analysed the Armistice period by using both Armenian and Ottoman Turkish media sources. I argue that in order to understand the period comprehensively, a comparative analysis of Ottoman Turkish and Ottoman Armenian public opinions of the time is necessary. Put differently, without analysing the transformation of the Ottoman public discourse regarding the Ottoman Armenians and focusing merely on the Armenian sources does not adequately cover the entirety of the topic. Consequently, this thesis seeks to contribute significantly to both historiographies from which a comparative critical approach has been mostly absent.

This study explores the thematic and historiographical questions posed by the Armistice period. As noted, the existing Ottoman Turkish historiography lacks reflection on the multidimensional nature of this critical period in which an empire collapsed and a nation state arose. The state-endorsed academic works, particularly organised by the Turkish Historical Association, generally commence with the narrative of the landing of Mustafa Kemal in Samsun on 19 May 1919, which later became accepted as the beginning of the War of Independence. The Armistice period in Turkish historiography begins with the emergence of the Turkish National movement in Ankara and ends with the Turkish victory against *yedi düvel* (the whole

world).⁵ This study will make a contribution towards enhancing a critical approach in Turkish historiography by highlighting the many factors influencing the period. In state-sponsored Turkish historiography, the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire are portrayed as traitors, supporters of the Entente, and therefore deserving of exclusion from history.

Conversely, Armenian historiography has either focused on the newly established Republic of Armenia in the Caucasus or studied the Ottoman Armenians of the Armistice period within the framework of the genocide. Thus, the Armistice period has been included in the genocide history to show the continuity of the process. Generally, the works regarding this period gravitate towards covering the court martials that were established by the new government to punish the perpetrators, as discussed below. Yet, there is rare mention in the Armenian historiography of the Turkish intellectuals who openly condemned the Committee of Union and Progress (hereafter CUP) leaders, calling them ‘traitors of the nation’ because of their crimes against humanity inflicted upon the Armenian population. Bound by biased Armenian and Turkish perspectives, the history of the Ottoman Armenians during the Armistice period requires a critical, objective approach. This thesis challenges both Ottoman

⁵ A literal translation of the phrase *yedi düvel* means ‘seven continents’. This phrase has been employed with a patriotic subtext in the official history of modern Turkey while analysing the Armistice years and the Turkish War of Independence in order to highlight the importance of the victories of the Turkish National movement against the Allied Powers. See Mahmut Goloğlu, *Milli Mücadele Tarihi* [The History of National Struggle], 5 vols. (Istanbul: İş Bankası Yayınları, 2011); Enver Behnan Şapolyo, *Kemal Atatürk ve Milli Mücadele Tarihi* [Mustafa Kemal and the History of the National Struggle] (Istanbul: Rafet Zaimler Yayınevi, 1958); Salahattin Tansel, *Atatürk ve Kurtuluş Savaşı* [Ataturk and the War of Independence] (Ankara: Türkiye Vakıflar Bankası Yayını, 1965); Şerafettin Turan, *Türk Devrim Tarihi: Ulusal Direnişten Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’ne* [The History of Turkish Revolution: From National Struggle to the Republic of Turkey] (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1992); Fahir H. Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi, 1914-1995* [The Political History of the Twentieth Century (1914-1995)] (Istanbul: Alkım, 1995); Bülent Tanör, *Kurtuluş (Türkiye 1918-1923)* [The Liberation Turkey 1918-1923] (Istanbul: Cumhuriyet Yayınları, 1997); Salahi Ramadan Sonyel, *Turkish Diplomacy 1918-1923: Mustafa Kemal and the Turkish National Movement* (London: Sage Publications, 1975).

Turkish and Armenian historiographies, and attempts to bridge the gap between the two approaches to better understand this period.

Before explaining how this thesis will contribute to the body of knowledge and how it challenges the existing historiographies, the particularities of the Ottoman Turkish and Armenian historiographies will be scrutinised in the following sections.

1.1. Ottoman/Turkish Historiography⁶

Current literature in Ottoman/Turkish historiography neglects the Ottoman Armenians as part of Ottoman history and excludes the Armenians, considering them as ‘foreigners’. As Mustafa Kemal and the Turkish resistance movement in Anatolia have always been the primary focus of Turkish historiography, the works written on this particular period were the history of the Turkish National movement, in which there was no place for the Armenians.

The academic literature regarding this period in Turkish historiography consists of two categories: the memoirs of politicians and members of the military who participated in the War of Independence, as well as secondary works, including dissertations, academic books, and articles. Especially in the first decades of the Republic of Turkey— for which researchers have only relatively recently been granted limited access to archival documents—these memoirs were the main primary sources for historians writing the history of the Turkish National movement.⁷

⁶ I categorise academic works which analyse or put great emphasis on the history of the Ottoman Empire or emergence of the Turkish National movement, regardless of the nationality of the authors, within the scope of Ottoman/Turkish historiography.

⁷ Ryan Scott Gingeras, ‘Imperial Killing Fields: Revolution, Ethnicity and Islam in Western Anatolia, 1913-1938’ (PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 2006), p. 14. This PhD thesis was later published as a book in 2009; Ryan Scott Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1912-1923* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

However, since the 1980s, as the state archives have become more open to the public, researchers have been given greater access to the archival documents, allowing them to rewrite the period in a more critical light. Yet, the academic works have remained focussed on the Nationalist struggle and the history of the War of Independence.

Arguably, those who produced works which were at odds with the traditional Turkish historiography were excluded from Turkish academia; as a result, Turkish historians tended to adhere to the accepted narrative and not broach the more sensitive matters, such as non-Muslim minorities during the period of the Turkish National movement.

I shall argue that Fatma Müge Göçek's conceptualisation of the history of the Armenian genocide, while written with the wartime period (1914-1918) in mind, can also be applied to Ottoman/Turkish historiography regarding the Armistice years (1918-1923). Göçek argues that there are three distinct narratives in Turkish historiography: first, the Ottoman Investigative Narrative, which is primarily based on memoirs; second, the Republican Defensive Narrative, which is based on works published or funded by the Turkish state; and third, the Post-Nationalist Critical Narrative, which includes works that are critical of the traditional nationalist narrative.⁸ Although this framework was suggested for the wartime period and the Armenian massacres, I argue that it is applicable for the Armistice period as well. For the first narrative regarding this period, there is a tremendous collection of memoirs written by Turkish politicians, military personnel, and civilians.⁹ The second

⁸ Fatma Müge Göçek, 'Reconstructing the Turkish Historiography on the Armenian Massacres and Deaths of 1915', in *Looking Backward, Moving Forward*, ed. Richard G. Hovhanissian (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2003), p. 210.

⁹ Yunus Nadi Abalıoğlu, *Kurtuluş Savaşı Anıları* [Memoirs of the War of Independence] (Istanbul: Çağdaş Yayınları, 1978); Halide Edip Adıvar, *Türkün Ateşle İmtihanı* [Turkish Ordeal] (Istanbul: Can Yayını, 1962); Samet Ağaoğlu, *Kuvayi Milliye Ruhu* [The Spirit of Kuva-i Milliye] (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1981); Rahmi Apak, *Yetmişlik Bir Subayın Hatıraları* [The Memoirs of a Seventy-Year-Old Officer] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1988); Celal Bayar, *Ben de Yazdım* [And So I Wrote], vol. 5, 8 vols. (Istanbul: Sabah Kitapları 1997); Ali Fuat Cebesoy, *Milli Mücadele Hatıraları* [Memoirs of

narrative, the Republican Defensive Narrative, is rich with an enormous body of literature that has been produced by state-funded bodies.¹⁰ The third narrative, the Post-Nationalist Critical Narrative, has been mostly produced by scholars outside of Turkey along with a small group of liberal scholars working at private and state universities in Turkey.¹¹ It is not possible to analyse all of the works with regard to

National Struggle] (Istanbul: Vatan Neşriyatı, 1953); Nizamettin Delilbaş, *Hatıralarım* [My Memoirs] (Istanbul: Türkiye Yayınları, 1946); Asım Gündüz, *Hatıralarım* [My Memoirs] (Istanbul: Kervan Yayınları, 1973); İsmet İnönü, *Hatıralar* [Memoirs] (Istanbul: Bilgi Yayınevi 1985); Mehmet Arif Bey, *Anadolu İnkılabı, Milli Mücadele Anıları 1919-1923* [The Anatolian Revolution: Memoirs of the National Struggle (1918-1923)] (Istanbul: Arba Yayınları, 1987); Rıza Nur, *Hayat ve Hatıratım* [My Life and Memoirs] (Istanbul: İşaret Yayınları, 1992); Rauf Orbay, *Cehennem Değirmeni-Siyasi Hatıralarım* [The Mill of Hell—My Political Memoirs] (Istanbul: Emre Yayınevi, 1993); Haydar Rüştü Öktem, *Mütareke ve İşgal Anıları* [The Memoirs of Armistice and Occupation] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1991); Mehmet Selahattin, *İttihat ve Terakki'nin Kuruluşu ve Osmanlı Devleti'nin Yıkılışı Hakkında Bildiklerim* [Things That I Know About the Establishment of the Committee of Union and Progress and the Collapse of the Ottoman Empire] (Istanbul: İnkılab Yayınları, 1989); Selahaddin Adil, *Hayat Mücadeleleri* [The Struggle of Life] (Istanbul: Zafer Matbaası, 1982); Cemil Topuzlu, *80 Yıllık Hatıralarım* [Eighty-Year-Old Memoirs] (Istanbul: Arma Yayınları, 1994); Ali Fuat Türkgeldi, *Görüp İşittiklerim* [Things I Have Seen and Heard] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1984); Fahrettin Altay, *10 Yıl Savaş (1912-1922) ve Sonrası* [Ten Years of War (1912-1922) and Its Aftermath] (Istanbul: İnsel Yayınları, 1970); Abdülhalim Akkılıç, *Askerin Romanı: E. Sv. Alb. Abdülhalim Akkılıç'ın Savaş ve Barış Anıları* [A Soldier's Novel: E. Sv. Alb. Abdülhalim Akkılıç's War and Peace Memories] (Gemlik: Körfez Ofset Yayınları, 1994).

¹⁰ Sina Akşin, *Istanbul Hükümetleri ve Milli Mücadele* [Istanbul Governments and the National Struggle] (Istanbul: İş Bankası Yayınları, 2010); Sina Akşin, *Turkey from Empire to Revolutionary Republic: The Emergence of the Turkish Nation from 1789 to the Present* (New York: New York University Press, 2007); Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi, 1914-1995* [The Political History of the Twentieth Century (1914-1995)]; Mahmut Goloğlu, *Milli Mücadele Tarihi* [The History of National Struggle]; Gotthard Jaeschke, *Türk Kurtuluş Savaşı Kronolojisi* [The Chronology of the War of Independence] (Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1970); Gotthard Jaeschke, *Kurtuluş Savaşı İle İlgili İngiliz Belgeleri* [British Documents On the War of Independence] (Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1991); Enver Ziya Karal, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Tarihi 1918-1965* [The History of the Republic of Turkey] (Istanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1973); Salahi Sonyel, *Turkish Diplomacy 1918-1923: Mustafa Kemal and the Turkish National Movement*; Enver Behnan Şapolyo, *Kemal Atatürk ve Milli Mücadele Tarihi* [Mustafa Kemal and the History of the National Struggle]; Salahattin Tansel, *Atatürk ve Kurtuluş Savaşı* [Ataturk and the War of Independence]; Zekerriya Türkmen, *Mütareke Döneminde Ordunun Durumu ve Yeniden Yapılanması 1918-1920* [The Condition of the Turkish Military During the Armistice and Its Reorganisation (1918-1920)] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 2001); Turan, *Türk Devrim Tarihi: Ulusal Direnişten Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'ne* [The History of the Turkish Revolution: From National Struggle to the Republic of Turkey].

¹¹ Erik Jan Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2004); Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1926* (Leiden: Brill, 1984); Erik Jan Zürcher, 'Young Turk Memoirs as a Historical Source: Kazim Karabekir's 'İstikal Harbimiz', ' *Middle Eastern*

this period in Ottoman/Turkish historiography, but it is important to touch upon some prominent works to illustrate the points. The following section will discuss the three aforementioned narratives that exist in Ottoman/Turkish historiography.

The works belonging to the first narrative, the Ottoman Investigative Narrative, are the memoirs and autobiographies of members of the Turkish military and journalists who witnessed the development of the War of Independence and the establishment of the Ankara government in Anatolia. Naturally, as memoirs and autobiographies, these include subjectivity. For example, in the memoirs of famed Turkish author and intellectual Halide Edip, *Türkün Ateşle İmtihanı* (The Turkish Ordeal), those who supported the Turkish National movement in Ankara are considered ‘true’ citizens, and those who did not are seen as traitors to the nation.¹² Fahrettin Altay, a general who participated in the War of Independence, portrays Armenians as enemies who at every opportunity rebelled against the state and sought to attack the Muslim population. For him, Kurds, Arabs, Armenians, and Greeks were enemies of the Turkish nation during the First World War (hereafter WWI) and Armistice years.¹³ Similarly, Kazım Karabekir, a Turkish commander who fought alongside Mustafa Kemal, claimed in his memoirs that the Armenians and Greeks were bent on eradicating the Turkish presence in Anatolia and the War of Independence was a war fought against these two nations.¹⁴ According to Abdülhalim Akkılıç—a colonel who participated in the Nationalist struggle, especially in the Southern front against the French—their struggle was against the Armenians and

Studies 22 (1986): 562-70; Kate Fleet, Suraiya Faroqhi, and Reşat Kasaba, *The Cambridge History of Turkey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Turkey Beyond Nationalism towards Post-Nationalist Identities* (London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2006); Akçam, *From Empire to Republic: Turkish Nationalism and the Armenian Genocide*; Eugene Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East*, (New York: 2016).

¹² Halide Edip Adivar, *Türkün Ateşle İmtihanı* [The Turkish Ordeal].

¹³ Altay, *10 yıl savaş (1912-1922) ve sonrası* [Ten Years of War and Its Aftermath].

¹⁴ Kazım Karabekir, *İstiklal Harbimiz* [Our War of Independence] (Merk Yayıncılık, 1988).

Greeks.¹⁵ He freely expressed his gratitude to the CUP leaders, ‘who cleaned the Armenian population from Anatolia’ and thus ‘eased the burden of the independence struggle’.¹⁶ Rıza Nur, one of the members of the Turkish delegation at Lausanne, portrays the Armenians in his memoir as a nation that the Turks were forced to rid themselves of in order to protect the unity of their fatherland.¹⁷

The second narrative, the Republican Defensive Narrative, includes a wide range of scholars from different universities, countries, and backgrounds. The purpose of their inclusion in this thesis is not to discuss narrative discrepancies or subjectivity but to provide samples for comparison with the other two narratives.

The authoritative work of Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, examines the period from a perspective I call the ‘traditional approach’. Throughout the book, Lewis labels the Armistice period as that of the ‘Kemalist Republic’ and analyses the political events surrounding the Ankara movement, denouncing the Ottoman government as a ‘problem’ and praising the victories of Nationalists against their ‘enemies’. Lewis locates the Turkish National movement at the centre of his study, highlighting:

Yet it is not in these achievements, great as they were, that the true greatness of Atatürk lies... It is the supreme merit of Mustafa Kemal that he—the Ottoman soldier, the victorious hero, was able to see this, and to make the immense effort of imagination and courage that it required from him.¹⁸

¹⁵ Akkılıç, *Askerin Romanı: E. Sv. Alb. Abdülhalim Akkılıç'ın Savaş ve Barış Anıları* [The Novel of a Soldier: E. Sv. Alb. Abdülhalim Akkılıç's War and Peace Memories].

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 219-20. As cited in Göçek, *Denial of Violence: Ottoman Past, Turkish Present, and Collective Violence against the Armenians, 1789-2009*, p. 267.

¹⁷ Rıza Nur, *Hayat ve Hatıratım* [My Life and Memoirs].

¹⁸ Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 2nd ed. (London, New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 291.

Although Bernard Lewis makes valuable assessments on the history of modern Turkey, his appraisal of the Armistice period is limited to the viewpoint of the state-sanctioned historical narrative, excluding Ottoman loyalists and non-Muslims.

In *Reform, Revolution and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975*, Stanford Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw make no reference to Ottoman social life or public opinion during the Armistice period, but they turn their attention to examining the nationalist struggle as a subject of political history. The narrative begins with the establishment of resistance forces and the Greek invasion, then continuing with the Erzurum and Sivas congresses and activities of the Ankara government.¹⁹ The Ottoman public opinion, which was mostly formed in Istanbul by the Ottoman press, is not considered. This study is seen as a major pioneering contribution to the history of modern Turkey, yet it excludes the full dimensions of the Armistice period. As such, this falls within the scope of the Republican Defensive Narrative.

Salahi Sonyel Ramadan's *Turkish Diplomacy 1918-1923: Mustafa Kemal and the Turkish National Movement* focuses on the diplomatic history of the period.²⁰ The work ignores the political activities of the Ottoman government of Istanbul, thus privileging the Turkish National movement and identifying Ankara at its centre. In overlooking the other aspects of the period, it represents the traditional approach.

Salahi Sonyel writes:

The Turkish Nationalists succeeded in destroying every vestige of ex-territorial and supra-national privileges hitherto enjoyed by the foreigners in Turkey in the form of the Capitulations and secured in all the essentials complete independence, national sovereignty and territorial integrity as

¹⁹ Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp. 340-73.

²⁰ Sonyel, *Turkish Diplomacy 1918-1923: Mustafa Kemal and the Turkish National Movement*.

postulated in the *Misak-ı Milli*. This magnificent achievement was mainly the work of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.²¹

In *Milli Mücadelenin Sosyal Tarihi* (Social History of the National Struggle), Doğu Ergil takes a slightly different angle but still shares the same traditional approach in writing the history of the period. Although Ergil analyses the social and economic life of Ottoman society during the period, the Armenians, Kurds, and Greeks are labelled as ‘foreigners’ who establish alliances with the Entente to divide the Muslim/Turkish unity of the Ottoman government.²²

In *The Armenian Question 1914-1923*, Mim Kemal Öke examines the post-war period and the discussions at the Lausanne Conference regarding the Ottoman Armenian community. He points out the importance of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association, which was established in 1922 by Armenian and Turkish individuals in order to promote Turkish-Armenian reconciliation and friendship. Nevertheless, he categorises the Armenians as either ‘good’ or ‘bad’—those who joined this association and pledged their allegiance to the Ankara government were the ‘good Armenians’, and those who supported the Armenian delegation for an independent Armenia were the ‘bad Armenians’.²³

Having provided examples of the first and second narratives, at this point I will discuss the third narrative, the Post-Nationalist Critical Narrative, to highlight the differences.

Erik Jan Zürcher, who studies the Armistice period through a thick lens of criticism towards the traditional approach, is known for his significant contribution to modern Turkish historiography, *Turkey: A Modern History*, in which he attempts to

²¹ Ibid.

²² Doğu Ergil, *Milli Mücadelenin Sosyal Tarihi* [Social History of the National Struggle] (Ankara: Turhan Kitabevi, 1981), pp. 22-42.

²³ Mim Kemal Öke, *The Armenian Question* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basimevi, 2001), pp. 208-15.

analyse the political waves of the Armistice period with a comprehensive inclusion of all key figures and developments. He clearly demonstrates the connection between the CUP underground organisations and Kemalist activities, as well as contends that the Nationalist program was not only aimed at Turkish national sovereignty but at all Muslim Ottomans.²⁴ Furthermore, his other authoritative work, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1926*, sheds light on the link between the CUP and the Kemalist regime, a subject which has been neglected by the Republican Defensive Narrative approach.²⁵

Taner Akçam, one of the most prominent Armenian genocide scholars, approaches the Armistice period from a different point of view than that of traditional Turkish historiography. He states:

A portrayal of the events of 1918-23 as merely a war for territories and borders does not fully reflect the history as it was experienced. There is another dimension which is equally important and which fundamentally determined the matter of territories and borders. This was the dimension that today would be termed 'human rights'.²⁶

More recently, the newer generations of historians have made their own contributions to the field. Ryan Scott Gingeras's book, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1912-1923*, provides insights into the Armistice period, especially in terms of shaping the dominant approach in Turkish historiography by exploring the opposition movement against the Kemalist forces in the South Marmara region. Gingeras argues that the War of Independence was not a product of mass mobilisation of the Anatolian population, delineating that not all

²⁴ Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, pp. 133-65.

²⁵ Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1926*.

²⁶ Akçam, *From Empire to Republic: Turkish Nationalism and the Armenian Genocide*, p. 181.

strata of Muslim/Turkish society provided open support to the Ankara government.²⁷

This fact has been overlooked in the traditional Turkish historiography because the Turkish National movement has been considered to be the founding body of modern Turkish society and has been presented as a shared vision that united all Anatolian Muslims, regardless of their ethnic origin. Gingeras fills a gap in modern Turkish historiography by examining how Muslim minorities, such as the Albanians and Caucasians, conducted counter-revolutionary activities against the Nationalist forces.

Uğur Ümit Üngör, in his recent book, *The Making of Modern Turkey: Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia (1913-1950)*, argues that the Young Turk movement continued until the 1950s and that the Kemalist movement principally was a continuation of the Young Turk regime. He scrutinises how the Turkish national formation process excluded first the non-Muslims and then the non-Turkish elements of Ottoman society. He argues that the nation formation process is one of construction and destruction, inclusion and exclusion. This policy of exclusion of non-Muslims and non-Turks—by the Young Turks until the end of WWI and then by the Nationalists until the 1950s—was implemented in order to create a Turkish nation state from the ashes of the multi-ethnic Ottoman Empire.²⁸

This thesis will contribute to the third narrative, the Post-Nationalist Critical Narrative, and will challenge—through integrating the Armenian sources into the historiography and by analysing the dissenting Turkish public opinion, which has been overlooked by the historiography propagating the Republican point of view—the second narrative, the Republican Defensive Narrative, by contending such a monolithic approach. The following section will address how this thesis challenges

²⁷ Gingeras, ‘Imperial Killing Fields: Revolution, Ethnicity and Islam in Western Anatolia, 1913-1938’, p. 10.

²⁸ Uğur Ümit Üngör, *The Making of Modern Turkey: Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia (1913-1950)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

Armenian historiography, but first it is crucial to provide an overview of the way in which this subject matter has been dealt with to date in Armenian historiography.

1.2. Armenian Historiography²⁹

For Armenian historiography, the Armistice period has been studied primarily as an extension of the Armenian genocide, covering the period from 1915 to 1923. Richard Hovannisian's four volumes on *The Republic of Armenia* concentrate on the establishment of the independent Armenian state in the Caucasus and provide insights into the political developments among Western Armenians; however, the Armistice period is not central to the study.³⁰ Vahakn Dadrian's work, *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict From the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus*, examines the Armistice period by concentrating on the establishment of court martials and the new Ottoman government's approach to punishment of the CUP leaders for war crimes.³¹

Levon Marashlian's PhD thesis at the University of California, Los Angeles, 'The Armenian Question from Sevres to Lausanne Economics and Morality in American and British Policies 1920-1923', is the first comprehensive study that focuses solely on the Armistice period. Marashlian examines the American and

²⁹ I categorise academic works, which analyse or put great emphasis on the history of the Ottoman Armenians, as part of Armenian historiography regardless of the nationality of the authors.

³⁰ Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: The First Year, 1918-1919*, vol. 1, 4 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971); Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: From Versailles to London, 1919-1920*, vol. 2, 4 vols. (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1982); Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: From London to Sèvres: February - August, 1920*, vol. 3, 4 vols. (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1996); Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: Between Crescent and Sickle: Partition and Sovietization*, vol. 4, 4 vols. (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1996).

³¹ Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus*, 300-347.

British policies toward the ‘Armenian Question’ in light of the diplomatic developments of 1920-1923. Marashlian’s work is still the first and only to approach the period from an economic and political perspective.³² Herve Georgelin examines a French-language daily newspaper, *La Renaissance*, published in Istanbul from 1918 to 1920, demonstrating how the daily reflected the political and social developments; as such, Georgelin’s approach has similarities with Marashlian.³³

In recent years, the Armistice period has become a primary area of interest for historians contributing to Armenian historiography. In her 2005 master’s thesis for Istanbul University, Silvart Malhasyan dissects the undertakings of the association to re-establish Turkish-Armenian friendship in the post-war period. She sheds light on the poorly studied topic in the historiography of Turkish Armenians, but it lacks a critical approach and has been relegated to the margins of traditional Turkish historiography.³⁴ Armaveni Miroğlu’s thesis, ‘Ստամբուլի Հայ Հասնայնքը (1923-1939)’ (The Armenian Community of Istanbul [1923-1939]), highlights the experiences of Armenians who stayed in Istanbul after the founding of the Republic of Turkey. Based on documents from the Armenian press in Istanbul, the thesis highlights the assimilation policies of the Turkish state which were applied to the Armenian community. Miroğlu writes:

The new government elaborated and carried out the new ‘policy of Turkification/assimilation with Turks’ directed to all of the ethnic communities since the very first years of the Republic’s foundation.

³² Levon Marashlian, ‘The Armenian Question from Sèvres to Lausanne: Economics and Morality in American and British Policies, 1920-1923’ (PhD thesis, The University of California, Los Angeles, 1992).

³³ Hervé Georgelin, ‘‘La Renaissance’ and the Aftermath of World War I’, in *Armenian Constantinople*, ed. Richard G. Hovannisian and Simon Payaslian (Costa Mesa, California: Mazda Publishers, 2010).

³⁴ Silvart Malhasyan, ‘*İstanbul’da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri*’ [Activities of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association: Istanbul, 1922] (MA thesis, Istanbul University, 2005).

This policy was implemented by means of discriminative decisions carried out against the non-Muslim minorities of the country.³⁵

Lerna Ekmekçioğlu's book, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*, is a pioneering work on the Armistice and Republican periods. Ekmekçioğlu analyses the period of 1918-1935, focusing on the post-war Armenian community in Istanbul. She regards gender as 'an analytical tool and a site of discourse through which the post-genocide Armenian community in Constantinople/Istanbul perceived and organised itself'.³⁶ Guided by this perspective, Ekmekçioğlu paves a new path for research in Armenian historiography and criticises the 'gender-blindness' so commonly encountered in the field. Furthermore, by using Armenian-language primary sources, Ekmekçioğlu brings a new critical approach to the Turkish historiography and contributes to the Post-Nationalist Critical Narrative.

Talin Suciyan's book, *The Armenians in Modern Turkey: Post-Genocide Society, Politics and History*, is a product of extensive research on the Armenian press of the period. Suciyan analyses Armenian dailies, such as *Nor Or* (*The New Day*; published 1945-1946), *Nor Lur* (*The Latest News*, published 1945-1949), *Marmara* (published 1944-1950), *Aysor* (*Today*; published 1947-1948), *Tebi Luys* (*To the Light*; published 1950) and *Paros* (*The Lighthouse*; published 1950). Suciyan's work sheds light on the state policies of the early Republican period and locates at its core the concept of 'post-genocide habitus of denialism', which stemmed from 'the state and

³⁵ Armaveni Miroğlu Armenak, 'Մտամբուլի Հայ Համայնքը (1923-1939)' [The Armenian Community of Istanbul 1923-1939] (PhD thesis, The Institute of History of the National Academy of Sciences of Republic of Armenia, 2011).

³⁶ Lerna Ekmekçioğlu, 'Improvising Turkishness: Being Armenian in Post-Ottoman Istanbul (1918-1933)' (PhD thesis, New York University, 2011), 26. Her PhD thesis was published as a book in 2016; Lerna Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016).

[was] reproduced by the larger layers of the society'.³⁷ She argues that both the Ottoman and Turkish historiographies should be reconsidered and rewritten by taking into consideration the sources of 'others', that is, the sources of neglected groups in historiography.

Thus far I have provided an overview of the academic works constituting the Armenian historiography with regard to the Armistice period. As noted, this thesis will challenge the recent literature in how diverse sources are used in the narrative. Sources that arise from the Ottoman Turkish press regarding Armenians would provide different points of view from those included in the Armenian press. The common characteristic of Armenian historiography in terms of source selection will be questioned in this thesis.

1.3. Theoretical Approach

This study argues that the Armenian press as an instrument of the public sphere played a crucial role in the transformation of the political position of the Ottoman Armenians. In an atmosphere of insecurity, the Ottoman Armenian community shifted its policy toward rehabilitating the Turkish-Armenian relationship, especially following the defeats of the Armenian state in the Caucasus and the Greek army in Anatolia. In the process of re-orienting their political position, the Armenian newspapers played a vital role as the most influential policy-making vehicles of society. In order to understand this argument comprehensively, it is essential to discuss and outline the framework of the theoretical concepts that are used in the

³⁷ Talin Suciyan, 'Surviving the Ordinary: The Armenians in Turkey, 1930s to 1950' (PhD thesis, Ludwig Maximilian University, 2013), p. 229. Her PhD thesis was published as a book in 2015 Talin Suciyan, *The Armenians in Modern Turkey: Post-Genocide Society, Politics and History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015).

construction of the argument: security dilemma, political position, and public sphere.

1.3.1. Security Dilemma, Political Position, and the Public Sphere

As a study of Ottoman Armenian history during the Armistice years, this thesis seeks not to put forward a new theoretical approach on social movements or ethnic conflicts. Rather, it benefits from recent theories to conceptualise this historic period. In the recent literature on ethnic conflicts, especially ‘ethnic bargaining’, scholars have argued that minority groups may be radicalised by the signals of behavioural intent from the host state or from a third state.³⁸ Accordingly, if the host state demonstrates an aggressive approach towards an ethnic minority group, the radicalisation of that group is more likely. Furthermore, if there is an intervention by a third state on behalf of the ethnic minority’s rights, the possibility of the radicalisation of the group increases.³⁹

Erin K. Jenne, in her authoritative study, utilises the theory of ethnic bargaining in understanding the reasons behind the minority mobilisation. According to her, minorities update their beliefs and political positions periodically over time by signals they receive from host states or lobby actors.⁴⁰ Hungarian minority groups in Slovakia and Romania, for instance, became more vocal in their demands for rights

³⁸ For the ethnic bargaining method, see Erin K. Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2007), p. 53; Erin K. Jenne, Stephen M. Saideman, and Will Lowe, ‘Separatism as a Bargaining Posture: The Role of Leverage in Minority Radicalization’, *Journal of Peace Research* 44, no. 5 (2007); Erin K. Jenne, ‘A Bargaining Theory of Minority Demands: Explaining the Dog That Did Not Bite in 1990s Yugoslavia’, *International Studies Quarterly* 48, no. 4 (2004); Dan Reiter, ‘Exploring the Bargaining Model of War’, *Perspectives on Politics* 1, no. 1 (2003): pp. 27-43; Rupen Cetinyan, ‘Ethnic Bargaining in the Shadow of Third-Party Intervention’, *International Organization* 56 (Summer: 2002): pp. 645-677.

³⁹ Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining*, p. 95.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p. 53.

when Hungary showed patronage and sent signals of protection in the 1990s.⁴¹ In 1992, when the Hungarian government called on Slovakia to agree on the principles of minority self-government, the Hungarian community in Slovakia became more vocal. In Romania as well, before the Hungarian government intervened on behalf of the minority to protect their demands in 1992, Hungarian representatives had pursued moderate demands. However, after observing the support of the Hungarian state, the Hungarian community in Romania became more demanding.⁴² The secessionist demands of the Hungarian leadership in Romania came to an end after Romania and Hungary signed a bilateral agreement. Thus, when the ‘external support’ disappeared, Hungarians in Romania accommodated the host state.⁴³ I argue that the collective behavior of the Armenian community during the Armistice years can be contextualised by the theory of ethnic bargaining. In the case of Ottoman Armenians, it is important to note that the Ottoman Armenians were accepted as *dhimmi* (non-Muslims) within the Ottoman *millet* system.⁴⁴ Even though the Ottoman state provided certain rights for the Ottoman Armenians—such as religious freedom, the right to have Armenian schools, as well as the right to publish books and newspapers in Armenian—the Ottoman Armenians still remained a religious minority *vis-à-vis*

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 97-116.

⁴² Ibid, pp. 121-122.

⁴³ Ibid, pp. 123.

⁴⁴ For the analysis of the *millet* system see Benjamin Braude, ‘Foundational Myths of the Millet System’, in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Bernard Lewis, vol. 1 (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1982), pp. 69-88; İlber Ortaylı, *Ottoman Studies* (Istanbul Bilgi University Press, 2004), pp. 15-22; Kemal Karpat, *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History* (Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 2002), pp. 544-56; *ibid.*, 611-47; Karen Barkey and George Gavrilis, ‘The Ottoman Millet System: Non-Territorial Autonomy and Its Contemporary Legacy’, *Ethnopolitics* 15, no. 1 (January 1, 2016): pp. 24-42; Fikret Adanır, ‘Religious Communities and Ethnic Groups Under Imperial Sway’, in *The Historical Practice of Diversity: Transcultural Interactions from the Early Modern Mediterranean to the Postcolonial World*, ed. D. Hoerder, D. C. Harzig, and A. Shubert (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2003), pp. 54-86; Kemal Karpat and Yetkin Yıldırım, *The Ottoman Mosaic: Exploring Models for Peace by Re-Exploring the Past* (Seattle: Cune Pres, 2010); Roderic H. Davison, *Essays in Ottoman and Turkish History, 1774-1923: The Impact of the West* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), pp. 112-33.

the Muslim majority. However, it is clear that there were third states—the Allied Powers in this case—who intervened in the conflict on behalf of the Armenians during the Armistice years, when the Ottoman state enacted its own oppressive policies. Reactions similar to those of the Ottoman Armenians can be seen in the studies of other ethnic conflicts in recent decades. For instance, ethnic Hungarians in the Vojvodina region of Yugoslavia accelerated their demands to unite the region with Hungary in the 1990s when the Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic increased the level of aggression toward them; in return, the Hungarian government declared that it would protect the rights of the Hungarian population in Vojvodina.⁴⁵ However, in 1999 when the Hungarian government declared its non-interventionist position regarding the Hungarian minority issue in Yugoslavia, the Hungarians in Vojvodina refrained from radicalising against the central authority.⁴⁶ In applying this case to the Ottoman Armenians, when there was external support by the foreign states, the secessionist approach among the Ottoman Armenian community was at its highest; on the other hand, when the external support was cut following the military defeats on the battleground against the Turkish National movement, members of the Armenian community changed their political position and acquiesced to the Turkish National movement, repressive as it was. This change in the political position of the Ottoman Armenians is in line with the expectations of the ethnic bargaining theory. Ethnic minority groups pursue separatist, pro-independence strategies when there is a repression from the state and external support from third party states; yet, when the external support disappears, in the *state of vulnerability*, the minority groups

⁴⁵ Jenne, ‘A Bargaining Theory of Minority Demands: Explaining the Dog That Did Not Bite in 1990s Yugoslavia’, pp. 740-41.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 743.

accommodate the majority if there is a policy of oppression. This conceptual framework of the ethnic bargaining theory is applicable to the Ottoman Armenians.

However, in addition to ethnic bargaining, I would add that the atmosphere of insecurity played a pivotal role in the alteration of the Armenian political position, as its rapid transformation can be conceptualised within the framework of security dilemma. Rogers Brubaker argues that a national minority is not merely based on ethnic demography. Minorities have a dynamic political position which consists of various stances that emerge within the group. In the case of Ottoman Armenians during the Armistice years, I argue that the majority of the community were unified for common political goals, as will be demonstrated throughout this thesis.⁴⁷

Barry Posen describes how the presence of a power vacuum during the collapse of an imperial power may create fear among the different ethnic groups, especially those in the minority. In cases of disintegration of the state and lack of security, ethnic groups might perceive the neighbouring groups as a threat.⁴⁸ Stephen M. Saideman similarly argues that even if it is not a collapsing state, the ethnic groups might suffer security problems because of the inability of the state to ensure their protection.⁴⁹ If there is such a security dilemma within the state, the ethnic groups either seek secession in order to create a new state over which they have complete control, or

⁴⁷ For Brubaker's framework, see Rogers Brubaker, 'National Minorities, Nationalizing States, and External National Homelands in the New Europe', *Daedalus* 124, no. 2 (1995): pp. 107-32.

⁴⁸ Barry R. Posen, 'The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict', *Survival* 35, no. 1 (1993): 27-47; David Carment, Patrick James, and Zeynep Taydas, 'The Internationalization of Ethnic Conflict: State, Society, and Synthesis', *International Studies Review* 11, no. 1 (2009): pp. 63-86; D. A. Lake and D. Rothchild, 'Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict', *International Security* 21, no. 2 (1996): pp. 43-44.

⁴⁹ Stephen M. Saideman, 'Is Pandora's Box Half-Empty or Half-Full?', in *Ethnic Conflict: Fear, Diffusion, Escalation*, ed. D. Rothchild and D. A. Lake (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998), p. 135. As cited in Yasemin Akbaba, Patrick James, and Zeynep Taydas, 'The "Chicken or the Egg"? External Support and Rebellion in Ethnopolitics', in *Intra-State Conflict, Governments and Security*, ed. Stephen M. Saideman and Marie-Joëlle Zahar (Routledge, 2008).

they seek to join a state where their ethnic group is more secure. Furthermore, during this process, ethnic groups seek outside help to internationalise their situation and demands.⁵⁰ Even though there is a burgeoning literature on the conceptualisation of security dilemma by scholars of political science and sociology, it is clear that each particular case has its own characteristics.⁵¹ What can be drawn from the security dilemma theory for the case of Ottoman Armenians during the Armistice years is that there was mutual fear in the Muslim/Turkish and Armenian communities in the Ottoman Empire, and this mutual fear generated a climate of insecurity, as can be observed in Malaysia between the Malay and Chinese in the late 1960s and 1970s.⁵² One of the basic characteristics of security dilemma is the mutual fear that two ethnic groups share of one another. To consider the conditions of the Ottoman Armenians within the framework of security dilemma, it is possible to say that there was a power vacuum—most notably following the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in WWI against the Allied Powers—and the state was not in a position to provide security for the Ottoman Armenians. During the wartime, the CUP government orchestrated the Armenian deportations, which resulted in the annihilation of the majority of the Armenian population. The Muslim/Turkish population feared that the Ottoman Armenians would divide their country by establishing alliances with the Allied Powers. The Ottoman Armenians, on the other hand, feared that they could be the subject of Muslim/Turkish aggression, as they had been during the wartime.

Therefore, the remaining Ottoman Armenians could not place faith in the newly

⁵⁰ Akbaba, James, and Taydas, 'The "Chicken or the Egg"? External Support and Rebellion in Ethnopolitics', pp. 163-64.

⁵¹ Following are selections from the literature on the concept of security dilemma: Posen, 'The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict'; Alan Collins, 'The Ethnic Security Dilemma: Evidence from Malaysia', *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 20, no. 3 (1998): pp. 261-78; Shiping Tang, 'The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict: Toward a Dynamic and Integrative Theory of Ethnic Conflict', *Review of International Studies* 37, no. 2 (2011): pp. 511-36.

⁵² Collins, 'The Ethnic Security Dilemma: Evidence from Malaysia'.

established government to provide security and protection for them in Anatolia. Given the atmosphere of insecurity, the Ottoman Armenians—validating the Muslim Turks’ fears—entered into alliances with the Allied Powers to establish their own state during the first four years of the Armistice period (1918-1922). However, following the defeat of the Greek, French, and Armenian forces against the Nationalist forces in western, southern, and eastern Anatolia, respectively, the Ottoman Armenians re-oriented their political position and pursued the path of reconciliation with the Muslims Turks because there was no room left for them to pursue separatist aims in the newly established Republic. The security concerns at the time forced the Ottoman Armenians to declare their loyalty to the Turkish National movement in order to protect the physical and cultural existence of the community. Thus, I contend that the Ottoman Armenians changed their political position during the Armistice years to protect their existence in the atmosphere of insecurity.

Besides the notions of political position, security dilemma, and ethnic bargaining theory, the theory of the public sphere is useful in conceptualising the main argument in this thesis—that the Armenian press played a significant role in the public sphere in the formation of the Armenian political position. In the following section, I shall give an overview of the concept of the public sphere and explain the primary sources that I use.

Habermas, in *Legitimation Crisis*, describes the main structure of a society in three categories: the political system, the economic system, and the socio-cultural system, calling them collectively the *lifeworld*.⁵³ The political system is responsible for the establishment of social welfare for the lifeworld, as well as for preserving a healthy financial structure for the economic system. The socio-cultural system

⁵³ Jürgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975), p. 5.

represents a ‘shared social construct, constituted through communication’.⁵⁴ Thus, the lifeworld is responsible for social production, discussion, and the establishment of a public opinion. Yet, for Habermas, the public sphere has no power—actions can only be taken within the political system. Therefore, the public sphere is ‘a network of communicating information and points of view’.⁵⁵ For Habermas, the public sphere is a ‘communication structure rooted in the lifeworld through the associational network of civil society’.⁵⁶ The public sphere is a common place where people meet and discuss certain arguments and make collective decisions. Notably, though, Habermas gives particular regard to journalists and especially to the politicians who he contends have the power to sway public opinion.⁵⁷ He imagines the state as an ‘alienated entity which is not rooted in society, and the public sphere as an independent formation from the political power of the state’.⁵⁸

Habermas highlights the importance of the press in the public sphere as the ‘pre-eminent institution’ of the bourgeois public sphere.⁵⁹ The press is not only a vehicle for the transformation of information but also a transmitter and amplifier of public debate. He argues that the press has a significant role in the development of public debate:

⁵⁴ Jane Braaten, *Habermas’s Critical Theory of Society* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1991), p. 80.

⁵⁵ Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996), p. 360.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 359.

⁵⁷ Jürgen Habermas, ‘Political Communication in Media Society: Does Democracy Still Enjoy an Epistemic Status? The Impact of Normative Theory on Empirical Research’, *Communication Theory*, 16 (2006): p. 416.

⁵⁸ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989), p. 27, as cited in Cengiz Kırılı, ‘The Struggle over Space: Coffeehouses of Ottoman Istanbul, 1780-1845’ (PhD thesis, State University of New York-Binghamton, 2000), p. 14.

⁵⁹ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, p. 181.

Citizens behave as a public body when they confer in unrestricted fashion... about matters of general interest. In a large public body, this kind of communication requires specific norms for transmitting information and influencing those who receive it. Today, newspapers and magazines, radio and television are the media of the public sphere.⁶⁰

The press, as well as the media in general, is central to the public sphere, offering a basis to organise and develop healthy public debate. Peter Dahlgren explains:

The public sphere is a concept which in the context of today's society points to the issues of how and to what extent the mass media, especially in their journalistic role, can help citizens learn about the world, debate their responses to it and reach informed decisions about what courses of action to adopt.⁶¹

The concept of the public sphere discussed by Habermas is a theoretical framework derived from the dynamics of Western society, covering a period from the eighteenth century to contemporary times. The main thrust of the argument is that in the late eighteenth century, the public sphere was composed of an elite of private citizens. An emerging independent press provided a place for what were formerly private opinions to become part of public opinion. Nevertheless, this public discourse was displaced by power politics, and large organisations made deals with each other and with the state, excluding the public, a process Habermas calls the 'refeudalisation' of society.⁶² However, the framework of the public sphere remains disputable. Scholars who have done considerable research on the concept of the public sphere often criticise Habermas's arguments, and Habermas himself also

⁶⁰ Meenakshi Gigi Durham and Douglas Kellner, *Media and Cultural Studies: Keywords* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), p. 103.

⁶¹ Peter Dahlgren and Colin Sparks, *Communication and Citizenship: Journalism and the Public Sphere in the New Media Age* (London; New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 14.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 38.

accepts this definitional ambiguity.⁶³ Regarding this debate, I am not interested in engaging in the discussion of the theorisation of public sphere, but I wish to explore the question of how the concept of the public sphere could be used in analysing the Ottoman and Armenian press during the Armistice period.

I contend that during the Armistice period dailies were the only vehicles for Ottoman society to engage in political and social life in order to create a public sphere in which individuals had the opportunity to voice their opinions. The Armenian dailies, especially, were much more accessible to the Armenian readers than the Ottoman Turkish dailies were to the Ottoman Turkish community, given that the Armenian community experienced higher levels of literacy and education. Many Armenian readers were also contributors, writing reports and articles, as well as sometimes serving as correspondents for the Armenian dailies. The Armenian dailies provided a space for the community to discuss and produce solutions for contemporary issues. Thus, they were ‘transmitters and amplifiers’ of the period. Deriving from the concepts of security dilemma, political position, and the public sphere, I argue that the Armenian newspapers served as one corner of the public sphere and as agents of formation for political positioning during the Armistice period. In the absence of democratic participation during this period, the Armenian as well as the Ottoman Turkish newspapers were the only medium through which civil society participated in discussion and produced arguments for contemporary political developments. Journalists and politicians used the newspapers to shape public opinion. The public was engaged in the discussions in the newspapers, as the press was the only forum for the Ottoman citizens to follow the developments in politics and the future of the state.

⁶³ Simon Susen, ‘Critical Notes on Habermas’s Theory of the Public Sphere’, *Sociological Analysis* 5 (2011): p. 43.

1.4. Sources

This thesis employs Armenian and Ottoman Turkish press as primary sources. My research trips to libraries in Istanbul, Yerevan, and Vienna resulted in a digitised collection of twenty-five Armenian and Ottoman Turkish dailies. I believe they provide an invaluable source to analyse the socio-political position of the Armenian community during the Armistice years. I excluded Ottoman and Armenian archival documents and sources written in Russian and French for practical reasons of time constraints and scope. The Ottoman Archives in Istanbul and the Armenian Archives in Yerevan would have provided official reactions to the political developments argued in this thesis. However, tracing the change in the Armenian public opinion within the archival documents is not completely possible. I argue that the Armenian and Ottoman Turkish press are critical and more reflective sources to map out the inner dynamics of the Armenian and Turkish communities during the Armistice years. Even as primary and secondary sources in Russian and French provide valuable insights into the post-war political developments,⁶⁴ I exclude them from my narrative

⁶⁴ For Russian sources regarding this period see especially П. Макинциан, *Армянский вопрос на Лозаннской конференции* [Armenian Question at the Conference of Lausanne] (Тифлис: Закнига, 1920); А.Ф. Миллер, *Ближний Восток после I Мировой войны. Севр и Лозанна* [Near East After First World War: Sèvres and Lausanne] (Москва: Высшая школа партийных организаторов при ЦК ВКП (б), 1945); А.М. Шамсутдинов, *Советско-турецкая дружба в годы освободительной борьбы Турции. 25 Международный конгресс востоковедов* [Soviet-Turkish Friendship During Turkey's War of Independence: 25th International Congress of Orientalists] (Москва: Восточная литература, 1960); *Документы внешней политики СССР, 1-6 т.* [Foreign Affairs Documents of the SSSR, vols. 1-6] (Москва: 1959 - 1962); Р. Г. Саакян, *Франко-Турецкие Отношения И Киликия В 1918—1923 гг.* [French-Turkish Relations and Cilicia, 1918-1923] (Ереван: Национальная академия наук Республики Армении, 1986); Л.М. Воробьева, «Трагедия армянского народа: страницы истории», [‘The Tragedy of the Armenian People: Pages from History’] *Армения: проблемы независимого развития.* [Armenia: The Problems of Independent Growth] Ред. Е.М.Кожокин. (Москва: Российский институт стратегических исследований, 1998); Наталья Александровна Соколова. *Политические и торговые отношения между Советской Россией и Турцией в 1917-1923 гг.* [Political and Economical Relations Between Soviet Russia and Turkey, 1917-1923] канд. дис. (Владимир, 2002); Нина Константиновна Есяян, *Брестский мир (1918 г.) и*

because they are not directly related to the main argument of the thesis, the transformation of Armenian political position during the Armistice years.

его последствия для армянского народа в борьбе за национальное единство [The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk [1918] and its Consequences on Armenian's Fight for National Unity] канд. дис. (Санкт-Петербург: 2004); Мустафа Озтюрк, *Советско-турецкие отношения на Кавказе в 1918-1923 гг.* [Soviet-Turkish Relations in the Caucasus, 1918-1923] канд. дис. (Санкт-Петербург: 2010); Гегам Петросян, *Отношения Республики Армения С Россией (1918 - 1920 гг.)* [The Relations of the Republic of Armenia With Russia, 1918-1920] (Ереван: Издательство ЕГУ, 2012).

For French sources, see especially H. Barby, *Les Extravagances Bolchéviques et l'épopée Arménienne (la Débauche Russe)* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1918); J. Loris-Melikoff, *La Révolution Russe et les Nouvelles Républiques Transcaucasiennes. Bolchévisme et Antibolchévisme* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1920); A. Poidebard, 'Rôle Militaire des Arméniens sur le front du Caucase Après la Defection de l'armée Russe (Décembre 1917-Novembre 1918)' *Revue des Etudes Arméniennes* Vol 1. (1920), No: 2.; P. G. La Chesnais, *Les Peuples de la Transcaucasie Pendant la Guerre et Après la Paix* (Paris: Bossard, 1921); Archives Nationales, Fonds Edouard Brémond (1868-1948), Pierrefitte; *Délegation de la République Arménienne à la Conférence de la Paix: L'Arménie et la Question Arménienne Avant, Pendant et Depuis la Guerre* (Paris: Turabian, 1922); A. Poidebard, *Le Transcaucase et la République de l'Arménie dans les Textes Diplomatiques du Traité de Brest-Litovsk au Traité de Kars, 1918-1920* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1924); General G. Korganoff, *La Participation des Arméniens à la Guerre Mondiale sur le Front Caucase, 1914-1918.* (Paris: Massis, 1927); S. Afanasyan, *L'Arménie, l'Azerbaïdjan et la Géorgie: de l'Indépendance à l'Instrauration du Pouvoir Soviétique, 1917-1923.* (Paris: Éditions l'Harmattan, 1981); S. Afanasyan, *La Victoire de Sardarabad Arménie (mai 1918).* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1985); Alexander Khatissian, 'La République Indépendante d'Arménie et le Role des Alliés (1918-1920)', *Temps modernes* Vol. 43 (1988) Nos 504-506, pp. 78-89; Alexander Khatissian, *Ecllosion et Développement de la République Arménienne* (Athens: Editions Arméniennes, 1989); A. Ter Minassian, *La République d'Arménie, 1918-1920* (Brussels: Éditions Complexe, 1989). Vahe Tachjian, *Minorités, États-nation, Expansionnisme Occidental: la Zone Frontière Turco-Syrienne dans l'Entre-deux-Guerres* (Paris: EHESS, 2002); Raymond Kévorkian; Lévon Nordiguian; Vahé Tachjian, *Les Arméniens, 1917-1939: la Quête d'un Refuge,* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux; Beyrouth: Presses de l'Université Saint-Joseph, 2007).

1.4.1. The Armenian Press

Name	Place of Publication	Year of Publication	Political Position
<i>Zhamanag</i>	Istanbul	1908-	Neutral / nonpartisan
<i>Jagadamard</i>	Istanbul	1909-1924	ARF
<i>Verchin Lur</i>	Istanbul	1914-1930	Neutral / Pro-Ramgavar
<i>Giligia</i>	Adana	1919-1921	Pro-ARF
<i>Arewelean Mamul</i>	Izmir	1871-1909, 1919-1922	Pro-Ramgavar
<i>Tashink</i>	Izmir	1909-1919	Pro-Ramgavar
<i>Koyamard</i>	Izmir	1920	Pro-ARF
<i>Horizon</i>	Izmir	1919-1922	Neutral / Pro-ARF
<i>Piwzantion</i>	Istanbul	1896-1918	Neutral
<i>Arawöd</i>	Istanbul	1909-1924	Ramgavar Liberal Party
<i>Hay Tzayn</i>	Aleppo and Adana	1918-1920	Pro-Ramgavar
<i>Hay Ts'aw</i>	Adana	1919-1921	Pro-Ramgavar
<i>Yerewan</i>	Istanbul	1918-1919	Neutral / Conservative
<i>Zhoghovurt / Zhoghovurti Tsaynë</i>	Istanbul	1918-1923	Neutral
<i>Yergir</i>	Istanbul	1919-1922	SDHP

Table 1. The Armenian Press used in this thesis

At the beginning of WWI in 1914, more than thirty Armenian newspapers, journals, and periodicals were being published in Istanbul. After the declaration of the participation of the Ottoman Empire in the war, the CUP government embarked upon

a campaign of prohibition against the Armenian press, closing twenty-five newspapers and journals, leaving only *Piwzantion* (Byzantium), *Zhamanag* (The Times), and *Verchin Lur* (The Latest News) in business. The reason was simple: these Armenian newspapers were not affiliated with any political organisations, making them essentially ‘neutral’ in the eyes of the state.⁶⁵ Besides newspapers in Istanbul, more than eighteen Armenian newspapers—from various cities in Anatolia including Van, Harput, Sivas, Tokat, Erzurum, and Trabzon—were also closed.⁶⁶ In the war years, especially from 1915 to the signing of Armistice of Mudros in October 1918, the Armenian press in the Ottoman Empire was completely silent *vis-à-vis* the political developments. With the signing of the Armistice, however, political and cultural life of the Ottoman Armenians started to re-emerge in Istanbul and Izmir. In 1918, eight journals (some newly established, others previously established papers resuming operation) were published in Istanbul. In 1919, moreover, more than twenty literary journals, newspapers, and satirical magazines were published in Istanbul and Izmir.⁶⁷ The daily and weekly newspapers published in the Ottoman Empire in Armenian and Ottoman Turkish between 1918 and 1923 are the main sources of this study. News items, reports, editorials, and political discussions in the dailies provide deep insights into the socio-political developments of the period and call for a comprehensive analysis. This study scrutinises various Armenian and Ottoman Turkish newspapers that were published by diverse political and cultural institutions. It is important to give a brief overview of the newspapers that are analysed in this study.

⁶⁵ Ա.Ա. Խառատյան, *Արեւմտահայ Մամուլն Իր Պատմության Ավարտին (1900-1922)* [The Western Armenian Press at the End of Its History] (Երեվան: Պատմության Ինստիտուտ, 2015), pp. 12-13.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 359.

Before 1908, the year that *Zhamanag* was first published, twenty-six Armenian dailies were published in the Ottoman Empire.⁶⁸ *Zhamanag*, which continues to be published today in Istanbul, was first published in 1908 by Misak K'och'anean.⁶⁹ It was hugely popular among the members of the Armenian community, with many leading Armenian authors serialising their novels in the columns of *Zhamanag*.⁷⁰ For instance, Hrant Samuel, who for many years worked for *Zhamanag*, describes the popularity of the daily as follows:

These novels were received so well that when, once every week, a huge advertisement occupied the fourth page of *Zhamanag*, forcing us to skip the series of that day, readers, especially women, would telephone us to protest and threaten to boycott. As a result, we agreed to move the series to the third page whenever the advertisement occupied the full fourth page.⁷¹

The circulation of the daily was the largest among all the Armenian newspapers. It carried no political affiliation from its founding until the beginning of WWI. *Zhamanag* is an eminently important primary source for this thesis because it

⁶⁸ It is noteworthy to mention that other papers shared the name 'Zhamanag'.

1. *Zhamanag Hayrenanuer* [Patriotic Times], Istanbul, 1863-1868, 8 pages.
2. *Zhamanag Vets'amsia Hantes Kragan, Kidagan, Kegharuesdagan Yew Kaghakagan* [The Times: Bi-annual Journal of Literature, Science, Arts, and Politics], Paris, 1901-1902, 64 pages.
3. *Zhamanag Orat'ert'* [The Times: Daily], Tiflis, 1906-1907, 4 pages.
4. *Zhamanag* [The Times], Istanbul, 1908-, 4 pages.
5. *Zhamanag* [The Times], 1927, Detroit, 2 pages.

⁶⁹ I employed the romanization table of the Library of Congress while writing Armenian names.

⁷⁰ For instance, some of the novels that were published in the *Zhamanag* daily between 1908 and 1913:

1. 'Gragin Mēchen' [Through Fire], K'asim, 1908-1909, no. 1-129.
2. 'Yēldēzi K'aghdnik'nerē' [The Secrets of Yildiz], Paul De Regla, May 1909 to July 1909, No. 154-229.
3. 'Temk' Ch'unets'ogh Martē' [The Faceless Man], 1909-1910, no. 272-381.
4. 'Dasnergu Dari Bolsen Turs' [Twelve Years Outside Istanbul], Yeruant Odean, 1912-1913, no. 1198-1404.

⁷¹ Ekmekçioğlu, 'Improvising Turkishness: Being Armenian in Post-Ottoman Istanbul (1918-1933)', p. 19.

had an uninterrupted print run during the Armistice period and served as a mirror of the Armenian community during that time.

Jagadamard (The Battle), *Ariamard* (The Battle of Braveness), and *Artaramard* (The Battle of Justice) were subsequent incarnations of *Azadamard* (The Battle of Freedom), a newspaper which was first published in 1909 after the revolution as an organ of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (hereafter ARF).⁷² Prominent Armenian intellectuals such as Ārupēn Zartarean, Hagop Siruni, and K‘egham Parseghean contributed to *Azadamard* as editors. The paper changed its name in 1918 to *Artaramard*, then *Ariamard*, and finally to *Jagadamard*, which it stayed from late 1918 to early 1924.⁷³ Published without interruption during the Armistice period, it is a valuable source for this study.

Verchin Lur (The Latest News) was published in Istanbul from 1914 to 1930.⁷⁴ Owned by Hrach‘eay Dēr Nersēsean, the paper’s editorial board consisted of Hagop Dēr Hagopean, Hovhannes Asbed, Lewon Sat‘ērean, Ardashes K‘alpak‘jean,

⁷² Գարեգին Լեվոնյան, *Հայոց Պարբերական Մամուլի Լիակատար Ցուցակ հայ Լրագրության* [The Periodical Press: A Complete Catalogue] (Երեվան: Մելքոնյան Ֆոնդ, 1934), p. 57. The Federation of Armenian Revolutionaries was founded in the summer of 1890 in Tiflis. It was renamed a year later as the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF). The main objective of ARF was the liberation of Ottoman Armenia. Although the party programme involved socialist rhetoric, the primary concern of the party was nationalism. For the ARF, socialism was a vehicle to achieve a nationalist goal. The ARF was the major party among the Ottoman Armenians and was an ally of the CUP until the beginning of WWI. For the history of the ARF, see Arsen Avagyan and Gaidz F. Minassian, *Ermeniler ve Ittihat ve Terakki: İşbirliğinden Çatışmaya* [Armenians and the Union and Progress: From Cooperation to Confrontation] (Istanbul: Aras Yayıncılık, 2005); Razmik Panossian, *The Armenians from Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars* (London: Hurst & Co., 2006), pp. 205-10; Louise Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement; the Development of Armenian Political Parties through the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963).

⁷³ Zakarya Mildanoğlu, *Ermenice Süreli Yayınlar, 1794-2000* [The Armenian Periodicals 1794-2000] (Istanbul: Aras Yayıncılık, 2014), p. 127.

⁷⁴ Գարեգին Լեվոնյան, *Հայոց Պարբերական Մամուլի Լիակատար Ցուցակ հայ Լրագրության* [The Periodical Press: A Complete Catalogue], p. 81.

Vahan Tshigean, and the famous Armenian author Yervant Odean.⁷⁵ The daily officially remained ‘neutral and independent’, with no political affiliation. However, the arguments supported in the daily’s columns were often in line with Ramgavar Liberal Party policies.⁷⁶ Some contributors of the daily such as Hovhannes Asbed and Ardashes K‘alpak‘jean were previously affiliated with the Ramgavar Liberal Party.⁷⁷ *Verchin Lur* was one of the most popular dailies among the Armenian community in Istanbul, with a circulation of ten thousand during and after WWI. Therefore, it is an essential source to analyse the Ottoman Armenian political position during the Turkish-Armenian War.

Giligia (Cilicia) was first published in Adana in 1919 and continued until 1921, with copies appearing every two to three days.⁷⁸ Owner G. Dēr Ap‘rahamean assembled an editorial team of Dikran Dzamhur, Minas Veradzin, and Lewon Mozean, whose editorial views were close to those of the ARF.⁷⁹ *Giligia* is an important source for this study, as it reflects the developments in the Adana region during the Armistice period.

Owned by Hrant Mamurean and edited by Suren Bart‘ewean, *Arewelian Mamul* (The Orient Daily) was first published in 1871 in Izmir by Madtēos Mamurean and later renamed *Tashink‘* (The Pact) in 1909, before ceasing publication

⁷⁵ Mildanoğlu, *Ermenice Süreli Yayınlar, 1794-2000* [The Armenian Periodicals 1794-2000], p. 131.

⁷⁶ Խառատյան, *Արեւմտահայ Մամուլն Իր Պատմության Ավարտին (1900-1922)* [The Western Armenian Press at the End of Its History], p. 391. The Ramgavar Liberal party was founded in 1908 by a group of liberals who were formerly attached to the Armenagan party. The party operated as the Constitutional Democratic Party from 1908 to 1921. It was popular among the upper class Armenians in Istanbul. In 1921, during the Armistice years, the party renamed itself as the Ramgavar Liberal Party. The Ramgavar party defended the idea of liberalism. Although it supported the unity and independence of Armenia, it advocated achieving this goal through negotiation and dialogue rather than violence.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Լեվոնյան, *Հայոց Պարբերական Մամուլի Լիակատար Ցուցակ հայ Լրագրության* [The Periodical Press: A Complete Catalogue], p. 99.

⁷⁹ Mildanoğlu, *Ermenice Süreli Yayınlar, 1794-2000* [The Armenian Periodicals 1794-2000], p. 155.

in 1914 as a result of WWI. In 1919, the pro-Ramgavar Liberal Party newspaper resumed publication for one year following the war.⁸⁰ After *Tashink*‘ ceased publication in late 1919, the daily was again resurrected as *Arewelean Mamul* and continued to be published as such until 1922.⁸¹ It is crucial to analyse this paper, in both of its forms, as it documents the news and developments regarding Izmir and the surrounding areas. Additionally, its strong opposition to the ARF provides valuable insight into the political dynamics of the period within the Armenian community. *Arewelean Mamul-Tashink*‘ criticised the Soviet Armenian government and drew attention to Bolshevism, portraying it as a danger.⁸² It is possible to find political discussions between *Arewelean Mamul-Tashink*‘ and *Koyamard* (The Battle for Existence), an Izmir-based publication of the ARF.⁸³ In addition to *Arewelean Mamul-Tashink*‘, *Horizon* (Horizon) was also published in Izmir from 1919 to 1922.⁸⁴ The daily was owned by Vahan Bardizbanean and Setrag T‘okajean, with Suren Bartevean serving as editor.⁸⁵ Similar to *Arewelean Mamul-Tashink*‘, the daily reflected the developments in Izmir and its surrounding areas, including the fraternal relationship between the Armenian and Greek communities of Izmir. However, while *Horizon* claimed to be a neutral publication, it published news quoted from *Jagadamard* and the announcements of the ARF in its pages. In the first issue, Suren Bartevean stated that *Horizon* was an attempt to fill a gap in the Armenian intellectual and cultural life following its annihilation during the wartime. In its inaugural issue in

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 105.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 45.

⁸² Խառատյան, *Արեվմտահայ Մամուլն Իր Պատմության Ավարտին (1900-1922)* [The Western Armenian Press at the End of Its History], pp. 471-72.

⁸³ Լեվոնյան, *Հայոց Պարբերական Մամուլի Լիակատար Ցուցակ հայ Լրագրության* [The Periodical Press: A Complete Catalogue], p. 106.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 101.

⁸⁵ Mildanoğlu, *Ermenice Süreli Yayınlar, 1794-2000* [The Armenian Periodicals 1794-2000], p. 157.

1920, *Koyamard* explained the meaning of its name—the Ottoman Armenians had fought a battle for their very existence during WWI, and there would now be a second battle for existence in the Armistice years.

Piwzantion was published in Istanbul from 1896 to 1918 after obtaining special permission from Abdulhamid II. Piwzant K'ēch'ean, owner of the daily, pursued a moderate policy during the first years of publication. The daily had no political affiliation and remained neutral. The opinion editorials published in the daily regarding the Armenian massacres of 1894-1896, which were optimistic about the future of the Armenian community in the Ottoman Empire, serve as examples of the moderate tone the daily sought.⁸⁶ In the one year the daily was published during the Armistice period, it arguably changed its pro-Ottoman approach; thus, only the year 1918 of the daily will be examined in this thesis.⁸⁷

Aṛawōd (The Morning) was published from 1909 to 1924 in Istanbul as a mouthpiece of the Ramgavar Liberal Party.⁸⁸ Owned and directed by Misak' Surean, *Aṛawōd* strongly criticised the ARF for its policies during the Turkish-Armenian war in the Caucasus and its harsh opposition to the Soviet Armenian government.⁸⁹ The daily was one of the first Armenian newspapers to declare a pro-Turkish stance during the Lausanne Conference, believing in the possibility of reconciliation between the Turks and the Armenians.

⁸⁶ Խառատյան, *Արեվմտահայ Մամուլն Իր Պատմության Ավարտին (1900-1922)* [The Western Armenian Press at the End of Its History], p. 60-61.

⁸⁷ Mildanoğlu, *Ermenice Süreli Yayınlar, 1794-2000* [The Armenian Periodicals 1794-2000], p. 64.

⁸⁸ Լեվոնյան, *Հայոց Պարբերական Մամուլի Լիակատար Ցուցակ հայ Լրագրության* [The Periodical Press: A Complete Catalogue], p. 57.

⁸⁹ Mildanoğlu, *Ermenice Süreli Yayınlar, 1794-2000* [The Armenian Periodicals 1794-2000], p. 100.

Hay Tzayn (The Armenian Voice) was founded in Aleppo in 1918 by Setrag Gebenlian before relocating to Adana.⁹⁰ It continued to be published through 1920 and reflected the news regarding the Armenian community in Cilicia.⁹¹ In the first issue, the daily declared that its aim was to build a bridge between the local Armenians and the Turkish and Arab populations, as well as to assist diaspora Armenians in locating their relatives in the region. Even though the daily claimed to be neutral, the content remained pro-Ramgavar party. Gebenlian also served as the editor of another daily during the same period—*Hay Ts‘aw* (The Armenian Pain), which was published in Adana from 1919 to 1921. *Hay Ts‘aw* was unique in that it was the only Turkish-language paper that used Armenian characters in the Armistice years.⁹²

Yerewan (Yerevan) was published in Istanbul from 1918 to 1919.⁹³ Owned by Mgrdich‘ Gabrash, it initially ran as a weekly before becoming a twice-weekly publication.⁹⁴ Even though the daily had no official political affiliation, its editorial policy carried a strong nationalist bent, voicing support for the establishment of a ‘*Miatsyal Hayastan* (United Armenia)’ and declaring itself ‘the organ of free Armenians’.

Nor Gyank‘ (The New Life) was published in Istanbul from 1918 to the end of 1919 by Yeruant Dēr Andtrēasean, an intellectual who had been working in Armenian

⁹⁰ Լեվոնյան, *Հայոց Պարբերական Մամուլի Լիակատար Ցուցակ հայ Լրագրության* [The Periodical Press: A Complete Catalogue], p. 100.

⁹¹ Mildanoğlu, *Ermenice Süreli Yayınlar, 1794-2000* [The Armenian Periodicals 1794-2000], p. 149.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 395.

⁹³ Լեվոնյան, *Հայոց Պարբերական Մամուլի Լիակատար Ցուցակ հայ Լրագրության* [The Periodical Press: A Complete Catalogue], p. 90.

⁹⁴ Mildanoğlu, *Ermenice Süreli Yayınlar, 1794-2000* [The Armenian Periodicals 1794-2000], p. 152.

newspapers since 1880.⁹⁵ He was actively involved in the publications of *Masis*, *Tsaghik* (The Flower), *Arevelk* (East) and *Manzume-i Efkar* (The Verse of Ideas) before WWI. In *Nor Gyank*, he tried to draw public attention to the Armenian massacres while also criticising the CUP leaders.⁹⁶

Zhoghovurt (The People) was published in Istanbul from 1918 to 1919 by Armenian intellectual Dikran Zawēn.⁹⁷ Born in Sivas in 1874, he studied at Getronagan Armenian school in Istanbul and upon graduation moved to Europe during Abdulhamid's reign. He published the journal *Yergri Tsaynē* (The Voice of Country) in Tblisi in 1906 to provide updates on the political developments in the Ottoman Empire to readers. After 1908, he moved to Istanbul and began contributing to the Armenian dailies. In 1918, he began to publish *Zhoghovurt*. The daily continued publication under the name *Zhoghovurti Tsaynē* (The Voice of People) until 1923. From 1920 to 1922, the paper was edited by the well-known Armenian poet Vahan Tēkēan.⁹⁸

Yergir (The Country) was published by the Social Democrat Hnch'agean Party (SDHP) in Istanbul from 1919 to 1922.⁹⁹ Owner O. Jinazean and the editorial team of Vahan Zeytunean, Hrant Kaligean, and Yetuart Ch'op'urean argued that the only revolutionary political organisation within the Armenian community was

⁹⁵ Ibid., 151; Լևոնյան, *Հայոց Պարբերական Մամուլի Լիակատար Ցուցակ հայ Լրագրության* [The Periodical Press: A Complete Catalogue], p. 94.

⁹⁶ Խառատյան, *Արևմտահայ Մամուլն Իր Պատմության Ավարտին (1900-1922)* [The Western Armenian Press at the End of Its History], p. 360.

⁹⁷ Լևոնյան, *Հայոց Պարբերական Մամուլի Լիակատար Ցուցակ հայ Լրագրության* [The Periodical Press: A Complete Catalogue], p. 90.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 98.

⁹⁹ The Social Democrat Hnch'agean Party (SDHP) was founded by a group of Armenian students in 1887 in Geneva. Derived from the romanticism of Russian Narodniks, SDHP advocated for an immediate revolution and the separation of independent Armenia from the Ottoman Empire by using a Marxist revolutionary approach. Unlike the ARF and Ramgavar Liberal Party, the SDHP was reluctant to engage in an alliance with the CUP and defended the immediate independence of Ottoman Armenia through revolutionary means.

SDHP.¹⁰⁰ Unlike many other Armenian dailies in Istanbul, the editorial policy of the daily was sympathetic towards Soviet Armenia. Because of this political position, the daily was strongly criticised by those in ARF circles who did not favour the Bolsheviks.¹⁰¹

1.4.2. The Ottoman Turkish Press

Name	Place of Publication	Year of Publication	Political Position
<i>İleri</i>	Istanbul	1919-1924	Pro-Turkish National movement
<i>Vakit</i>	Istanbul	1917-1949	Pro-Turkish National movement
<i>Istanbul</i>	Istanbul	1919-1920	Anti-Turkish National movement / Pro-Loyalist
<i>Alemdar</i>	Istanbul	1909-1922	Anti-Turkish National movement / Pro-Loyalist
<i>Yeni Gün</i>	Istanbul and Ankara	1918-1924	Pro-Turkish National movement
<i>Peyam / Peyam-ı Sabah</i>	Istanbul	1913-1922	Anti-Turkish National movement / Pro-Loyalist

Table 2. The Ottoman Turkish Press used in the thesis

İleri (Forward) newspaper was published in Istanbul from 1919 to 1924 by the brothers Celal Nuri (İleri) and Suphi Nuri (İleri). Strongly critical of the CUP and the Istanbul government, the paper openly supported the Ankara movement, publishing

¹⁰⁰ Լեվոնյան, *Հայոց Պարբերական Մամուլի Լիակատար Ցուցակ հայ Էրազրության* [The Periodical Press: A Complete Catalogue], p. 97.

¹⁰¹ Խառատյան, *Արեւմտահայ Մամուլն Իր Պատմության Ավարտին (1900-1922)* [The Western Armenian Press at the End of Its History], p. 382.

articles written by Mustafa Kemal as well as announcements from the Ankara government.¹⁰²

The *Vakit* (The Times) daily was published by Mehmet Asım (Us) and Ahmet Emin (Yalman) in Istanbul in 1917. Prominent Turkish authors such as Ziya Gökalp, Halide Edip, Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, Reşat Nuri, and Ruşen Eşref wrote for the daily, which openly supported the Ankara government.¹⁰³

The *Istanbul* daily was published by Sait Molla in 1919 in Istanbul. Molla was a member of the Anglophile Society,¹⁰⁴ which supported the British mandate over the Ottoman Empire.¹⁰⁵ *Istanbul* strongly opposed the Turkish National movement and criticised the CUP's activities in its columns. The paper ceased publication after the victories of the Nationalist forces in Anatolia. Prominent poet Ahmet Haşım was an intermittent contributor to the daily.¹⁰⁶

Alemdar (The Flag-bearer) daily was published by Refii Cevat in Istanbul from 1909 to 1922. Refik Halit, a prominent Turkish author, wrote many articles criticising the Turkish National movement under the pseudonyms 'Aydede' and 'Kirpi'. Muammer Asaf, Mustafa Sabri, Hafız İsmail, and Dr. Selahattin—all of who were strong opponents of the CUP and the Turkish National movement—were contributors to the daily.¹⁰⁷ *Alemdar* was at the heart of the opposition during the Armistice period, calling the Nationalist movement 'brainless bands' and supporting the British mandate.

¹⁰² Nuri İnuğur, *Basın ve Yayın Tarihi* [History of Press and Publishing] (Istanbul: Çağlayan Kitabevi, 1982), pp. 337-38.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 341.

¹⁰⁴ The Anglophile Society was founded in 1919 to promote the relationship between the British and the Ottomans. During the Armistice years, it supported the British government to establish the British mandate over the Ottoman Empire.

¹⁰⁵ Nuri İnuğur, *Basın ve Yayın Tarihi* [History of Press and Publishing], p. 341.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 342.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

Following the war, the Ottoman newspapers *Peyam* (The News) and *Sabah* (Morning) merged and were re-established as *Peyam-ı Sabah* in 1920 by owner Mihran Efendi.¹⁰⁸ Editor in chief and renowned intellectual Ali Kemal strongly opposed the Turkish National movement, openly characterising the movement as ‘daydreamers’. His anti-Nationalist publications were so intense that he was lynched by a crowd in Izmit after the Nationalist victory against the Greek forces in 1922.¹⁰⁹ Accordingly, *Peyam-ı Sabah* is a crucial source to compare with the pro-Nationalist Turkish daily *Vakit* during the Turkish-Armenian War.

Yeni Gün (The New Day) was founded by Yunus Nadi in 1918. Soon after, the newspaper was forced to cease publication by the British forces because of its pro-Kemalist leanings. Yunus Nadi relocated his operations from Istanbul to Ankara, where he continued to publish the daily.¹¹⁰ *Yeni Gün* openly supported the Ankara government during the Armistice period and provided crucial information regarding developments in the Nationalist circles.

1.5. Organisation of the Thesis

This introductory chapter outlines the various perspectives from the Armenian and Turkish historiographies concerning the period of interest to this thesis, as well as discussing the key methodological and theoretical approaches of the thesis.

The second chapter presents the aspirations of Ottoman Armenians toward the establishment of ‘*Miatsyal Hayastan*’ (‘United Armenia’). The Armistice of Mudros

¹⁰⁸ Mihran Nakkashean was an Armenian entrepreneur who was born in Kayseri in 1850. He received his training in typesetting in Istanbul and worked in several newspapers. In 1882, he bought the publishing rights of *Sabah* and became its owner. Mihran Nakkashean left the country and immigrated to France in 1922 after selling his property, including the newspaper.

¹⁰⁹ Nuri İnuğur, *Basın ve Yayın Tarihi* [History of Press and Publishing], p. 344.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 339.

ended what had been considered by the Ottoman Armenians to be an unending state of insecurity, finally granting them liberty. They started to campaign and lobby for the establishment of an Armenian state in the *Vilayât-ı Sitte* (Six Provinces; a geographical term used for the six provinces of the Ottoman Empire populated by Armenians). These provinces, covering contemporary Eastern Anatolia, were Sivas, Diyarbakir, Bitlis, Erzurum, Van, and Mamuretülaziz. It was crucial that the Ottoman Armenians prove that they constituted a majority of the population in those regions or that there were enough Armenian survivors to relocate into the region to produce a majority.

The third chapter analyses the Greek-Armenian friendship that was established during the first months of the Allied occupation. The Ottoman Armenians formed a friendship with the Greeks, and the Armenian Patriarchate acted together with the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The chapter reflects the peculiarities of the Armenian political position during the first two years of the Armistice period and how friendships were established between the Armenians and the Great Powers.

The fourth chapter analyses the implications for the Ottoman Armenians of the emergence of the Turkish National movement. It is significant that before the French retreat and the defeat of the Armenian government, influenced by the Ottoman Armenian press, the Ottoman Armenian public considered the Nationalist forces as ‘bands’ who were another incarnation of the CUP. As the Nationalist forces were conducting an aggressive campaign against the Christians of Anatolia, the Ottoman Armenians lived in fear of a second genocidal campaign. This chapter deconstructs the political position of the Ottoman Armenians before the French, Greek, and Armenian defeats against the Nationalist forces and presents the various dimensions of ethnic conflict, fear, and insecurity gripping Anatolia.

The fifth and the sixth chapters elaborate on the sustained support of the Ottoman Armenians for the establishment of a United Armenia. Firstly, during the Franco-Turkish war, the Ottoman Armenians served as legions within the French occupation forces. Nevertheless, when the French government secured its economic interests from the Nationalist Turks and withdrew from the Cilicia region, the remaining Armenian population was under threat of massacre and forced to leave for the deserts of northern Syria. The sixth chapter addresses the ramifications of the Turkish-Armenian War in the Caucasus and the aid campaign of the Ottoman Armenians in support of the Armenian government. The political position of the Ottoman Armenians is highlighted through two case studies in these two chapters: the French-Armenian friendship and the support of the Ottoman Armenians to the Armenian State.

The seventh chapter explores the transformation of the Armenian political position from a pro-Allied position to a pro-Kemalist one. Especially from 1918 to 1922, the Armenian community of the Ottoman Empire supported the Allied Powers in the hope that an independent Armenian state would be established in the Vilayât-ı Sitte. This expectation was shared by all Armenian political parties and was reflected as a common goal in the Armenian dailies of all political orientations. Nevertheless, as the Nationalists accumulated victories on the battlefield, the Armenian community in Anatolia and particularly in Istanbul began to adapt themselves to the newly established nationalist rule, under which minorities were not considered to be truly 'Turkish'. This significant turning point in the Armenian public sphere demonstrates the developing opinions of the Armenian community during the Republican years. Two crucial developments in the transformation of the Armenian political position are analysed: first, the establishment of the Turkish-Armenian Assent Association, which

was organised by a group of Turkish and Armenian intellectuals and businessmen; and second, the support of the Ottoman Armenians for the National government during the peace conference in Lausanne. This chapter illustrates how the Ottoman Armenians came to support the Turkish National movement after realising they were left with no alternative following the defeat of the Greek and French forces, as well as the Armenian government in the Caucasus. The role of the Turkish-Armenian Assent Association in the Turkish-Armenian reconciliation process is examined, arguing that the Association was a product of the development of pro-Ankara views among the Armenian community. The Armenians who remained within the borders of the newly established Turkish Republic accepted the legitimacy of the Ankara government in order to ensure their continued physical and cultural existence, while those opposing the Nationalists fled.

The concluding chapter summarises the main points of the study, highlighting how the Armenian political position was reshaped during the Armistice years, and underlines the contributions made by this thesis to Ottoman Armenian historiography.

Here it should also be noted that, even as the issue of Armenian orphans and humanitarian aid during the Armistice years is an important topic, I do not deal with this issue in my discussions, as it lies outside the realm of the main arguments presented in this thesis. The topic of Armenian orphans in itself could deservedly become the subject of another doctoral thesis.

CHAPTER II

THE END OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR: THE ARMENIAN ASPIRATIONS FOR 'UNITED ARMENIA' FROM THE ARMISTICE OF MUDROS TO THE GREEK OCCUPATION OF IZMIR (OCTOBER 1918- MAY 1919)

2.1. Introduction

This chapter scrutinises the particularities of the period—beginning with the signing of the Armistice of Mudros in October 1918 and ending with the declaration of the Turkish Republic in 1923—which serves as a microcosm of the transformation of the Armenian political position during the Armistice years. Before the Armistice of Mudros was signed on 30 October 1918, the Armenian press published numerous articles on the Turkish-Armenian friendship and the loyalty of the Ottoman Armenians to the Ottoman State, with Armenian individuals expressing their pro-Ottoman approach in the columns of the dailies. Nevertheless, following the signing of the Armistice of Mudros, this pro-Ottoman approach of the Ottoman Armenian community changed drastically. The Ottoman Turkish dailies, which had been publishing articles highlighting the loyalty of the Armenian community prior to the Armistice of Mudros, reversed course and claimed the Armenian community was disloyal to the Ottoman State. As will be illustrated in the following sections of this chapter, the Ottoman Armenians acknowledged the Armistice of Mudros as an excellent opportunity to gain 'liberation' from the Ottoman yoke. Within a period of about three months, the pro-Ottoman tone of the Armenian publications transformed into a propagandist one—fuelled by the Wilson Principles, which declared the right of

self-determination for the nations—in which all layers of the Armenian community demanded the establishment of an Armenian State in the eastern provinces. The Ottoman Armenians who were reluctant to openly support the Allied cause during the war now raised their voice in favour of the Entente. The establishment of a Romioi-Armenian friendship further encouraged the political position of the Armenian community, one that was no longer keen to share the same fate with the Ottoman Turkish society; therefore, they worked toward the establishment of a friendship with the Romioi—that is, with the Entente. As such, this chapter attempts to demonstrate a micro example of the main argument of the thesis, which tries to show the transformation of the Armenian political position during the Armistice years.

2.2. The Road to the Armistice of Mudros: The Pro-Ottoman Approach of the Ottoman Armenians

The idea of Ottomanism, which had been swept under the carpet during the Balkan Wars and WWI, re-emerged particularly in the last months of 1918 when the approaching ultimate defeat of the Ottoman Empire by the Allied Powers was certain.¹¹¹ Wartime propagation of Turkish nationalism by the Ottoman Turkish press gave away to a ‘sympathetic Ottomanism’, which aimed to bring the non-Muslim

¹¹¹ The Ottoman Empire entered WWI on the side of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Bulgaria—the Central Powers. On the other side, the Allied Powers—consisting of the British Empire, the Russian Empire, the Kingdom of Italy, and the French Republic—formed the opposition. The war ended with the absolute defeat of the Central Powers; consequently, each state belonging to the vanquished alliance was compelled to sign separate treaties with the Allied Powers. For a selective historiography on the Ottoman participation in WWI, see D. K. Fieldhouse, *War and Partition of Ottoman Empire, 1914-1922* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Michael A. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires: The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires, 1908-1918* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); A. L. Macfie, *The End of the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1923* (London; New York: Longman, 1998); Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East*; David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace: Creating the Modern Middle East, 1914-1922* (New York: H. Holt, 1989).

communities of the Empire back into the fold, as an effort to restore the government and preserve its unity.¹¹² With the impending fall of the government increasingly clear, Turkish intellectuals were cultivating fears of occupation and the possible dismemberment of the state because of its non-Muslim populations, particularly the Armenians and Romioi. Even though the declaration of independence of Balkan nations after the Balkan War of 1912-1913 stirred reactions among the Muslim population, the propagation of Turkish nationalism by the Ottoman Turkish press created a new atmosphere for Ottoman Muslims, and it was used as a tool to shape the sympathy of the masses from Ottomanism to Turkish nationalism.¹¹³ Ottoman Muslim

¹¹² The term ‘Ottomanism’ developed over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the Ottoman Empire. During the reign of Abdulhamid II, it was used as a synonym for Islamism, whereas after the Revolution of 1908, it came to be understood as the equality of all citizens, regardless of ethnicity or religion. In 1918, Ottomanism represented the ideology of territorial nationalism, which is to say that all the citizens were regarded equal before the law. The term ‘sympathetic Ottomanism’ is used in this thesis as an ideology in which Muslim and non-Muslim populations of the Ottoman Empire were regarded as equal citizens. It should be noted that in certain periods Ottomanism was used as a cover to assimilate the non-Muslim population, and on some occasions appeared as Islamism and Turkish nationalism. For discussion of Ottomanism as ideology, see Ohannes Kılıçdağı, ‘The Bourgeois Transformation and Ottomanism Among Anatolian Armenians After the 1908 Revolution’ (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2005), pp. 56-67; Bedross Der Matossian, *Shattered Dreams of Revolution From Liberty to Violence in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014), pp. 49-71; Karpas, *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History*, pp. 27-74; Macfie, *The End of the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1923*, pp. 113-19; Davison, *Essays in Ottoman and Turkish History, 1774-1923: The Impact of the West*, pp. 112-38; Suny, *‘They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else’: A History of the Armenian Genocide* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), pp. 149-65.

¹¹³ The Balkan Wars, which took place in 1912 and 1913, resulted in the Ottoman Empire’s loss of the majority of its European territory. Before the Balkan Wars, the primary policy of the Ottoman government was Ottomanism, which aimed at uniting the non-Muslim and Muslim subjects under one umbrella, promoting a common ‘Ottoman’ identity; however, this policy was drastically reshaped after the loss of Balkan lands changed the demographic map of the Empire. After the Balkan Wars, the Christian population of the Empire significantly decreased, and the ruling government pursued a new policy of Turkish Nationalism. For discussion on the impact of the Balkan Wars on Ottoman policy, see Özgür Balkılıç and Deniz Dölek, ‘Turkish Nationalism at Its Beginning: Analysis of *Türk Yurdu*, 1913-1918’, *Nationalities Papers* 41, no. 2 (n.d.): pp. 316-33; Ümit Kurt and Doğan Gürpınar, ‘The Balkan Wars and the Rise of the Reactionary Modernist Utopia in Young Turk Thought and the Journal *Türk Yurdu* [Turkish Homeland]’, *Nations and Nationalism* 21, no. 2 (2015): pp. 348-68; Erol Ülker, ‘Contextualising “Turkification”: Nation-Building in the Late Ottoman Empire, 1908-18’, *Nations and Nationalism* 11, no. 4 (2005): pp. 613-36; Ebru Boyar, ‘The Impact of the Balkan Wars on Ottoman History Writing: Searching for a Soul’, *Middle East Critique* 23, no. 2 (2014): pp. 147-56; Mustafa Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914:*

society was convinced after the Balkan Wars that the nucleus of the Turkish land must remain intact and that any possible partition of this core would cause the displacement of Muslims in Asia Minor.¹¹⁴ This belief is evident in the reflections of Ottoman Muslims toward the establishment of the Armenian state in the Caucasus. Although public opinion among Ottoman Turkish society showed concerns that the Ottoman Armenians would proliferate the idea of unification with the Armenian state in the Caucasus, it welcomed and recognised the new state simply because it had been established outside of the borders of the Turkish nucleus.

With this mindset, Turkish intellectuals were concerned about the possible attitudes of the non-Muslim populations in the case of an Ottoman defeat. When the German defeats in Europe in the spring of 1918 caught the Ottoman government in Istanbul off guard, the Ottoman Turkish press started to publish articles directly addressing the non-Muslim communities, urging them to pledge loyalty to the idea of Ottomanism. The *Atı* (Future) daily, for instance, ran an editorial on the declaration of the Armenian Republic in the Caucasus, which warned the Ottoman Armenians not to engage in any further revolutionary activity:

Some of our fellow citizens, who assume themselves as Armenians of Armenia (Ermeniyye), started to speak of ‘you’ and ‘we’. ... Armenians, who constitute a minority in almost every part of our state, are Ottomans in the first place. ... An Armenian should consider Ottomanism superior to his

The Ottoman Empire and First World War (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Ebru Boyar, *Ottomans, Turks and the Balkans: Empire Lost, Relations Altered* (London and New York: Tauris Academic Publishers, 2007).

¹¹⁴ Especially following the devastating defeat the Ottomans received in the Balkan Wars, the CUP leaders discussed retreating to the ‘Turkish heartland’ of Anatolia. Thus, the term ‘nucleus’ is used to refer to Anatolia. For discussion of the CUP authorities’ decision to retreat to Anatolia, see Fuat Dündar, *Modern Türkiye’nin Şifresi: İttihat ve Terakki’nin Etnisite Mühendisliği (1913-1918)* [The Code of Modern Turkey: The Committee of Union and Progress' Ethnic Engineering] (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2015), pp. 58-62.

Armenianness. For Armenians, there is life and prosperity in forgetting the Tashnagts‘ut‘iwn [ARF] past.¹¹⁵

If the Ottoman Armenians pledged loyalty to the Ottoman government, they would be mostly welcomed to continue to live within the borders of the Ottoman state. Forgetting the ‘Tashnagts‘ut‘iwn past’, a term used for the revolutionary activities of the Armenian political parties, was the key element for the Armenians to renew their relationship to the Ottoman government. It is noteworthy that the Armenian community was viewed as a united entity, ‘all of whose members’ were perceived to be ‘revolutionaries and possible traitors’. Further elaborating on the issue, the daily drew the boundaries of being ‘a proper Armenian’. The Armenians loyal to the Ottoman Empire were seen as equal to Turks, while the Armenians whose loyalties fell elsewhere, such as ARF revolutionaries, were no friends of the Ottoman Turks.¹¹⁶ The daily warned the Ottoman Armenians: ‘If you listen to this wise counsel, life and happiness will be provided to you. If not, it is up to you. But then you should consider the roads either to Yerevan or to America through Batum, Hamburg, Liverpool or Le Havre’.¹¹⁷

The majority of Turkish society wholeheartedly believed that the atrocities committed between the Ottoman Empire and the Armenians during wartime were ‘the products of foreign interference’. They argued that the newly established Armenian

¹¹⁵ *Ati*, ‘Bizde Anasır Meselesi’ [Nations Issue Among Us], 25 June 1918, no. 174. Tashnagts‘ut‘iwn is the name used in Armenian for the ARF. ‘Bazı vatandaşlarımız kendilerini Ermeniye Ermenisi zannederek siz ve biz demeye başladılar... Memleketimizde bila istisna bir hayli yerlerde küçük bir ekaliyyet olmak üzere sakin bulunan Ermeniler evvel-be-evvel Osmanlıdır... Ermeni Ermeniliğinin fevkinde Osmanlılığını bilecektir. Taşnaksutyun mazisini unutmakta Ermeni için hayat ve felah vardır’.

¹¹⁶ *Ati*, 25 June 1918, ‘Bizde Anasır Meselesi’ [Nations Issue Among Us]; *Verchin Lur*, Օսմանլիկի Հայերուն [To Ottoman Armenians] 25 June 1918, no. 1298.

¹¹⁷ *Ati*, ‘Bizde Anasır Meselesi’ [Nations Issue Among Us], 25 June 1918; *Verchin Lur*, Օսմանլիկի Հայերուն [To Ottoman Armenians], 25 June 1918, no. 1298. ‘Eğer pek hayr-ı hevahan olan bu vesayamı dinlerseniz, sizin için saadet ve hayat mukadderdir. Dinlemezseniz, bu da irade-i ihtiyarınızdadır. O zaman bilmiş olunuz ki Revan’a gitmek için Batum, Amerika’ya göçmek için de Hamburg, Liverpool ve Le Havre yolları vardır’.

state would stay a friend of the Ottoman Empire if she were to declare there were no aspirations to take Ottoman lands in Eastern Anatolia. *Vakit* reminded Armenians of the lack of support from the Allied powers in response to their request for military assistance: ‘What shall we do? Our cannons could not reach Mt. Ararat’.¹¹⁸ As a result, the daily advised the Ottoman Armenians to pledge loyalty to the Ottoman Empire in order to be seen as equal subjects. *Vakit* welcomed those Armenian dailies publishing articles in support of the idea of Ottomanism.¹¹⁹ A few days later, *Vakit* elaborated on the fact that no state in the world, including Britain and France, supported the establishment of a free Armenian state in the Caucasus—except the Ottoman Empire. The Allied powers showed no sympathy toward the Caucasian Armenians, and the Germans prioritised the protection of Georgian rights in the region.¹²⁰ In contrast, the Ottoman government welcomed the establishment of the Armenian state in the Caucasus, immediately recognising its sovereignty. Furthermore, *Vakit* proposed that the Ottoman government provide assistance to the newly established Armenian state, as it in turn would wield influence over the Armenian diaspora communities. According to the daily, if the Ottoman government won the sympathy of the Armenian state in the Caucasus, it would be possible to decrease the anger and enmity of the global Armenian diaspora directed towards it¹²¹ and even serve a dual purpose—by providing basic assistance to the Armenian state, the Ottoman government could help establish a stable structure on its Eastern border

¹¹⁸ *Vakit*, ‘Ermeni Meselesinin Tasfiye-i Hesabı’ [Winding up of the Armenian Question], 27 June 1918, no. 249.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ Richard G. Hovannisian, *Armenia: On the Road to Independence 1918* (California: University of California Press, 1967), p. 183. The German-Georgian agreement was reached in May 1918 at Poti. Germans were allowed to use the railways and ports of Georgia and even occupy some of the strategic points. The Georgians aimed at protecting themselves from the Bolshevik threat and preferred the German influence to Bolsheviks. See David Marshall Lang, *A Modern History of Soviet Georgia* (London: Grove Press Inc., 1962), pp. 206-8.

¹²¹ *Vakit*, ‘Kafkas Siyasetimiz ve Ermeniler’ [Our Caucasus Policy and the Armenians], 3 September 1918, no. 316.

and avert the ambitions of the Ottoman Armenians to unite with their compatriots.

Vakit wrote:

There is an Armenian nation that, if its need for independence is not satisfied, will not stop causing havoc and will not abstain from doing anything. The main target of this anger will be us... The only way to free the Armenian nation from such an irresponsible situation is to make them landlords. If they become landlords, they would stop political riots and engage in trade and agriculture. In this way, we would get rid of both an insecure structure on our Eastern border which wants to interrupt at every instance, and those Armenians who secretly lobby against us in foreign countries and provoke our own Armenian citizens.¹²²

Along similar lines, the *İkdam* (Perseverance) daily beseeched the Ottoman Armenians to understand that their fate was wed to that of the Ottoman state. It was in their favour to return to serving as loyal, hardworking subjects of the state; in doing so, they would again be treated as equal citizens.¹²³ Turkish intellectual Yunus Nadi delivered a message to the Ottoman Armenians in *Tasvir-i Efkar* (Picture of Ideas), reminding them of the statements of Alexander Khadisean,¹²⁴ representative of the Armenian Republic during the Treaty of Batum negotiations, that the actions carried

¹²² Ibid. ‘... Bir Ermeni anasırı vardır ki, istiklal hususundaki ihtiyacı tatmin edilmedikçe mütemadiyen tahrikatta bulunacak hiçbir nevi gayr-i mesul hareketlerden çekinmeyecektir. Bu tahrikatın başlıca hedefi de biz olacağız. Ermeni anasırını böyle gayr-i mesul bir vaziyetten kurtarmanın yegane çaresi kendilerini ev sahibi yapmaktır. Ermeniler ev sahibi olunca siyasi tahrikat yerine harsi ve iktisadi işlerle uğraşmaya başlarlar ve böylece biz şimal-i şarki hududumuz üzerinde daima emniyeti ihlale meyyal gayr-i mesul amelden, ecnebi memleketlerinde aleyhimize tahrikatta bulunmaktan başka bir şey yapmayan adamlardan ve tebamız arasındaki Ermenileri daima ifsada çalışacak gizli bir ocaktan kurtulmuş oluruz’.

¹²³ *Verchin Lur*, Իգոսամը Եւ Հայ Թերթերը [İkdam and the Armenian Press] 29 June 1918, no. 1302.

¹²⁴ Alexander Khadisean was born in 1876 in Tbilisi and received his education in Russia and Germany, specialising in chemistry. He was a member of the ARF and mayor of Tbilisi from 1909 to 1917. He served as mayor of Gyumri at the beginning of 1918 and was appointed as foreign minister of the Republic of Armenia in November 1918. He then served as president of Armenia from April 1919 to May 1920. After the Bolshevik revolution in Armenia, he moved to Paris, where he died in 1945. See Կոստանդին Խուդավերդյան, ‘Խատիսյան, Ալեքսանդր’, Հայկական Հարց [‘Alexander Khadisean’, the Armenian Question] (Երևան: Հայկական Հանրագիտարանի Գլխավոր Խմբագրություն, 1996), p. 166. Yunus Nadi refers to him as Hadisov.

out by the Ottoman government during the wartime were necessary to ensure the safety and integrity of the country.¹²⁵ According to Nadi, Foreign Minister Khadisean stated that the Armenians had done everything in their power to weaken the Ottoman state, reinforcing the idea that the Ottoman actions were justified as self-defence. Khadisean stated that the Armenians must accept that they had ‘lost the game’.¹²⁶ Referring to Khadisean’s words, Nadi urged the Ottoman Armenians not to pursue the dream of independence but to face the shortcomings of the Armenian political parties.¹²⁷

Ottoman Turkish public opinion demanded that the Ottoman Armenians behave as ‘proper Armenians’. They were to be considered as brothers and sisters of the Turks only if they proved their fealty to the Empire and did not engage in revolutionary activities. Celal Nuri provides an example of a ‘proper Armenian’ in an article describing a visit to his old friend Giragos Bey, an 80-year-old Armenian merchant living in Istanbul. When Celal Nuri asked about the revolutionary and separatist aims of the Armenians, Giragos Bey reportedly answered:

I am firstly an Ottoman and then an Armenian. There are 200,000 Armenians in Istanbul. They cannot be separated from the Turk. The fish can’t live out of the water. Like Catholics and Protestants in Germany, the Ottoman Empire has the Turk and the Armenian. People [Western Powers] disturbed our comfort. How good it was in the past.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ The Treaty of Batum was signed on 4 June 1918 by the Ottoman government and the governments of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. The Armenian government, following the devastating defeats on the battleground against the Ottoman forces, was left with no choice but to accept the harsh conditions imposed by the Ottoman government. See Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *Reform, Revolution, and Republic the Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp. 325-26; Reynolds, *Shattering Empires: The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires, 1908-1918*, pp. 206-18.

¹²⁶ *Tasvir-i Efkar*, ‘Ermeni Meselesi’ [The Armenian Question], 29 June 1918, no. 2500.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ *Verchin Lur*, Հայոց Մասին [Regarding Armenians] 5 September 1918, no. 1359. ‘Ես Նախ Օսմանցի եմ եւ յետոյ Հայ: Պոլսոյ մէջ 200.000 Հայ կայ: Ասոնք Թուրքէն չեն կրնար բաժնուիլ: Եթէ ձուկը ջուրէն ելնէ չապրիի: Գերմանիա ինչպէս բողոքականը

In response to the sentiments produced in the Ottoman Turkish dailies, the Ottoman Armenian community sought to regain the trust of the Ottoman Muslims by publishing articles and opinions expressing the loyalty of the Ottoman Armenians toward the state. With the ongoing war and political uncertainty at hand, the Armenians—those having already survived the massacres—did not want to give Ottoman Turkish society any reason to arouse hate against them. *Verchin Lur* published a lead article written by Avedis Surenean, one of the daily’s editors, in which the author echoed the sentiments previously expressed in the Ottoman Turkish press: ‘We enthusiastically shake the brotherly hand that they extend to us... being the children of the same country, the Turk and the Armenian are forever equal and together... both would live happy. We greet with gladness this brotherly cordial expression’.¹²⁹

Throughout the war, the Ottoman Armenian community suffered as the target of oppression, anger, and violence. Given that a considerable number of Armenian intellectuals were either imprisoned or deported, and that the majority of the Ottoman Armenian population was scattered throughout the Empire, the Armenian community was extremely decimated. Therefore, the collective Armenian reaction against the political and social developments was short of being able to articulate the community’s socio-political position.¹³⁰ Even though there was justifiable anger toward the Ottoman state and Turkish/Muslim society, the Ottoman Armenians

եւ կաթոլիկը ունի անանկ ալ օսմանցիութիւնը թուրքը եւ Հայը ունի:... Սարդիկ մեր հանգիստը վրդովեցին: Անցեալ ժամանակը ինչ աղէկ էր:’

¹²⁹ *Verchin Lur*, Թրքահայերս [Turkish Armenians], 26 June 1918, no. 1299. ‘... Իրենց մեզ ուղղած եղբայրական ձեռքը կը սեղմենք եռանդագին... միեւնոյն երկրի զաւակներն եղող թուրք ու Հայ յաւէտ հաւասար ու միասին... երկուքն ալ երջանիկ կապրին: Մենք ցնծութեամբ կողջունենք այս եղբայրական սիրալիր զգացման արտայայտութիւնն..’.

¹³⁰ For a selective list of academic works written on the Armenian genocide, see chapter 1.

preferred to wait until the end of the war and the occupation of the Ottoman lands by the Allied powers to reveal their political position. An editorial published in the 6 July 1918 edition of *Verchin Lur*, for instance, strongly supported the Turkish-Armenian friendship:

Let's think for a moment. Who are the closest elements in this country? And is it even possible to distinguish Turks and Armenians from each other, these two elements who mostly have the similar appearance, behaviour and pronunciation... Don't we find Armenians and Turks most similar to each other in the plays of Mnagean, Burhaneddin and Benliean, who represent Turkish social life? Starting with our grandees, we wish to see each Armenian working for this [Turkish-Armenian brotherhood]. We call upon Armenian deputies, officials, leading merchants, intellectuals, teachers and editors to put extremely serious efforts towards the strenghtening of Turkish-Armenian brotherhood.¹³¹

Not only the Armenians in the capital or in intellectual circles, but also ordinary Armenians, sent opinion letters to the Armenian dailies to express their feelings. An Armenian correspondent from Konya sent a letter to the *Hayrenik* (The Fatherland) daily to express gratitude to the Ottoman authorities. According to this correspondent, there were 15,000 Armenians in Konya who were well off:

¹³¹ *Verchin Lur*, Թուրք Եւ Հայ Էղբայրակցութիւն [Turkish Armenian Friendship], 6 July 1918, no. 1307. Born in Istanbul in 1839, [Mardiros] Mnagean helped found the Ottoman theatre, writing and translating hundreds of theatre plays. [Serope] Benliean was a famous Armenian theatre player born in Istanbul in 1835. He spent his career travelling the cities of the Ottoman Empire—from the Greek islands to Edirne, from Cairo to Adana—to bring plays to the stage. Burhaneddin [Tepsi] was a Turkish theatre player and writer born in 1882 in Tarsus, Adana. ‘... Պահ մը խորհիւնք: Այս երկրին մէջ իրարու ամէնէն մօտ տարրերը որո՞նք են: Եւ արդէն կարելի՞ է շատ անգամ զանազանել իրարմէ Թուրքերն ու Հայերը որոնք թէ արտաքին երեւոյթով թէ նիստ ու կացով եւ թէ խօսակցութեամբ ու արտասանութեամբ... զիրար նմանող տարրերը: Թրքական ընկերային կեանքը ներկայացնող Մնակեանի, Պուրհանէտօիինի եւ Պէնլեանի թատերական տեսարաններուն մէջ ալ չէ որ ամէնէն աւելի իրարու մօտ կը գտնենք միշտ Թուրքն ու Հայը:... Կը փափաքինք որ մեր մեծամեծներէն սկսեալ ամէն Հայ անհատ ասոր համար աշխատի: Հայ երեսփոխաններուն, պաշտօնատարներուն, վաճառականական դասակարգին մէջ առաջնակարգ դիրք գրաւողներուն, մտաւորականներուն, ուսուցիչներուն եւ խմբագիրներուն կոչ կընենք աշխատիլ խիստ լրջօրէն Թուրք եւ Հայ եղբայրակցութեան ամրապնդման:’

The Turks over here are extremely hardworking and honourable elements [members of society]. We consider ourselves extremely happy that in this Ottoman country we live with people with such attributes. Cursed be those who discriminate a brother against a brother. Both *Hairenik* and all Armenian papers should work towards strengthening these relations. We, Ottoman Armenians, can find our happiness and peace only under the auspices of the Ottoman Rule.¹³²

2.3. End of the Game: Signing of the Armistice of Mudros

The discussion between Armenian and Turkish intellectuals regarding the loyalty of the Armenians to the Ottoman Empire continued until October 1918. As demonstrated in the examples above, the political position of the Ottoman Armenians was pro-Ottoman during this period. While the discussion continued in the newspapers published in the capital, in the political field, in practical terms, the Ottoman Empire was essentially surrounded when Bulgaria signed a separate ceasefire agreement with the Allied Powers on 29 September 1918.¹³³ An unexpected offensive was led by General Franchet d'Esperey on the Southeastern front. Serbian and Greek-English divisions simultaneously attacked the German-Bulgarian divisions, pressuring them to retreat. Bulgaria could no longer continue to fight, and General Franchet d'Esperey

¹³² *Verchin Lur*, Իգոտամ Եւ Հայ Թերթերը [İkdam and the Armenian Press], 29 June 1918, no. 1302. ‘Հոս տեղի Թուրքերը խիստ աշխատասէր եւ պատուաւոր տարր մըն են: Ինքզինքնիս խիստ երջանիկ կը համարինք որ Օսմ. Երկրին մէջ այս յատկութիւններով օժտուած տարրի մը հետ կապրինք: Անէծք անոնց որոնք եղբայրը եղբորմէն զատեցին: Թէ Հայրենիք եւ թէ բոլոր Հայ թերթերը պետք է աշխատին մեր յարաբերութեանց ամրապնդման: Մենք, Օսմանցի Հայերս, մեր երջանկութիւնն ու խաղաղութիւնը կրնանք գտնել լոկ Օսմ. Կառավարութեան հովանիին տակ:’

¹³³ The Armistice of Salonica was signed on 29 September between the Bulgarian government and the French General d'Esperey, who signed the ceasefire on behalf of the Allied Powers. The Bulgarian government accepted the complete demobilisation of its army and the evacuation of occupied Greek and Serbian lands. For the detailed terms of the Armistice, see Richard C. Hall, ‘Bulgaria in the First World War’, *The Historian*, no. 73 (2011): pp. 300-315; ‘Bulgaria Armistice Convention, September 29, 1918’, *The American Journal of International Law* 13, no. 4 (1919): pp. 402-4.

was able to force them to sign an armistice within a few days, without referring to the Supreme War Council.¹³⁴ When Talat Pasha, the Grand Vizier, was on a visit to Berlin in 1918 to find a resolution to the disagreement between Germany and the Ottoman Empire over the Caucasus, he learned of the heavy German defeats on the Western front. He conducted negotiations with Austrian authorities in Austria to offer a joint peace agreement to the Allied Powers.¹³⁵ Returning from Germany, Talat Pasha witnessed the disintegration of the Bulgarian army. The Bulgarian leaders met him at the train station to inform him of the separate peace agreement they had requested. When he heard news of the Bulgarian ceasefire, he stopped and stared for a moment, mumbling a Turkish phrase: ‘*Şimdi boku yedik*’ (‘We are in deep shit’).¹³⁶

Indeed, Talat Pasha had reason to be concerned. While the CUP government had valiantly fought for a German victory, not only had it faced internal resistance from opposition groups protesting the pro-German policies, but also the Allied Powers urged the CUP on several issues, including the Armenian genocide, which it declared a ‘crime against humanity and civilisation’.¹³⁷ Bulgaria was the bridge linking the Ottoman capital to Berlin, which was of utmost importance to the CUP government, as it was a lynchpin in the transportation scheme of both military and financial assets from the German capital to Istanbul. On the other hand, Enver Pasha, with his adventurous, unrealistic strategy, proclaimed that by turning attention to the Eastern front and launching an attack on the Caspian Sea, Britain would be forced to

¹³⁴ Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace: Creating the Modern Middle East, 1914-1922*, p. 363.

¹³⁵ Gwynne Dyer, ‘The Turkish Armistice of 1918, 1: The Turkish Decision for a Separate Peace, Autumn 1918’, *Middle Eastern Studies* 8 (1972): p. 149.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

¹³⁷ Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, p. 137; Richard G. Hovannisian, ‘The Allies and Armenia, 1915-18’, *Journal of Contemporary History* 3 (1968): p. 147; Pars Tuğlacı, *Tarih Boyunca Batı Ermenileri 1891-1922* (Istanbul: Pars Yayın, 2004), p. 667; Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*, p. 5.

submit to signing an agreement bearing equal terms for both sides.¹³⁸ Enver's push into the Caucasus required the redeployment of troops from the Palestinian and Mesopotamian fronts to the region, thus opening the way for a complete British victory.¹³⁹ Consequently, the Ottoman Empire was made to sign an armistice agreement which stipulated harsh terms, including the loss of sovereignty, lands, and the dissolution of the regime itself.

By August 1918—after the 8 August defeat of the German army on the 'Schwarze Tag', which saw the British unleash a crushing tank/armoured attack at Amiens¹⁴⁰—it was clear that the only salvation for the Ottoman Empire was to ask the Allied Powers for a peace agreement.¹⁴¹ However, the position of the Ottoman Empire was far different from that of the Habsburg Empire and Bulgaria, both of whom had lost nearly all of their armies; in contrast, the Ottoman Empire still had active forces on the battlefields of Syria and the Caucasus. Nevertheless, by late summer of 1918, approximately 500,000 Ottoman soldiers had deserted, many of whom took to the hills of Anatolia, acting as bandit gangs. Though weakened, the army still contained approximately 100,000 troops; the Ottoman economy, on the

¹³⁸ Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace: Creating the Modern Middle East, 1914-1922*, p. 367.

¹³⁹ D. K. Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914-1958* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 43. In 1918, Enver Pasha transferred most of the Ottoman forces to the East in order to drive a campaign against Armenia, Georgia, and Persia. He aimed to reach Central Asia through the Caspian Sea to win the support of the Turkic population in the interests of the Ottoman Empire. The troops returning from Galicia and Romania were directed to the East, and Enver Pasha was able to reorganise them as eight functional combat divisions. Two and a half divisions were sent directly to the Baku front to form 'the Caucasus army of Islam', and they captured Baku on 15 September 1918. It is noteworthy that during the war, the CUP's policy focused on Pan-Turanism; thus, the Arab lands that were still under the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the war began to lose their strategic value to the CUP government. For example, Ziya Gökalp, a prominent intellectual of the CUP, published articles in March 1918 arguing that independent Arab states would be established. For details, see Dyer, 'The Turkish Armistice of 1918, 1: The Turkish Decision for a Separate Peace, Autumn 1918'.

¹⁴⁰ Gwynne Dyer, 'The Turkish Armistice of 1918, 2: A Lost Opportunity: The Armistice Negotiations of Moudros', *Middle Eastern Studies* 8 (1972): p. 314.

¹⁴¹ Dyer, 'The Turkish Armistice of 1918, 1: The Turkish Decision for a Separate Peace, Autumn 1918', p. 144.

other hand, was on the brink of collapse.¹⁴² The Ottoman public debt in 1914 was approximately 171 million Turkish liras, but by 1918 it had increased three-fold. Food shortages led to famine not only in the provinces but also in Istanbul. In 1918, prices rose twenty-five-fold, an enormous increase in inflation.¹⁴³

By the spring of 1918, it was clearly evident that there was no longer anything resembling a united strategy in the CUP cabinet. On the one hand, Enver Pasha and his allies vowed to continue the fight; on the other hand, Talat Pasha and his circle were prepared to accept peace terms with the Entente. The Cabinet members were irritated that Enver Pasha had not informed them in a timely manner regarding the situation of the German army and his clandestine endeavours in the Caucasus. Cavid Bey, the minister of finance, wrote in his diary at the beginning of October 1918:

Enver Pasha's greatest guilt is that he never kept his friends informed of the situation. If he had said five or six months ago that we were in a difficult situation, naturally we would have sought an escape. We would have made a favourable separate peace at that time. But he concealed everything, and he deluded himself and brought the country to this state.¹⁴⁴

After the resignation of the CUP government on 8 October 1918, the newly established government decided to reach an agreement with the British, with negotiations commencing between the Ottoman and British delegations on the battleship HMS Agamemnon in Lemnos on 25 October 1918. During the negotiations, Rauf Bey, a member of the Ottoman delegation, expressed his concerns regarding Article 1, underlining the importance that Straits were to be occupied only

¹⁴² Ibid.; Vedat Eldem, *Harp ve Mütareke Yıllarında Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun Ekonomisi* [The Economy of the Ottoman Empire During War and Armistice] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1994), pp. 130-32.

¹⁴³ Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914-1958*, p. 43; Eldem, *Harp ve Mütareke Yıllarında Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun Ekonomisi* [The Economy of the Ottoman Empire During War and Armistice], pp. 143-48.

¹⁴⁴ Dyer, 'The Turkish Armistice of 1918, 1: The Turkish Decision for a Separate Peace, Autumn 1918', p. 148.

by British and French troops, as the appearance of any Greek warships would cause great disturbances in Istanbul and Izmir, which had large Romioi communities.¹⁴⁵ After prolonged discussions, Rauf Bey accepted the article, provided that Admiral Calthorpe, head of the British delegation, personally provided a letter of assurance.¹⁴⁶ Rauf Bey also had a suspicion about the seventh clause of the Armistice agreement,¹⁴⁷ which allowed for the Allied forces to occupy any place within the Empire if any threat to their security was perceived. At this point, Sadullah Bey, who had returned from Palestine a few weeks prior, stated that the Ottoman forces had no power to continue the struggle; in addition, Reşad Hikmet Bey, another member of the Ottoman delegation, noted that ‘Austria and Germany were done’.¹⁴⁸ On 30 October 1918, the Armistice of Mudros was signed, and the Ottoman government resigned itself to conditions so exacting that even the British, who helped draft the terms, did not see them as just.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁵ Article 1 read: ‘Opening of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus and secure access to the Black Sea. Allied occupation of Dardanelles and Bosphorus forts’. Dyer, ‘The Turkish Armistice of 1918, 1: The Turkish Decision for a Separate Peace, Autumn 1918’; Dyer, ‘The Turkish Armistice of 1918, 2: A Lost Opportunity: The Armistice Negotiations of Moudros’. According to the official statistics of the Ottoman Empire, in 1914, the Greek population in Istanbul was 205,000 out of 560,000 total inhabitants, while in Izmir the Greek population was 73,000 out of 207,000 total inhabitants. See Kemal Karpat, *Ottoman Population, 1830-1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), pp. 170 and 174.

¹⁴⁶ Dyer, ‘The Origins of the ‘Nationalist’ Group of Officers in Turkey 1908-18’, p. 333.

¹⁴⁷ Article 7 of the Armistice of Mudros is as follows: ‘The Allies to have the right to occupy any strategic points in the event of a situation arising which threatens the security of the Allies’. For the developments during the negotiations for ceasefire between the Ottoman and Allied delegations, see Dyer, ‘The Turkish Armistice of 1918, 1: The Turkish Decision for a Separate Peace, Autumn 1918’; Dyer, ‘The Turkish Armistice of 1918, 2: A Lost Opportunity: The Armistice Negotiations of Moudros’.

¹⁴⁸ Dyer, ‘The Turkish Armistice of 1918, 2: A Lost Opportunity: The Armistice Negotiations of Moudros’, p. 335.

¹⁴⁹ Indeed, no one in the British Cabinet expected that the Ottoman Empire would demand an armistice after the Bulgarian collapse. The Ottomans did well in the Caucasus and were still fighting on the Southern front, and they continued to hold out in Syria, despite being vastly outnumbered by British. See Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace: Creating the Modern Middle East, 1914-1922*, p. 364.



Figure 1. The Allies and Armenia (*Zhoghovurt*, 19 November 1918)

2.4. ‘Christ is Risen’: Reflections after the Signing of the Armistice of Mudros

Following the removal of the CUP government, the tone of the Armenian and Ottoman Turkish dailies started to change. The Ottoman Armenians regarded the fall of the government as a bright light appearing at the end of the tunnel, whereas dissenting opinions started to emerge among the Ottoman Turks, and a wave of strong criticism of the CUP government began to be voiced. This fact altered the tone of the dailies: Ottoman Turkish society lost the previously united political position in support of the CUP, while at the same time, Ottoman Armenian society became more vocal in demanding their basic democratic rights. They asked that the new cabinet, on

behalf of the Armenian victims and survivors, return their constitutional rights immediately.¹⁵⁰

On the very day of the signing of the Armistice of Mudros, the elation was evident in the Armenian community. On 1 November 1918, *Verchin Lur* announced the Armistice with a heading, ‘The whole capital celebrates and goes into raptures’, and the lead article, titled ‘Today’s Enthusiasm: The Flags of the Entente Fly Splendidly’, opened with a passage which reflected the Armenian political transformation: ‘*Քրիստն յարեաւ ի ի սէռեղնց!*’ (‘Christ is risen from the dead!’). It is noteworthy here to point out that, as has been discussed above, a few months before the signing of the Armistice of Mudros, *Verchin Lur* was calling the Armenian intellectuals and public to support the Armenian-Turkish friendship and to be loyal citizens of the Ottoman State.

The flags of Greece, Italy, France, and Britain were flying on the streets of Pera, with Christians greeting each other: ‘Christ is risen from the dead! Blessed is the resurrection of Christ!’ According to an Armenian correspondent, the streets were full of people crying with joy. The Armistice of Mudros, perceived as salvation for the Ottoman Armenians, was likened to the resurrection of Jesus, imbuing it a divine meaning. The correspondent was worried that this celebration would end like those before it held after the announcement of the restoration of the Ottoman constitution in 1908:¹⁵¹ ‘The scene clearly reminded me of the Constitution announcement days ten

¹⁵⁰ *Verchin Lur*, Ի՞նչ Կուզեն Հայերը Նոր Դահլիճէն [What Do Armenians Want from the New Cabinet?], 15 October 1918, no. 1393.

¹⁵¹ The Ottoman constitution (*Kanun-i Esasi*), which was ratified in 1876, was restored following the Revolution of 1908, also known as the Young Turk Revolution. The Ottoman Armenians were ardent supporters of the CUP during their fight for the announcement of the constitution, and following the revolution, many public celebrations were organised by the Armenians and Turks under the motto ‘*liberté, égalité, fraternité*’. However, following the revolution in 1909, the Armenians of Adana were massacred during the counter-revolutionary uprising. For the Young Turk Revolution and the political position of the Ottoman Armenians

years ago, which, sadly, later in faint hands became a dictatorship causing bloodsheds that this unlucky country suffered for four years'.¹⁵²

The Armistice opened a new stage in the history of Ottoman Armenians. The publications of the Armenian press reflected a reaction from the Armenian community which had been suppressed during wartime. This repressed reaction was indeed a repressed anger toward Muslim/Turkish society and the CUP government in particular. Nevertheless, as we have seen, almost a month before the war ended, the Ottoman Armenian dailies published articles promoting the Turkish-Armenian friendship and the idea of peaceful coexistence in the same country. The pro-Turkish/pro-Ottoman approach of the Ottoman Armenians drastically changed with the signing of the Armistice of Mudros because the threat had diminished. We shall see a second rapid change in the Armenian political position, especially after the victories of the Turkish National movement, later in the thesis.

Ottoman Turkish intellectuals, as well as Ottoman Turkish public opinion, were regarded as supporters of the CUP's crimes. Onnik, an Armenian voluntary correspondent for the *Artaramard* daily, highlighted how the Ottoman Turkish press had played a crucial role during the deportations and encouraged the CUP leaders in their crimes. He reported that the lead author of *Tasvir* (Picture), Yunus Nadi, wrote

vis-à-vis these developments, see Matossian, *Shattered Dreams of Revolution From Liberty to Violence in the Late Ottoman Empire*; Bedross Der Matossian, 'From Bloodless Revolution to Bloody Counterrevolution: The Adana Massacres of 1909', *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 6 (2011): pp. 152-73; Ohannes Kılıçdağı, 'Socio-Political Reflections and Expectations of the Ottoman Armenians after the 1908 Revolution: Between Hope and Despair' (PhD thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2014); Ohannes Kılıçdağı, 'The Bourgeois Transformation and Ottomanism Among Anatolian Armenians After the 1908 Revolution?'; Ari Şekeryan, ed., *1909 Adana Katliamı: Üç Rapor* [1909 Adana Massacre: Three Reports] (Istanbul: Aras Yayıncılık, 2014).

¹⁵² *Verchin Lur*, Այսօրուան խանդավառութիւնը [Today's Enthusiasm], 1 November 1918, no. 1407. 'Տեսարանը արդարեւ կը յիշեցնէր ասկից տասը տարի առաջուան Սահմանադրութեան հռչակման օրերը որ աւա ղ յետոյ ապիկար ձեռքերու մէջ բռնապետութեան փոխուեցաւ եւ պատճառ եղաւ այս դժբախտ երկրին այս չորս տարիներու միջոցին ամբողջ արեան ճապաղիքներու մէջ լողալուն:'

many articles during the wartime supporting the CUP's deportation decision. Giving a second example, Onnik argued that the lead author of *Ati*, Celal Nuri, wrote provocative articles during the wartime, urging the government to take actions against the Ottoman Armenians. Onnik asked in the conclusion: 'How can Armenians forget these words?'¹⁵³

This repressed anger toward Ottoman Turkish society could be traced in another editorial published in the *Piwzantion* daily. According to the article, the call of the Ottoman Turkish dailies to unite under the idea of Ottomanism was farcical, the insincerity of which had been proven by the Ottoman wartime actions.

Today the situation is as follows: Armenians, Greeks and all non-Turks witnessed such horrifying policies against them, that they understood that there is an element in this country which clearly wants to annihilate them. We experienced this and extremely bitterly. We do not believe anymore that these events were the work of one person. A few or thousands, it does not matter for us. The whole Armenian population in the provinces have been annihilated, Armenian women and girls have been ravished, almost 3,000 churches and monasteries have been plundered... Why are they [Turkish dailies] upset when we write about our condition the way we understand it. Again, we don't have the right to open our mouth?¹⁵⁴

Hrach'ia, an Armenian correspondent writing for *Verchin Lur*, described in his article how the Ottoman Turkish press openly supported the CUP during the wartime

¹⁵³ *Artaramard*, Թուրք Մամուլին Ահաւոր Պատասխանութիւնը Մեծ Եղեռնին Մէջ [The Horrible Responsibility of the Turkish Press in *Medz Yeghern*], 28 November 1918, no. 1823.

¹⁵⁴ *Piwzantion*, Օրուան Պէտքը [The Need of the Day], 15 November 1918, no. 7736. 'Այսօր կացութիւնը սա՛ է: Հայ, Յոյն եւ ամեն ոչ-Թուրք տարրեր այնպիսի զարհուրելի քաղաքականութիւն մը տեսան իրենց դեմ, որ հասկցան դէ գիրենք իսկապէս բնաջինջ ընել նկրտող տարր մը կայ արդարեւ այս երկրին մէջ: Փորձը տեսանք եւ շատ դառն կերպով: Ալ մեր ականջը չէր մտներ այն մարդավալները թէ այս բոլորը մէկ հոգիի գործ էր: Մէկ քանի հոգի թէ մէկ քանի հազար հոգի, այդ միեւնոյնն է մէզի համար: Բաւ է որ գաւառի բովանդակ հայութիւնը փճացաւ, թալանուեցաւ եւ կիներն ու աջջիկները առեւանգուեցան եւ մօտաւորապէս 3,000 եկեղեցի ու վանք կողոպտուեցան... Ինչու՞ կայլայլին երբ մենք ալ մեր հասկցած կերպով կը գրենք մեր վիճակին վրայ: Նորէ՞ն իրաւունք չունինք բերաննիս քանալու:'

and had declared the Armenian population an internal enemy of the nation. According to him, the Armenians had always shown support for the Allied Powers and maintained their pro-Allied approaches from the very beginning of the war. He defended the Armenians' support for the Entente, for they were 'defending humanity, honesty, justice and civilisation'. He concluded: 'They were fighting against barbarism, despotism and militarism of which the Armenians were the victims'.¹⁵⁵

L. Papazean, an Armenian from Istanbul's Kınalı Island, urged the Armenian deputies to take immediate action with the intention of protecting the Ottoman Armenians' rights in the first months of the Armistice. First, the innocent Armenian prisoners should be freed; second, an aid campaign should be conducted for those Armenian survivors waiting to return to their home villages; third, an organisation should be formed for Armenian orphans captured by Muslim families; and fourth, the population statistics of the Ottoman Armenians, both the victims and survivors, should be collected in order to provide evidence in the future.¹⁵⁶

What is important here for our discussion is that the political position of the Armenians changed from pro-Turkish to pro-Allied in a very short period of time. It is impressive how the collective Armenian political position changed in the space of only a few months—before the signing the Armistice of Mudros, the Armenian dailies urged their readers to collaborate with the Ottoman Muslim community, but now, as detailed in the above examples, a pro-Entente approach emerged among the Armenians. The most important factor in this change is the beginning of the Allied occupation, thus, the emergence of external support for the Ottoman Armenians. As discussed in the first chapter, according to the ethnic bargaining theory, when there is

¹⁵⁵ *Verchin Lur*, Ի՞նչու Հալածուեցան Հայերը [Why Were the Armenians Persecuted?], 15 November 1918, no. 1419.

¹⁵⁶ *Verchin Lur*, Հայ Մէլայուսներուն [To Armenian Deputies], 6 November 1918, no. 1411.

external support, secessionist ideas within the minority group increase. In the case of the Ottoman Armenians, the political position of the community rapidly changed from pro-Ottoman to pro-independence within three months. The secessionist ideas began to be published in the Armenian dailies because the Ottoman capital was occupied by the Allied troops and the oppressive regime was no longer in power. Similar to the cases of Hungarian minorities in Slovakia and Romania in the 1990s, for instance, when the possibility of external support appeared, the political discourse among the Armenians began to radicalise.¹⁵⁷ Erin K. Jenne argues that the Hungarian ethnic groups in Slovakia and Romania became more vocal and radicalised when the Hungarian government sent signals of protection and support in 1990s.¹⁵⁸ According to the ethnic bargaining theory, static features such as historical grievances, cultural differences, and underlying economic disparities cannot explain sudden shifts in the political position.¹⁵⁹ In the case of the Ottoman Armenians, it is possible to argue that there were grievances caused by the wartime policy of the CUP government; however, the sudden shift could be explained by the fact that the Ottoman Empire surrendered, the capital was occupied, and the flags of the Allied States were hung on the streets of Istanbul. I suggest that the Ottoman Armenians were radicalised and galvanised following the de facto occupation of lands by the Allied States, which openly declared their support in favour of the Armenian independence. Ample evidence will be provided throughout this chapter supporting this argument.

¹⁵⁷ I use the term ‘radicalisation’ for the process in which the political demands of the Ottoman Armenians became more vocal. Thus, I use this term for the collective mobilisation of the community.

¹⁵⁸ Erin K. Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2007), pp. 97-116.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*, p. 38.

2.5. The Flight of the CUP Leaders and the Developments Following the Signing of Armistice of Mudros

Meanwhile, to avoid possible prosecution, the CUP triumvirate—Talat, Enver and Cemal Pashas—escaped from Istanbul onboard a German submarine on the night of 1 November 1918.¹⁶⁰ Although the government authorities were informed by the intelligence services of the escape in advance, the minister of the interior, Ali Fethi, himself a CUP member, took no action to prevent their escape.¹⁶¹ The flight of the CUP leaders incensed the Ottoman Armenians, as it demonstrated that the new government was nothing but a shadow government. The *Zhoghovurt* daily published an editorial laying blame on the Turkish authorities who had turned a blind eye and allowed the CUP triumvirate to escape. ‘Look, Talat and Enver are fleeing. Why are they fleeing? Look, the documents related to the Armenian massacres are being taken away. Why? They all know the reason, but only Fethi Bey does not understand, and still searches for proof under the sunlight whether it is at midday or not’.¹⁶²

A group within Ottoman Turkish society sought to create distance from the former CUP government and its ideology.¹⁶³ Significantly, the Turkish dailies—those

¹⁶⁰ *Zhamanag*, Փախչող Փաշաները [Escaped Pashas], 4 November 1918, no. 3344; *Verchin Lur*, Հետաքրքրական Մանրամասնություններ Երեք Փաշաներու Փախուստին Շուրջ [Interesting Details on the Escape of Three Pashas], 4 November 1918, no. 1334; Tuğlacı, *Tarih Boyunca Batı Ermenileri 1891-1922*, p. 722.

¹⁶¹ Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1926*, p. 72.

¹⁶² *Zhoghovurt*, Իրարու Վրայ Կը Նետեն Հայկական Ջարդը Եւ Գերմանիա [They Blame Each Other for the Armenian Massacres and Germany], 7 November 1918, no.15.

¹⁶³ The approach of a group of the Ottoman Turkish community to distance themselves from the CUP is documented in the opinion articles and editorials published in the Ottoman Turkish dailies. Especially following the first months after the signing of the Armistice of Mudros, being an Ittihadist (CUP supporter) was equal to being a criminal. Even the CUP itself changed its name, reincarnating as *Teceddüt Fırkası* (Renewal Party) following the signing of the Armistice. For articles criticising the CUP, see *Alemdar*, ‘Bilinmesi Lazım Bir Hakikat’ [A Truth That Needs to be Known], 10 June 1919; *Türkçe İstanbul*, ‘Firariler ve Akıbetleri’ [Deserters and Their Fate], 8 December 1918; *Türkçe İstanbul*, ‘Çetenin

that had lent support to different political parties, such as the *Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası* (Freedom and Accord Party) daily—vocally criticised the CUP government’s crimes in an effort to disassociate themselves from the CUP. Halide Edip, a prominent Turkish intellectual who supported the Turkish National movement during the Armistice years, published an article in the *Vakit* daily regarding the Ottoman Armenian community. While the article primarily advocated that a joint commission—consisting of Armenians, Americans, and Turkish officials who protected the lives of Armenians during the deportation—be established by the newly established Ottoman government to investigate the Armenian massacres, she also discussed the wartime crimes of the CUP:

To ingratiate the Turkishness, so to say, we carried out a campaign to annihilate the Christian population, particularly the Armenians, by medieval methods. As a responsible nation the whole burden is put on our shoulders because of the atrocities that went on for years... Now these have been dark and hopeless days for our nation. And the worst thing that saddens us is that America and the Britain see us as a state that killed her own innocent population including their children and oppressed them...¹⁶⁴

Velid Ebüzziya in *Tasvir-i Efkar* similarly discussed the responsibility of the Ottoman Turks for the crimes of the CUP, emphasising that it was a very small group

Marifetleri’ [The Cunningnesses of the Band], 8 September 1919; *Türkçe İstanbul*, ‘İttihatçı Ruhü’ [The Soul of the Unionist], 12 November 1918; *Türkçe İstanbul* ‘İttihat ve Terakki’ [Union and Progress], 13 November 1918; *Peyam*, ‘Ermeni Kıtalinde Kimler Sorumludur?’ [Who Is Responsible for the Armenian Massacres?], 10 September 1919; *Peyam*, ‘İttihat ve Terakki ve Turan Fikri’ [Union and Progress and the Idea of Turan], 15 September 1919.

¹⁶⁴ Halide Edip, ‘Wilson’un Şartları Karşısında’, [Before the Wilson’s Terms] *Vakit*, 22 October 1918, no. 357. *Verchin Lur* published the Armenian translation of Halide Edip’s article and thanked her for her support in favour of Armenians. *Verchin Lur*, Խալիդէ Էտիպ շնորհով [Ms. Halide Edip] 22 October 1918, no. 1398. ‘... Türk anasına bir hizmet olsun diye Hristiyan bilhassa Ermeni unsurunu yine kurun-u vustai bir usul ile tehcir ettik, imhaya çalıştık. Senelerce süren bu usuller ve cinayetler neticesinde yine hakim binaenaleyh mesul anasır olmak hasebiyle bütün yük ve leke milletin masum alınına çökmüş omuzlarına yıkıldı... Biz bugün milli hayatımızın en çetin ve kara günlerinde bulunuyoruz. Ve bizi en ziyade sıkan şey, Amerika ve İngiltere’ye karşı memleketinde tebasına zulm etmiş ve masum tabasını çocuklarıyla öldürmüş vaziyetinde kalmaktır...’

of people who bore responsibility, not the entire Ottoman Turkish peoples. While he acknowledged that the Armenians would understandably want to voice and vent their pain and suffering, he also insisted that they were not the sole victims, that the Muslim population had been equally targeted.¹⁶⁵ In an editorial that ran in the *Ati* daily, Celal Nuri Bey suggested that the Ottoman government should restore the constitutional rights of the minorities; however, he also made clear that, in his view, they would not succeed in winning their independence from the Ottoman Empire. He noted that there were thousands of Armenians and Greeks, in both the capital and the provinces, but it was impossible that they should accept any other governmental authority. He highlighted the importance of Ottomanism, stating: ‘Armenianness, Greekness and Turkishness are not obstacles for Ottomanness’.¹⁶⁶

The *Minber* (The Pulpit) daily, one of whose shareholders was Mustafa Kemal, pursued the same strategy to distance itself from the CUP government and promote Turkish-Armenian friendship by stressing ‘the shared history’ between the two nations.¹⁶⁷ The daily as evidence gave a proverb describing the Armenians as Christian Turks, stating that the only difference between an Armenian and a Turk was

¹⁶⁵ *Tasvir-i Efkar*, ‘Zalim Kim? Mazlum Kim?’ [Who is Tyrant? Who is Oppressed?], 28 October 1918, no. 2543; *Verchin Lur*, Որո՞ւք են Պատասխանատուները Հայոց Գլխուն Եկած Փորձանքներուն [Who Are Those Responsible for the Disaster That Befell the Armenians?] 28 October 1918, no. 1403.

¹⁶⁶ *Ati*, ‘Hariç Acaba Ne Diyor?’ [What Do Foreigners Say?], 15 October 1918, no. 278; *Verchin Lur*, Թուրքիոյ Մէջ Հայերն ու Յոյները [The Armenians and the Greeks in Turkey], 15 October 1918, no. 1393.

¹⁶⁷ Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk), together with Ali Fethi (Okyar), who was the interior minister at the time the CUP leadership escaped the country, and Dr. Rasim Ferid Bey, started to publish the *Minber* daily on 1 November 1918. The daily was published until 22 December 1918 and tried to create distance from the CUP by criticising its wartime deeds. It is claimed that Mustafa Kemal also contributed with articles to the daily under the pseudonym Hatib. For detailed discussion on this topic, see Dilek Çavuş, ‘Mustafa Kemal’in Basınla ve Minber Gazetesiyle İlişkisi’ [Relationship Between Mustafa Kemal, the Press and the Minber Daily] *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi* 29, no. 71 (Ankara: 2008). Fethi Tevetoğlu, ‘Atatürk’le Okyar’ın Çıkardıkları Gazete: Minber’ [Atatürk and Okyar’s newspaper: Minber] *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi* 13, no. 5 (Ankara: 1988).

one went to a church and the other one to a mosque. The daily concluded its argument as follows:

One of the biggest and most unforgivable responsibilities of the previous government was the actions that they carried out on the Armenian nation. If annihilating all the Armenians from earth was acceptable, what was the benefit in this besides the damages? This fault that was done by a clique disrupted the friendship between the two nations, who have lived together for centuries, shared the same values and filled each other's economic, social and political lives.¹⁶⁸

Süleyman Radi's thoughts were similar to those expressed in *Minber* and the other Turkish dailies. In his article published in the *Yeni İstanbul* (New Istanbul) daily, he maintained the idea that the Ottoman Muslims and Armenians had a long history of brotherhood and that the actions of the CUP government affected not only the Armenians but also innocent Muslims. According to him, the CUP government shed as much blood of the Turks as of the Ottoman Armenians.

No doubt, the noble and innocent hearts of the Turkish people are aching and groaning with the Armenian calamity... While the Armenians were being deported and killed on the roads, our grandmothers in Anatolia were grieving. Because the spirits of Turks and Armenians cannot be irrelevant to each other. Except for the lovely lands of the Turks, an Armenian cannot live in another place.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁸ *Minber*, 'Ermeni Terbiye-i Milliyesi' [The National Education of Armenians] 9 November 1918, no. 9. 'Dün terk-ı makam edip giden evliya harbimizin tarihine karşı en büyük ve en affedilmez mesuliyetlerinden biri de Ermeni milletine karşı irtikab ettikleri hatt-ı harekette tezahür etmişti. Ermeniliği yeryüzünden kaldırmak bile kabil olsa idi, acaba bunda mazarrattan başka ne menfaat vardı? Birkaç kişinin zihniyetinden çıkan bu hata, asırlardan beri aynı vatan üstünde kapı komşu geçinmiş hayat-ı içtimaiyye, siyasiyye, iktisadiyye velhasıl umumiyyede yekdiğerini ikmal ve itmam etmiş iki anasırın samimiyetlerini bulandırmaktan başka bir netice tevellüd edemezdi ve nitekim etmedi'.

¹⁶⁹ *Yeni İstanbul*, 'Türk ve Ermeni Ruhu' [The Turkish and Armenian Soul], 10 November 1918, no. 7. 'Şüphesiz pek masum ve necip olan Türk milletinin kalbi bu Ermeni fecai önünde derin derin sızlamış ve inlemiştir... Ermeniler sürülür ve öldürülürken Anadolu'daki ihtiyar İslam ninelerimiz matemnak oluyorlardı. Çünkü bir Türk ile bir Ermeni ruhu yekdiğerine bir dakika bile yabancı kalamaz. Bir Ermeni sevimli topraklarından başka bir yerde yaşayamaz'.

The opposition against the CUP ideology in the Ottoman Turkish press and public opinion significantly grew during the first months of 1919. It was a necessity to identify the guilty party, with the only possible culprit being the CUP. The opposition movement claimed that, had the CUP not ruled the country, the Ottoman Turks would have continued to rule the country peacefully, as they had done for more than five hundred years. According to the *Türkçe İstanbul* (Turkish Istanbul) daily, the CUP was ‘the enemy of the Turkish nation’. The daily noted: ‘Over the past ten years the CUP drew this miserable country into disasters that were not even imaginable and they will of course be cursed by the history of mankind’. *Türkçe İstanbul* argued that even if the Russian government had established a cabinet to rule the Ottoman Empire, they could not have caused such damage as the CUP did for the country.¹⁷⁰ Refi Cevad of the *Alemdar* daily asserted that a significant segment of the Turkish population neither approved nor supported the deeds of the CUP; as evidence, he stated that there were many Muslim families in Anatolia who refused to appropriate Armenian properties:

The burglars and bands were all part of the cursed gang’s abettors who consisted of five to ten hijackers... Today, from the highest point of our daily, I am calling out to our victim citizens. Mr. Venizelos is not the person who could claim Greek citizens’ rights. Bogos Nubar is not the person who could procure the demolished rights of the Armenians. It is the cabinet of Damad Ferid Pasha, which is the cabinet of the Freedom and Accord party, that will bring justice.¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ *Türkçe İstanbul*, ‘Ocağımıza İncir Ağacı Diktiler’ [They Ruined Us], 20 December 1918, no. 42.

¹⁷¹ *Alemdar*, ‘Osmanlılık ve Kabine’ [Ottomanism and the Cabinet] 8 March 1919, no. 78. ‘Orada yakan, yıkan, çalan, çırpan o malum çetenin yardakları olan beş on hayduttan ibaret idi... Bugün gazetemizin şu en yüksek kürsüsünden bütün mağdur vatandaşlarıma çağırıyorum. Rumların hukukunu arayacak olan Mösyö Venizelos değildir. Ermenilerin paymal edilen hukuk-u meşrualarını temin edecek olan Boğos Nubar Paşa değildir. Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası’nın mevki-i iktidara getirdiği hürriyet ve itilaf hükümeti olan Damat Ferit Paşa kabinesidir’.

Some segments of Turkish society tried to distance themselves from the CUP and the crimes committed during the wartime. Kaptan Osman, a correspondent for *Türkçe İstanbul*, wrote an open letter to the Ecumenical and Armenian Patriarchates, stating that the atrocities organised by the CUP against the Christian population during the wartime were a product of the CUP's genocidal policy and thus could not serve as an indictment against all Turks. He concluded: 'Either we were Turks and they were not, or they were Turks and we were not... Not on any account were we involved in those events, moreover we were also the victims of those atrocities and violence'.¹⁷² Refi Cevad, furthermore, highlighted the importance of being united under the flag of Ottomanism. According to him, 'the bands who conducted the deportations and massacres' were motivated by a base greed and that many Muslim families in Anatolia refused to assume ownership of the confiscated properties of the Armenians.¹⁷³

While one group of intellectuals was trying to reach out to the non-Muslim population of the Empire, another group, consisting of CUP supporters, was trying to defend the CUP's interests. The common strategy of this view could be seen in a *Yeniğün* article regarding the characteristics of Turkish rule. The editorial on the first page read:

If the Turks were so brutal and merciless, there would not have been any non-Turkish population in this country over the six hundred years of the Turkish rule. Indeed, the absolute opposite of this had happened. Under almost every part of the Ottoman State, the non-Turkish populations had the freedom to

¹⁷² *Türkçe İstanbul*, 'Rum Ermeni Patrikleriyle Bütün Alem-i İnsaniyet ve Medeniyete Karşı Açık Mektup' [An Open Letter to the Armenian and Greek Patriarchs and the Whole Civilised World], 17 March 1919, no. 157.

¹⁷³ *Alemdar*, 'Cevahirciyan Efendinin Cevahir Sözleri' [The Diamond Words of Jevahirjean Efendi], 23 March 1919, no. 92.

establish their own education system, to improve their language and live according to the principles of their religion.¹⁷⁴

2.6. From Respected Deputy to Traitor: The Case of Artin Boshgezenean Efendi

The case of Artin Boshgezenean serves as a prime example to illustrate and understand the evolution the Armenian political position during this specific period.¹⁷⁵ Artin Boshgezenean, an Armenian deputy for Aleppo, declared in the Ottoman Parliament in Istanbul on 18 November 1918 that the Ottoman Turks were innocent in the Armenian massacres. According to him, the Armenian massacres were organised by a group of gangs, and holding the entire Turkish nation accountable for these reprehensible actions was equally unjust as the atrocities themselves.¹⁷⁶ Additionally, in an interview with the *Minber* daily on 25 November, Artin Boshgezenean argued that the Armenians wished to return to the peaceful coexistence of the pre-CUP times:

In my opinion, before anything else, the criminals should be punished. Secondly, compensation for the aggrieved people should be paid. In this way, there will remain only those Armenians and Turks who are innocent and then they will live together fraternally, as they used to do in the past.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴ *Yeni Gün*, ‘Barbar Türkler’ [Barbaric Turks] 18 March 1919, no. 194. ‘... Zira Türkler iddia edilmek istenildiği kadar vahşet ve zulm göstermiş olsalar idi altı yüz seneden beri bu memleket içinde Türkten gayrı ferd ve (?) kalmaması lazım gelirdi. Halbuki bunun tamamen zıddı vuku buldu. Memalik-i Osmaniye’nin hemen her tarafında ekaliyeti teşkil eden gayrı-Türk unsurlar zengin, tedrisat-ı diniye, lisaniye ve harsiye hususunda kamilen serbest müreffeh bir cemaat teşkil eylemişlerdir’.

¹⁷⁵ Artin Boshgezenean was born in 1861 in Antep. He studied law and became a lawyer. In 1901, he was appointed as a member of the lower court of Cebel-i Bereket. He was elected in 1909 and served as a deputy representing Aleppo in the Ottoman Parliament from 1908 to 1918. During the Armistice years, he contended that the Armenian massacres were the shame of the CUP but not the Turkish nation. Because of his views, he was accused of being pro-Turkish by the Armenian press. After his service in the parliament, he returned to Aleppo, where he died in 1923. For his biography, see Tamar Nalcı and Emrecaan Dağlıoğlu, ‘Farklı Bir Mebus: Artin Boşgezenyan’, [A Different Deputy: Artin Boshgezenyan] *Agos*, October 1, 2010.

¹⁷⁶ Ayhan Aktar, ‘Debating the Armenian Massacres in the Last Ottoman Parliament, November-December 1918’, *History Workshop Journal*, 2007, p. 257.

¹⁷⁷ *Minber*, ‘Artin Efendi Nazarında Wilson Nazariyatı’ [The Wilson Principles According to Artin Efendi’s Viewpoint], 25 November 1918, no. 24. ‘Bence herşeyden evvel mücrimler

These statements elicited strong reactions among the Armenian community; in line with the collective change in the Armenian position triggered by the sociopolitical developments of the time, the repressed anger of the Ottoman Armenians was now being transformed into support for Armenian independence and separatism. The Armenians' reactions to Artin Boshgezenean's statements were the harbingers of the independence ideology that the Ottoman Armenians would pursue from the Armistice of Mudros to as late as the Greek defeat in Anatolia in 1922.

In the very first days following his statement, Artin Boshgezenean was declared a 'traitor of the Armenian nation'. The unforgiving tone of the Armenian dailies toward Artin Boshgezenean was so strong that he was even 'excommunicated' by the Armenian community and branded as 'the brother of Talat and Enver', as strong a slur as was fit to print. The *Nor Gyank*' daily ran an editorial that was a departure from civility, veering towards threatening:

Shut up Mr. Gezenean! What do you mean and on behalf of whom do you speak, when you announce to 'solve our interior problems among ourselves before going to the peace conference'? We wonder whether being an Armenian in name gives you the right to speak on behalf of the Armenian nation and make proposals. Do not you know that the real representatives of the Armenian nation can no longer stand in the recent Turkish parliament, like Zohrab¹⁷⁸ and Vartkes¹⁷⁹ could not stand here... Yes, they are innocent! What

cezalandırılmalı, saniyen, mütezarrırların zararları tazmin edilmeli. Bu suretle geride kalacak Türklerle Ermeniler artık kabahatsizlerden mürekkep olacağından ondan sonra eskisi gibi hepsi bir arada kardeşçe yaşayabilirler'.

¹⁷⁸ Krikor Zohrab (1861-1915) was an Armenian politician, lawyer, and writer who was one of the most influential Armenian community leaders of his time. During the Armenian genocide, he was detained and sent to appear before a court in Diyarbakır. Nevertheless, en route he was attacked by a *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa* band and was brutally murdered. For his biography, see Murat Koptaş, 'Armenian Political Thinking in the Second Constitutional Period: The Case of Krikor Zohrab' (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2005).

¹⁷⁹ Vartkes Serengulean was born in 1871 in Erzurum. After attending the Ardznean and Sanasarean schools in Erzurum, he moved to Istanbul and took part in the organisation of the occupation of the Ottoman Bank. He continued his political activism in Bulgaria, Tbilisi, Gyumri, Kars, and Van. He was arrested in 1903 in Van and sentenced to one hundred years

were they to do when they could not raise at least hundreds of Celal Beys¹⁸⁰ and Faik Alis¹⁸¹ against millions of Nazims¹⁸² and Talats?¹⁸³

imprisonment. After the Revolution in 1908, he moved to Erzurum, where he was elected as a deputy to the Ottoman parliament. In 1915, during the Armenian genocide, he was killed on the road together with Krikor Zohrab in the Karaköprü district. See Կոստանդին Խուղավերդյան, ed., ‘Վարդգես Սերենկույան’, Հայկական Հարց [‘Vartkes Serengulyan’, the Armenian Question] (Երևան: Հայկական Հանրագիտարանի Գլխավոր Խմբագրություն, 1996), p. 414.

¹⁸⁰ Celal Bey was the governor of Konya for a certain period during the wartime and opposed the deportation orders of the CUP headquarters. He organised an aid campaign for the Armenian refugees and secured their lives within the borders of Konya. See Burçin Gerçek, ‘Akıntıya Karşı: Ermeni Soykırımında Emirlere Karşı Gelenler, Kurtaranlar, Direnenler’ [Against the Current: Rescuers, Resisters and Those Who Opposed Orders During the Armenian Genocide] (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2016); Ari Sekeryan, ‘If You Are Sending Me There to Deport the Armenians, I Can’t Do That!’, *Agos*, 10 April, 2015, <http://www.agos.com.tr/en/article/11243/if-you-are-sending-me-there-to-deport-the-armenians-i-cant-do-that>.

¹⁸¹ Faik Ali was the governor of Kütahya from January 1915 to March 1916. No Armenians were deported from Kütahya during Faik Ali Bey’s term as governor. He supported the opening of a new school for Armenian children to continue their education, and the donations for the Red Crescent collected by Armenians to win favour among local authorities were distributed, upon his initiative, to impoverished Armenians. He personally prevented Armenians who were afraid from converting to Islam, and he provided provisions and shelter for Armenians from other provinces who sought shelter in Kütahya. See Burçin Gerçek, ‘Akıntıya Karşı: Ermeni Soykırımında Emirlere Karşı Gelenler, Kurtaranlar, Direnenler’ [Against the Current: Rescuers, Resisters and Those Who Opposed Orders During the Armenian Genocide] (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2016); Ari Sekeryan, ‘Since I Won’t Commit These Murders, Please Accept My Resignation!’, *Agos*, 27 March 2015, <http://www.agos.com.tr/en/article/11046/since-i-wont-commit-these-murders-please-accept-my-resignation>.

¹⁸² Dr. Nazim Bey was born in 1870 in Salonica. He was one of the founders and the strategists of the CUP. During WWI, he served as a member of the Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa in Anatolia and played a key role in the organisation of the Armenian massacres. The Ottoman Court-Martial of 1919-1920 sentenced him to death for his involvement in the Armenian massacres. Üngör, *The Making of Modern Turkey: Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia, 1913-1950*, pp. 45-46. For his biography, see Vahit İpekçi, ‘Dr. Nazım Bey’in Siyasi Yaşamı’ [The Political Life of Dr. Nazım Bey] (Istanbul: Yeditepe University, 2006).

¹⁸³ *Nor Gyank*, Բաց Նամակ Հալէպի Երեսփոխան Արթին Կէզէնեանի [Open Letter to Deputy For Aleppo Artin Gezenean], 28 November 1918, no. 41; Nalcı and Dağlıoğlu, ‘Farklı Bir Mebus: Artin Boşgezenyan’. [A Different Deputy: Artin Boshgezenyan]. ‘Լռեցէք... Ի՞նչ ըսել կուզէք եւ որո՞ւ կողմէ կը խօսիք, Պ. Կէզէնեան, երբ «Մեր ներքին խնդիրները մեր մէջ կարգադրենք եւ այնպէս հաշտութեան ժողովին երթանք» կը յայտարարէք: Արդէօք միայն անունով հա՞յ ըլլալնուդ համար ձեզ իրաւասու կը կարծէք հայ ազգին անունովը խօսելու եւ առաջարկներ ներկայացնելու: Բայց չ՞գիտէք արդէօք որ այսօրուան Թուրք երեսփոխանական ժողովին մէջ հայ ազգին ճշմարիտ ներկայացուցիչը ապահով չէր կրնար մնալ, ինչպէս չկրցան մնալ Զոհրապն ու Վարդգէսը... Բայց «Թուրք ժողովուրդը անմեղ է... յանցանք չունի:» Այո իսկապէս յանցանք չունի, ինչ ըներ երբ միլիոնաւոր Թալէաթ եւ Նազրմներու քով չկրցաւ գոնէ 100 հատ *ojun* ճէլալ Պէյեր եւ Ալի Ֆայիքներ ծնիլ ու ապրեցնել:

When Artin Boshgezenean stated in the Ottoman chamber of deputies on 18 December that the Ottoman constitution provided articles of religious freedom more liberal than those of most European countries, the Armenian community erupted in protest. The *Tashink*‘ daily published a series of responses by N. Nersesean countering Artin Boshgezenean’s opinion. As evidence, N. Nersesean highlighted the Islamic rules and regulations within the Ottoman constitution and gave examples of freedom of religion acts from Western constitutions.¹⁸⁴ Furthermore, N. Nersesean elaborated how the Turkish public was complicit in allowing the execution of the CUP’s genocidal designs. According to the daily, ‘one cannot find a tyrant in history that did not respect his own nation’s emotions and thoughts’. The daily claimed that ‘it was not possible to separate the nation from the government’.¹⁸⁵

The report of an Armenian voluntary correspondent, Asbed, reiterates the collective anger of the Ottoman Armenian community but bares significance in the sense that it was sent from Çorlu, a town located in Eastern Thrace. He wrote of the situation of Armenians in Çorlu, where they were deported from during the war without any proof of acts of sedition. Asbed, as an Armenian born and raised in Çorlu, directed his anger toward the Turkish authorities. He wrote that the whole world, including the Turkish people, knew what happened to the Armenians, yet the government made a fool of Armenians by denying the massacres and placing responsibility on the shoulders of only a few. Asbed’s final sentences reflected the anger among the native Armenian population:

We ask the Turkish people and its officials, what harm did you receive from the Armenians in Thrace in general and in Çorlu in particular? Can they prove that there was even one Armenian revolutionary in Çorlu?... I wonder if you

¹⁸⁴ *Tashink*‘, Անսներելի Սխալներ [Unforgivable Mistakes], 29 December 1918, no. 1829.

¹⁸⁵ *Tashink*‘, Անսներելի Սխալներ [Unforgivable Mistakes], 1 January 1919, no. 1831.

found any bombs, dynamite or secret written orders in the Armenian houses at Çorlu, which carried the intention that a big Armenian revolutionary army would sabotage the Turkish battle lines in the Dardanelles... Oh you Turkish compatriots, today the hand of justice rises from the bloodshed before you. Give account! We demand that you account for our millions of victims.¹⁸⁶

Another example of the rapid change in the political position of the Armenians can be seen in the 4 December 1918 edition of the Turkish *Söz* (The Statement) daily, which included a piece by an Armenian from Istanbul putting forward that the Ottoman Armenians did not want independence but only to ‘secure their commercial and cultural rights and the security of life and properties’.¹⁸⁷ The response came from the *Nor Gyank*‘ daily, attacking the author’s arguments and going so far as to question whether the statements were in fact made by an Armenian or the editor of *Söz* himself. After the signing of the Armistice, those Armenians who lent even the slightest support to the idea of reconciliation in Turkish-Armenian relations and the Ottoman land as a common country attracted aggressive reactions from the Armenian dailies and were labelled ‘traitors’. The conclusion of the *Nor Gyank*‘ reaction piece reflected this verbal outrage: ‘If the writer of this article is an Armenian, then we want to know his brilliant name so that we could put him among the traitors whose names have already been written in our ledgers’.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ *Zhamanag*, Չօրլուի Հայութիւնը [Armenians of Çorlu], 30 November 1918, no. 3370. ‘Կը հարցնենք Թուրք ժողովուրդին եւ անոր վարիչներուն թէ ամբողջ Բուսնիի եւ մասնաւորապէս Չօրլուի Հայութենէն ի՞նչ վնաս տեսան: Կրնա՞ն ապացուցանել թէ Չօրլուի մէջ մեկ հատիկ հայ յեղափոխական կար:... Արդեօք Չօրլուցի Հայերու տունէն պայթուցիկ նիւթե՞ր, թնթանօ թ եւ ուր մը գտան եւ կամ գաղտնի հրամանագրե՞ր ձեռք անցուցան ապացուցանող թէ Բուսնիի հայ յեղափոխական մեծ բանակը Տարտանելի մէջ կռուող Թուրք բանակին նահանջի գիծը կտրելու կաշխատի... Ո՞վ Թուրք հայրենակիցներ, ահա այսօր արեան ճապաղիքներու մէջէն արդարութեան ձեռքը կընդվզի ձեր դէմ. Հաշիւ, հաշիւ կը պահանջենք մեր միլիոնաւոր զոհերուն համար:

¹⁸⁷ *Söz*, ‘Biz ve Ermenilerin İstedikleri’ [We and Armenians’ Desire], 4 December 1918, no. 22.

¹⁸⁸ *Nor Gyank*‘, Թէ Ի՞նչ Կ’ուզենք Եղեր [So What Do We Want?], 4 December 1918, no. 47. ‘Իսկ եթէ յօդուածագիրը հայ մըն է, պիտի փափաքէինք որ իր լուսապայծառ

2.7. The Wilson Principles and the Propaganda for Armenian Independence

Woodrow Wilson, the twenty-eighth president of the United States, formulated the Fourteen Points, a document originally prepared in 1917 and publicly unveiled in a speech in January 1918 that outlined the peace terms of the United States for the resolution of WWI. The points were based on the principle of self-determination of the national minorities who were oppressed by the empires and undemocratic states.¹⁸⁹ Indeed, the principles put forward by the American president rippled through the oppressed minority communities around the world, breathing new life into their struggles for independence, many of which had carried on for decades. The reaction of the minorities in the political field was so demanding that the president himself was forced to change his remarks and clarify that he was not giving blanket support to all fights for independence:

When I gave utterance to those words [that all nations had a right to self-determination], I said them without a knowledge that nationalities existed, which are coming to us day after day... You do not know and cannot appreciate the anxieties that I have experienced as the result of many millions of people having their hopes raised by what I have said.¹⁹⁰

For instance, Wilson was aware of neither the large numbers of Germans living within the borders of Bohemia, a part of then Czechoslovakia, nor the extent of the Slovak population in Eastern Europe.¹⁹¹ His idea was based on an Anglo-US historical framework of nationalism, which considered nations in civic rather than

անունովը մէջտեղ ելնէր որպէս զի կարենայինք անունով մականունով դնել զինքը շառքին մէջ այն դաւաճաններուն որոնց անունները արձանագրած ենք մեր տոմարներուն մէջ:

¹⁸⁹ Allen Lynch, 'Woodrow Wilson and the Principle of 'National Self-Determination': A Reconsideration', *Review of International Studies* 28, no. 2 (2002): p. 425.

¹⁹⁰ Quoted from *ibid.*, p. 426.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

ethnic terms, as ‘a community of organisation, of life and of tradition’.¹⁹² His Fourteen Points played an important role in the post-war settlement and, most importantly, laid the foundation for a scheme for national minorities to establish their own state. Furthermore, according to the principles, disputed areas were to be decided by plebiscite, and those ethnic groups which were too small or too dispersed were eligible for protection with special minority regimes.¹⁹³ However, in practical terms, the implementation of the principles was not feasible, and Wilson himself acknowledged that if minorities were provided with cultural rights, it would ultimately discourage them from separatist ideas.¹⁹⁴ Nevertheless, the Wilson Principles became an important concern for Turks, Greeks, and Armenians at the beginning of the Armistice period. Articles scrutinising the Wilson principles were published in the dailies and drew the attention of the public. Initially, the principles implied the loss of Arab lands for the Ottoman Empire. Because it was not possible to propagate a Turkish majority in the Arab lands, Turkish public opinion accepted their loss. Nevertheless, from the beginning, Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace were accepted as the natural borders of the Turkish people, given the fact the Turks were in the majority in these regions.¹⁹⁵

On 6 December 1918, the *Wilson Prensipleri Cemiyeti* (Society for the Wilson Principles) was established by Turkish intellectuals.¹⁹⁶ The society announced nine

¹⁹² Ibid., p. 435; Anthony Whelan, ‘Wilson Self-Determination and the Versailles Settlement’, *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (1994): p. 100.

¹⁹³ Whelan, ‘Wilson Self-Determination and the Versailles Settlement’, pp. 100-101.

¹⁹⁴ Lerna Ekmekçioğlu, ‘Republic of Paradox: The League of Nations Minority Protection Regime And the New Turkey’s Step-Citizens’, *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 46 (2014): p. 665.

¹⁹⁵ *Verchin Lur*, Նոր Թուրքիան Պատմական Եւ Աշխարհագրական Տեսակէտով [The New Turkey From Geographical and Historical Perspective], 21 October 1918, no. 1397.

¹⁹⁶ *Wilson Prensipleri Cemiyeti* [The Society for the Wilson Principles] was established by a group of Turkish intellectuals in Istanbul in December 1918. The Society defended the idea that since the Turkish population was the majority in Anatolia, it was in accordance with the Wilson principles that the Turkish nation had the right to complete independence. See

reforms that required urgent implementation for the sake of the country. These proposed reforms included democratic rights for the non-Muslim population, including serving at every level in governmental positions, judicial and electoral rights, as well as self-governance for the provinces.¹⁹⁷ The political mindset of the Ottoman Turks focused on the fact that since the Muslim population constituted a majority throughout the nucleus of the Turkish land, the Wilson Principles could be the solution they were seeking for both the Allied occupation and the independence demands of the Armenians and Anatolian Romioi.

In December 1918, the Turkish dailies started to publish propagandist population statistics regarding the provinces that were subject to separation from the Ottoman state. For example, *Yeni Gün* stated that in Adana, which was subject to French occupation, along with the Turkmen tribes inhabiting the high mountains, as well as the cities and towns, the majority of the population were of Turkish origin, were Muslim, and spoke Turkish. Attempting to separate Adana and İçel by whatever means was akin to ‘separating the most crucial organ from the body of a human being’.¹⁹⁸ Süleyman Nazif’s *Hadisat* (Incidents) daily similarly published a long series, scrutinising the Kurdish population in the eastern provinces. According to the population statistics provided in this article, the Kurdish population in Van and Bitlis

Mehmet Şahingöz and Vahdet Keleşyılmaz, ‘Millî Mücadele Dönemi Türk Basınında Wilson Prensipleri’, [The Wilson Principles According to the Turkish Press During the National Struggle] *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi* 35 (1996).

¹⁹⁷ *Verchin Lur*, Ուիլսոնի Մկրբունքներու Ընկերութիւնը [The Society for the Wilson Principles], 6 December 1918, no. 1437.

¹⁹⁸ *Yeni Gün*, ‘Adana Kilikya Türktür Türk Kalmalıdır’ [Adana (Cilicia) is Turk and Should Stay Turk], 8 December 1918, no. 90. According to the statistics that *Yeni Gün* published, there were 130,000 Turks and 5,000 non-Muslims in İçel, as well as 380,000 Turks and 40,000 Armenians in Adana. It was noted that Adana had a long history of Turkish rule starting from the Selçuk Empire, Ertuğrul Gazi, and continuing under the Ottomans.

was more than 800,000, whereas the Armenian population was less than 170,000.¹⁹⁹ Ottoman Turkish intellectuals based the argument upon the idea that all Muslim populations, regardless of their ethnic origin, were considered as Turks. Therefore, defending the Muslimness of the provinces meant defending the Turkishness of the state.²⁰⁰ In response to the allegations of the Ottoman Turkish dailies, Hagop Der Hagopean, in an editorial published in *Verchin Lur*, argued that the Armenians were ready to welcome an independent Kurdish state in Eastern Anatolia as neighbours; however, he questioned the readiness of the Turkish community to see an independent Kurdish state.²⁰¹

The *Tashink*‘ daily also responded to Süleyman Nazif’s allegations, accusing him of making false claims. An Armenian volunteer correspondent, Zareh, responded to this claim that because of the Armenian massacres that transpired during the wartime, the Armenian population in these provinces was no longer the majority. Nevertheless, Zareh contended that the Armenians were the only nation in the region who ‘had the talent to govern themselves as well as other ethnic groups’. He put forward that while the Armenians were a minority in the region, they had proven in the past they had the necessary capacity to govern themselves.²⁰²

¹⁹⁹ *Hadisat*, ‘Kürtler-Ermeniler’ [Kurds and Armenians], 14 December 1918, no. 56; *Hadisat*, ‘Kürtler-Ermeniler’ [Kurds and Armenians] 13 December 1918, no. 55; *Hadisat*, ‘Kürtler-Ermeniler’ [Kurds and Armenians] 12 December 1918, no. 54.

²⁰⁰ As Erik Jan Zürcher argues, especially during the first two years of the Armistice (1918-1920), the rhetoric of Turkish intellectuals was based on Islam rather than Turkish nationalism. They defended that because the majority of Anatolia was Muslim, it was therefore naturally an indivisible part of the Turkish state. Erik Jan Zürcher, ‘The Vocabulary of Muslim Nationalism’, *International Journal of the Sociology of Science*, 1999, pp. 81-92.

²⁰¹ *Verchin Lur*, Օրուան Վիճակը [Situation of the Day], 13 December 1918, no. 1447.

²⁰² *Tashink*‘, Քանակը Թե՛ Ռրակը [Quantity or Quality], 14 December 1918, no. 1816.



Figure 2. The Wilsonian Armenia (*Jagadamard*, 13 February 1921)

On the Ottoman Muslim/Turkish side, besides the propaganda of the intellectuals in the newspapers, a CUP-organised structure named *Vilayat-i Şarkiye Müdafası-i Hukuk Cemiyeti* (Society for the National Defence of the Rights of the Eastern Provinces) played a crucial role in publicising the demands of the local Muslim communities in the eastern provinces. The organisation was significant in voicing its strong opposition against the idea of an independent Armenia. The society called a meeting in October 1918 on the matter, agreeing upon certain concerns to struggle against the Armenian demands.²⁰³ The following decisions were made at the meeting: First, the Society pledged to protect the rights of Turkish and Kurdish elements under the auspices of the Ottoman Empire. Second, the members agreed to publish a collection of evidence regarding the Armenian atrocities in the eastern provinces to prove that not only Muslims but also the Armenians were responsible for

²⁰³ *Ariamard*, Արեւելեան Նահանգները Փրկելու Համար [To Save the Eastern Provinces], 15 December 1918, no. 21.

massacres. Third, the group proposed the publication of a French newspaper to spread word of the atrocities committed upon the Muslim population by the Armenians. The Society published a Turkish newspaper, *Hadisat*, to respond to the claims of Armenians regarding the establishment of an Armenian state in the Six Provinces. The daily published French translations of some articles. A prominent member of the Society, İlyas Sami Efendi, deputy of Muş, clarified the group's goals in an interview. He said the Armenians never formed a majority anywhere in Eastern Anatolia. While accepting that during the deportation process 'bad things' had happened to the Armenians, the massacres, he argued, were the scheme of a relatively small group of officials and had not been perpetrated by the Muslim population at large. Furthermore, according to him, the Armenians massacred thousands of innocent Muslims during the Russian invasion, thus necessitating the deportations.²⁰⁴

²⁰⁴ *Verchin Lur*, Թէ Ինչեր Կը Բարբառին... Թուրքերը Անպարտ Են Հայու Արիւնէն [What Do They Speak of... The Turks Are Not Responsible for the Armenian Blood], 21 December 1918, no. 1450.

2.8. Efforts for the Establishment of a ‘United Armenia’

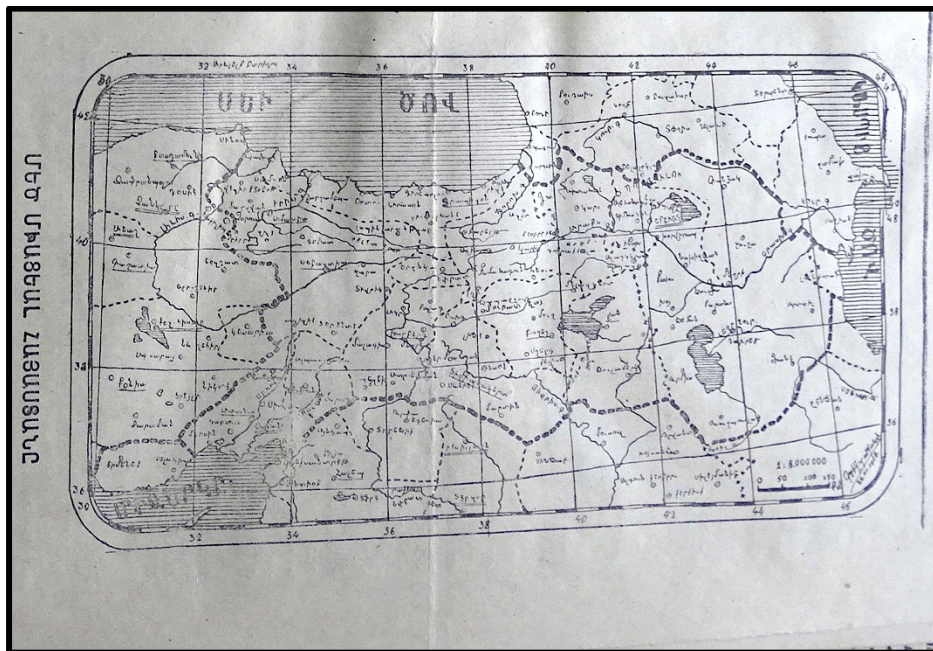


Figure 3. The map of ‘United Armenia’ (Yerevan, 26 January 1919)

At the same time, the Ottoman Armenian public’s attention was focused on the developments of the Armenian delegation in Paris. The Paris Peace Conference opened in January 1919 with the participation of the victorious states to discuss the peace terms which were to be imposed to the Central Powers.²⁰⁵ Two Armenian delegations were assigned to give voice to the Armenian demands: one representing the Ottoman Armenians and the other representing the Armenian state established in the Caucasus. But before the opening of the Conference, in December 1918, the Armenian delegation in Paris announced the establishment of the Cabinet of United Armenia. United Armenia’s borders were intended to include Cilicia, the Six Provinces in Eastern Anatolia, and the lands of the Armenian Republic in the

²⁰⁵ Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2003); Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace: Creating the Modern Middle East, 1914-1922*.

Caucasus.²⁰⁶ Whispers of the establishment of a cabinet for a ‘United Armenia’ were already making their way through the columns of the Armenian dailies in the Ottoman capital. According to *Ariamard*, though it was too early to declare the Cabinet’s establishment, Bogos Nubar Pasha would serve as president,²⁰⁷ Kapriel Noradunkean as foreign minister,²⁰⁸ Vosgan Mardigean as interior minister,²⁰⁹ and Arshak Ch‘obanean²¹⁰ as minister of education. It was reported that Yervant Ahaton,²¹¹ Minas

²⁰⁶ *Zhoghovurt*, Հայաստանի Անկախութեան Հռչակումը [The Declaration of the Independence of Armenia], 20 December 1918, no. 58

²⁰⁷ Bogos Nubar was born in 1851 in Istanbul. He was the son of Nubar Pasha, who served as Prime Minister of Egypt. He got his education in engineering from École Centrale des Arts et Manufactures and worked as the director of administration for the Egyptian railways. He actively participated in the organisation of the Armenian communities in Cairo and Alexandrette, where he founded the Armenian General Benevolent Union in 1906. During the Balkan Wars in 1912-1913, on the order of the Catholicos of the Mother See of Echmiadzin Kevork V, he lobbied in Europe to gain the support of the European countries for Armenian autonomy. He was the head of the Armenian Delegation at the Paris Peace Conference with Avedis Aharonyan in 1919. See ‘Նուբար, Պողոս’, Հայկական Հարց Հանրագիտարան [‘Bogos Nubar’ the Encyclopedia of the Armenian Question] (Երեվան: Հայկական Հանրագիտարանի Գլխավոր Խմբագրություն, 1996), pp. 379-80.

²⁰⁸ Kapriel Noradunkean was born in 1852 in Istanbul. After receiving his education in political science and law at the Sorbonne in Paris, he became a professor of law at the Mekteb-i Hukuk-ı Şahane (The Royal Academy of Law) in Istanbul. In 1908, he was appointed minister of trade, and he later became the minister of foreign affairs, which he served as during the Balkan Wars in 1912-1913. After WWI, he became an ardent supporter of the Armenian cause and supported the independence of the Ottoman Armenians. See ‘Նորատունկյան, Գաբրիել’, Հայկական Հարց Հանրագիտարան [‘Kapriel Noradunyan [The Encyclopedia of the Armenian Question] (Երեվան: Հայկական Հանրագիտարանի Գլխավոր Խմբագրություն, 1996), p. 358.

²⁰⁹ Vosgan Mardigean was born in 1867 in Erzincan. He received his higher education in Istanbul and served in various governmental positions for many years. He was minister of the posts and telegraphs service from 1913 to 1914. At the beginning of WWI, he opposed the entry of the Ottoman Empire into the conflict, and because of his stance, he was forced by the CUP authorities to resign. He found refuge in Cairo in 1920. See Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History*, p. 845.

²¹⁰ Arshak Ch‘obanean was born in Istanbul in 1872. He attended Getronagan, a prestigious Armenian high school in the city, was interested in literature, poetry, and philosophy. In 1893, he moved to Paris and in 1898 published the *Anahid* literary journal. During the wartime, he assiduously worked to mould public opinion on the Armenian massacres, working closely with Bogos Nubar. See ‘Չոպանյան, Արշակ’, Հայկական Հարց Հանրագիտարան [‘Arshak Ch‘obanyan [The Encyclopedia of the Armenian Question] (Երեվան: Հայկական Հանրագիտարանի Գլխավոր Խմբագրություն, 1996), p. 374.

²¹¹ Yervant Ahaton was the son of Krikor Ahaton, the first Christian minister in the Ottoman Empire. He received his education in agriculture and engaged in agricultural projects in Egypt. He was a member of Armenian General Benevolent Union and close friend of Bogos

Ch‘eraz,²¹² and two Armenian members from Caucasian Armenia, Avedis

Aharonean²¹³ and Samson Harutyunian,²¹⁴ would be included in the Cabinet.²¹⁵ The

editorial of *Ariamard* welcomed the rumours of the establishment of a ‘United

Armenia’ with joy:

[The State of] Armenia is henceforth declared. This time, we believe [it]. You, too, must believe it—the miserable remnants or deportees, with formidable persistence and brave resolve you had the will to continue to live—to live for tomorrow, for the free fatherland. Hence, you orphans, the rays of tomorrow; hence, the exiles; the first pilgrims. And hence, us, the lucky ones who want to lay the foundations of our Homeland.²¹⁶

Nubar. See *Verchin Lur*, Հայկական Դահլիճը [The Armenian Cabinet], 26 December 1918, no. 1454.

²¹² Minas Ch‘eraz was born in Istanbul in 1852. He participated in the Congress of Berlin in 1878 as a member of the Armenian delegation. In 1908, following the announcement of the Constitution, he was elected as the president of the Armenian National Assembly in Istanbul. During the wartime, he moved to Paris and continued to contribute to the Armenian cause. See ‘Չերազ, Մինաս’, Հայկական Հարց Հանրագիտարան [‘Minas Ch‘eraz’ The Encyclopedia of the Armenian Question] (Երեվան: Հայկական Հանրագիտարանի Գլխավոր Խմբագրություն, 1996), pp. 372-73.

²¹³ Avedis Aharonean was born in Surmalu in 1866. He studied history and philosophy at the University of Lausanne. Following his graduation, he became the director of the Nersisian School in Tbilisi in 1907 but was imprisoned for two years because of his revolutionary activities. In 1917, he returned to Armenia and played an active role in the establishment of the Armenian Republic. In 1919, he was head of the Armenian Delegation at the Paris Peace Conference with Bogos Nubar. See ‘Ահարոնեան, Աւետիս’, Հայկական Հարց Հանրագիտարան [‘Avedis Aharonyan’ The Encyclopedia of the Armenian Question] (Երեվան: Հայկական Հանրագիտարանի Գլխավոր Խմբագրություն, 1996), pp. 26-27.

²¹⁴ Samson Harutyunian was a lawyer who was born and raised in Tbilisi. He was an active member of the Armenian community and served as president of the General Benevolent Union of Caucasus. He was known by the Armenian community as the ‘Zohrab of the Caucasus’. See *Verchin Lur*, Հայկական Դահլիճը [The Armenian Cabinet], 26 December 1918, no. 1454.

²¹⁵ *Ariamard*, Միացեալ Հայաստանի Դահլիճը [The Cabinet of United Armenia], 21 December 1918, no. 27.

²¹⁶ *Ariamard*, Հայաստանը Կազմելու Համար [To Establish Armenia], 22 December 1918, no. 1843. ‘... Հայաստանը հռչակուած է այլևս: Կը հաւատանք այս անգամ: Եւ հաւատացէք դուք ալ, թշուառ մնացորդներ կամ տարագիրներ որ տոկուն յարատեւութեամբ մը եւ արի կամեցողութեամբ մը յամառեցաք ապրիլ, ապրիլ վաղուան համար, Ազատ Հայրենիքին համար:... Ահա որբեր, վաղուան ցոյքերը ահա տարագիրները-անդրանիկ ուխտաւորները- եւ ահա մենք բախտաւորներս որ կուզենք Մեր Հայրենիքին հիմերը դնել:’

Zhoghovurt published the photos of the Cabinet members and welcomed the establishment of the Cabinet. ‘Do we need to introduce one by one those members who are well known by our community because of their continuous public service? Is it necessary to introduce who Bogos Nubar, [Arshak] Ch‘obanean, [Avedis] Aharonean and [Kapriel] Noradunkean are?’²¹⁷ *Verchin Lur* indeed deemed it necessary and chose to publish the biographies of the newly established cabinet of United Armenia.²¹⁸ *Yerevan* published a map of United Armenia, which was, according to the daily, accepted in Paris during the peace conference. The daily was enthralled by the idea of a ‘United Armenia’, a dream that accelerated ‘each Armenian’s heartbeat, together with admiration and enthusiasm’.²¹⁹ The publication of these articles regarding the cabinet of United Armenia demonstrates the political alteration of the Ottoman Armenians; the Ottoman parliament had lost its legitimacy in the eyes of the Armenians, and they now preferred to be represented in the parliament of ‘United Armenia’.

²¹⁷ *Zhoghovurt*, Միացեալ Եւ Անկախ Հայաստան [United and Independent Armenia], 22 December 1918, no. 60.

²¹⁸ *Verchin Lur*, Հայկական Դահլիճը [The Armenian Cabinet], 26 December 1918, no. 1454.

²¹⁹ *Yerevan*, Մեծ Միացեալ Հայաստանը [Great United Armenia], 26 January 1919, no. 5.



Figure 4. The Cabinet members of ‘United Armenia’ (*Zhoghovurt*, 22 December 1918)

Besides the editorials and columns of Armenian press, there are ample reactions of individual Ottoman Armenians toward the establishment of United Armenia. As the news first broke, an Armenian, Karekin Hosrovean, solicited contributions from Armenians to erect a statue of Clemenceau, the president of France, in Paris. Hosrovean stated that it was a great opportunity to show the sympathy of the Armenians toward the French nation. He concluded, ‘At this critical moment when the future of Armenia will be discussed at the Paris conference, the president of the conference will be Clemenceau, which is a very good opportunity for

us'.²²⁰ *Verchin Lur* shared this sentiment, urging readers to contribute to the donation campaign. On that very day, the daily received donations from Armenian individuals: 100 *kuruş* (the smallest denomination of Ottoman currency) from Karekin Hosrovean and 225 *kuruş* from Nishan Manukean, Taniel Hovhannesean, and Onnik Tavitean.²²¹

Zhamanag dissected and countered the propagandist publications of the Ottoman Turkish dailies regarding the Wilson Principles and the Turkishness of the Anatolian provinces. According to the daily, the activities of the Vilayat-i Şarkiye Müdafa-i Hukuk Cemiyeti, the telegram from the prominent Muslims of Adana—which was sent to the Allied Powers, claiming that Muslims constituted the majority population in the region—plus the publications of the Ottoman Turkish dailies regarding the population statistics, all served to fan the notion of creating a Turkish state. It argued that the Ottoman government implemented a policy to convert the native Christian population to Islam, which mostly succeeded, with the majority of the converted population being of Armenian origin. *Zhamanag* argued that Surp Toros, Akarag, Musheghgay, Apeghanots', Vank', Abarank', and Aragay²²² were all villages still bearing Armenian names, and similarly there were Islamised Armenians who continued to preserve their culture and language, such as the Hemshin Armenians.²²³ *Zhamanag*, from a radical point of view, noted that the Armenian

²²⁰ *Verchin Lur*, Հայ ժողովրդական Մասնակցութիւն Մ. ժողով Բլեմանսոյի Արձանին Համար [The Participation of the Armenians for the Statue of George Clemenceau], 25 December 1918, no. 1453.

²²¹ *Verchin Lur*, Հայ ժողովրդական Մասնակցութիւն Մ. ժողով Բլեմանսոյի Արձանին Համար [The Participation of the Armenians for the Statue of George Clemenceau], 25 December 1918, no. 1453. The average salary of a state official in 1918 was 900 *kuruş* (the smallest unit of Ottoman currency) per month. See Vedat Eldem, *Harp ve Mütareke Yıllarında Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun Ekonomisi* [The Economy of the Ottoman Empire During War and Armistice], p. 55.

²²² These were Armenian villages located in the Agn (Eğin) region in the Vilayât-ı Sitte.

²²³ The Hemshin were people of Armenian origin who converted to Islam over the centuries. The Rize and Artvin regions of today's Turkey were the historic lands of the Hemshin people. It is noteworthy that *Zhamanag* in 1919 acknowledged the Hemshin Armenians as a part of the Armenian nation. For the history of the Hemshin people and discussion of their identity,

converts forgot their religion, culture, and language, but this did not compromise their Armenianness.²²⁴

Verchin Lur published a series to document in detail the Armenian characteristics of the Six Provinces in order to disprove the Ottoman Turkish press's allegations that they should not be considered as part of any Armenian state. In the first article, which considered Erzurum, the names of the villages were listed one by one as proof of the Armenianness of the province:

Sarajugh, Giv, Nil, Balakhor, Gam, Varizonts', Khozaghiwr, Chragents', Hunud, Hoghig, Garmrag, Gisag... Marik', Hazark', Komer... T'ortan, T'awgner, Garni, Dantsi, T'ughud... Shall we continue? Fill, fill your ears with these native Armenian names, fill till the core of your ears, and then try to prove in vain that Erzurum is not Armenian. Changing the name does not change the spirit, the clay and the rocks.²²⁵

Verchin Lur later focused on Bitlis, Muş, and Diyarbakır provinces.

Acknowledging that the Kurdish population was the majority in these provinces, *Verchin Lur* presented a questionable justification that the 'Kurdish population was ethnically more Armenian than Turkish in terms of blood and race'.

Approach a Kurdish bey coming from a great clan and ask his race. He will then answer with a great boast: 'My ancestors were Armenian but in order not to lose their freedom they accepted Islam'. And many Kurdish surnames will

see Hovann H. Simonian, ed., *The Hemshin: History, Society and Identity in the Highlands of Northeast Turkey* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

²²⁴ *Zhamanag*, Մեծամասնութեան Պատրանքը [The Illusion of Majority], 3 January 1919, no. 3404.

²²⁵ *Verchin Lur*, Տառերն Անգամ Մետրոպը Կը Յարուցանեն Քառերէն [Even the Letters Resuscitate Mesrop From the Rocks], 4 January 1919, no. 1462. 'Սարաճիւղ, Կիվ, Նիլ, Պալախոր, Կամ, Վարիզոնց, Խոզաղբիւր, Ջրակենց, Հունուտ, Հողիկ, Կարմրակ, Կիսակ... Մարիք, Հագարք, Գոմեր... Թորդան, Թակկներ, Կառնի, Տանձի, Թուղուտ... Շարունակէի՛նք տակաւին: Լեցուցէ՛ք, լեցուցէ՛ք, լեցուցէ՛ք ակաջնիդ բնիկ հայկական այս անուններով ականջնուդ մինչեւ ծուծը լեցուցէք դուք ամէնքդ որ հողմադացի պարապ թելեր կը շարժէք փաստելու թէ Էրզրումը Հայ չէ: Անունը փոխելով հոգին չի փոխուիր կաւը չի փոխուիր գարերը չեն փոխուիր:'

be familiar to you, for instance Mimikan (Mamigonean), Pakran (Pakradunean) etc. These are the surnames of old Armenian principalities.²²⁶

The Ottoman government presented a report to the Allied officials in Istanbul to be forwarded to the Paris Conference, claiming that the Armenians, assisted by the Tsarist forces, killed more than one million innocent Muslims before the start of the Armenian deportations in Eastern Anatolia. The report argued that, in accordance with the Wilson Principles, it was not appropriate to establish an Armenian state in Eastern Anatolia, since ‘there were more than five million Muslims and only a few hundred thousand Armenians in the region’.²²⁷ The Ottoman government proposed two alternative solutions to the problem: either Ottoman rule would continue in the eastern provinces, with the assurance that the rights of minorities would be preserved and upheld, or the borders of the Armenian Republic would be extended to accommodate the Armenian refugees from the Syrian deserts and the eastern provinces.²²⁸

This report presented by the Ottoman government in Paris caused an immediate and intense backlash from the Ottoman Armenian public. The official documents presented by the government were seen as ‘falsified and a source of propaganda’. It was argued that the documents of the Ottoman government consisted of biased, unreliable documents of the CUP members and the Russian military

²²⁶ *Verchin Lur*, Անցեալը Հայ Ներկան Հայ [The Past is Armenian, the Present is Armenian], 8 January 1919, no. 1465. ‘Բայց մօտեցէք հարցուցէք անգամ մը մեծատողմ Քուրդ պէյի մը թէ «Ի՞նչ ցեղէ էս» պիտի պատասխանէ խորունկ պարծանքով մը «Իմ նախնիքը Հայ են եղած, ազատութիւննին չկորսնցնելու համար Իսլամութիւն ընդունած են:» Ու ձեզի պիտի թուեն շատ մը Քուրդեր... Սըմըզան (Մամիկոնեան), Բագրան (Բագրատունեան) եւլն. Մակնունները՝ հին Հայ նախարարութիւններու:’

²²⁷ *Vakit*, ‘Ermeni Vakai Bir Milyon İslam’ [The Armenian Incident and One Million Muslims], 21 February 1919, no. 489.

²²⁸ *Zhoghovurti Tsaynē*, Թուրք Կառավարութեան Ծանուցագիրը Խաղաղութեան Համաժողովին [The Statement of Turkish Government at the Peace Conference], 4 March 1919, no. 38-118.

officers, whereas both the French and the British military officers who witnessed the Armenian genocide wrote memoirs, Ambassador Morgenthau published a book on the massacres, and the British government's Blue Book provided documents.²²⁹

It is relevant to our conceptual discussion here that the Armenian dailies —be they liberal (such as *Verchin Lur* and *Zoghovurt*) or nationalist (such as *Ariamard*)—reflected the enthusiasm and mobilisation of the Armenian community. These views and sentiments were expressed not only by Armenian intellectuals, but also by the common folk, like an Asbed from Çorlu, who saw the establishment of an Armenian state as liberation from the Ottoman yoke. The pro-independence position of the Armenian community increased significantly when the Allied states signaled their support. As Erin K. Jenne, Stephen M. Saideman, and Will Lowe argue in their study, there is a strong possibility that when there is an external support, the radicalisation of a group is likely to increase.²³⁰ The ethnic bargaining theory comprises two crucial components: external support and the radicalisation of the group. In the case of Ottoman Armenians, as evidenced in other case studies, the external support shown by the Allied states seems to have increased the radicalisation of the Armenian community. The case of Ottoman Armenians bears similarities with the case of the Sudeten Germans who were a minority in the Czechoslovak state. In 1918, leaders of the Sudeten Germans were mobilised towards independence by the signals given by

²²⁹ *Zhamanag*, Հայերը Եւ Թուրք Ստաւորականութիւնը [Armenians and the Turkish Intelligentsia], 4 March 1919, no. 3460. For ambassador Morgenthau's memoirs and the British government's documents, see Morgenthau Henry, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1918); Viscount Bryce, Arnold Toynbee and Ara Sarafian, *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, 1915-16: Documents Presented to Viscount Grey of Fallodon by Viscount Bryce: Uncensored Edition* (Princeton: Gomidas Institute, 2005) The Blue Book includes accounts from United States missionary sources and testimonies of German, Danish, Swedish, Greek, and Armenian witnesses regarding the genocide.

²³⁰ Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining*, p. 53; Jenne, 'A Bargaining Theory of Minority Demands: Explaining the Dog That Did Not Bite in 1990s Yugoslavia'; Jenne, Stephen M. Saideman, and Will Lowe, 'Separatism as a Bargaining Posture: The Role of Leverage in Minority Radicalization'.

Germany and Austria, the supportive states. Prominent leaders of the Sudeten Germans such as Joseph Seliger and Rudolf Lodgman voiced their demands for independence in 1918 and 1919. This led to a conflict between the Czech authorities and Sudeten German leadership.²³¹ The Sudetens refused to participate in parliament discussions and did not vote for crucial legislations regarding minorities, economy, education, and land reform.²³² The Czech authorities accepted Czech and Slovak as the official languages, and under the new law, all government correspondence and business transactions were to be conducted in Czech and Slovak. Thus, the Sudeten Germans were under pressure because of their pro-independence political position. However, when Germany and Austria renounced their territorial claims on Czechoslovakia in 1919 after the Paris Peace Conference, the Sudeten Germans were left with no option but to accept and accommodate the Czechoslovak state.²³³ Similar to the Sudeten Germans, the Ottoman Armenians changed their political position following the defeat of the Allied Powers by Turkish Nationalists and the signing of the Lausanne Treaty, which will be discussed in the following chapters.

2.9. Ottoman Armenians' Aspirations for a 'United Armenia'

Bogos Nubar, the most influential Armenian political figure of the Armistice period, in an interview underlined that 'United Armenia' would be created with the unification of the Armenian population in the Caucasus and the Ottoman Armenian survivors scattered throughout the Ottoman lands and throughout the diaspora. With the assistance of America, Britain, and/or France, he claimed 'United Armenia' would

²³¹ Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining*, p. 64.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Ibid.

establish its governmental bodies and become a healthy state within twenty years. With the repatriation of the diasporan Ottoman Armenians, he stated that, together with the two million Caucasian Armenians, ‘United Armenia’ would contain a population of more than three million Armenians.²³⁴

The backing of the Ottoman Armenian community for Bogos Nubar is an important step in understanding the dimension of their support for the establishment of United Armenia. With the high regard he was afforded in Europe, Bogos Nubar was in the best position to defend the national rights of the Armenians before the Great Powers. It should be noted that for the Armenian community, supporting Bogos Nubar meant supporting complete independence from the Ottoman yoke. The Ottoman Armenians not only expressed their support to Bogos Nubar, but they even celebrated a day in honour of him—9 January was celebrated as the feast of Bogos Nubar, to show their gratitude and respect to ‘the leader of the nation seeking the independence of United Armenia’ and in the eyes of Europe. Armenian intellectuals commemorated Bogos Nubar’s day by publishing tens of articles in the *Nor Gyank*‘ daily. Bishop Mesrop Naroean declared that Bogos Nubar was the ‘Great Armenian’ who devoted himself to the Armenian nation. Vahan Toshikean concluded his article as follows: ‘It is the feast of the Armenian [George] Washington today. Come, let us make a toast for him... Come, our Greek brothers, yet another cup with you! It is the feast of the Armenian Venizelos today!’²³⁵

The increasing support of the Ottoman Armenian community to Bogos Nubar represents a crucial point for our theoretical framework here. Bogos Nubar was a

²³⁴ *Zhoghovurti Artsakank*‘, Նոր Հայաստան [New Armenia], 19 January 1919, no. 19-78.

²³⁵ *Nor Gyank*‘, Եկէ՛ք Պարպ էնք Բաժակնիս [Come, Let’s Empty Our Glasses], 9 January 1919, no. 83. ‘Հայ Ուաշինկթընին տօնն է այսօր: Եկէ՛ք, պարպէնք բաժակնիս... Եկէ՛ք, եւ դուք Յոյն եղբայրներ բաժակ մըն ալ ձեզի հետ: Հայ Վենիզելօսին տօնն է այսօր:’

highly respected community leader and an activist who devoted himself to the cause of establishing an Armenian state in the Vilayât-ı Sitte. The increasing support Bogos Nubar received from the various strata of the Armenian community—including intellectuals, community leaders, and common folk with no political affiliations—is indicative of the gradual radicalisation of the political position of the community and the wider mobilisation around the idea of independence. According to the bargaining theory, ‘if minority members are reasonably confident of external support, their leaders will radicalise for concessions despite the majority’s best attempts to appease them’.²³⁶ In the case of Ottoman Armenians, it was natural to see that the leadership was mobilised because they were reasonably confident of external support; conversely, the Ottoman regime was far from friendly towards the Armenians.



Figure 5. Bogos Nubar's portrait (*Zhoghovurt*, 9 January 1919)

²³⁶ Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining*, p. 53.

The Armenian Patriotic Unions, which were organised by ten Armenian compatriotic associations, provide crucial clues as to how Ottoman Armenians living in the provinces or as refugees outside of the Ottoman territories perceived the developments within the Armenian press and political circles regarding the ‘United Armenia’ project. The meeting of the Armenian Patriotic Unions was held in Istanbul with the participation of representatives of the ten associations, as well as representatives of the Ottoman Armenian refugees in the Caucasus, Vahan Papazean, and Avedis Terzibashean.²³⁷ At the end of the meeting, the Patriotic Unions jointly made an announcement to publicise their demands. First, they demanded compensation for the loss of the Armenian nation during wartime and the punishment of the perpetrators.²³⁸ Secondly, they asked for the establishment of a national loan agreement to aid the return of Armenian refugees to their villages, to build new houses, and to provide equipment for agricultural activity. Thirdly, they demanded the demobilisation of the Armenian soldiers who were recruited in the Ottoman military. The Patriotic Unions declared that they were ready to cooperate to secure

²³⁷ *Jagadamard*, Հայրենակցական Միութիւններու Երեկուան Ժողովը [The Meeting of Patriotic Unions Held Yesterday], 25 January 1919, no. 61. Vahan Papazean was born in Tabriz in 1876 to parents who were originally from Van. He moved to Van in 1903 and became involved in politics. As a member of the ARF, he was elected to the Ottoman parliament in 1908. During the deportations, he joined the Armenian self-defence units, and he later escaped to the Caucasus. He tried to organise the Ottoman Armenian refugee community in the Caucasus, who numbered more than four hundred thousand. He moved to Beirut in 1947, where he died in 1973. He was known also by his pseudonym, Goms. See ‘Կոմս (Փափազյան Վահան)’, Հայկական Հարց Հանրագիտարան [The Encyclopedia of the Armenian Question] (Երեվան: Հայկական Հանրագիտարանի Գլխավոր Խմբագրություն, 1996), 188. Avedis Terzibashean was born in 1873 in Van. He attended the Armenian Hisusean and Yeramean schools. After the 1908 Revolution, he was elected as mayor of Van. In 1915, he participated in the self-defense activities of the Van Armenians against the Ottoman forces. He escaped to the Caucasus following the retreat of the Russian army. During the Armistice years, he moved to Istanbul. Following the announcement of the Turkish Republic, he moved to Paris, where he died in 1942. See ‘Թերզիբաշյան Ավետիս’, Հայկական Հարց Հանրագիտարան [The Encyclopedia of the Armenian Question] (Երեվան: Հայկական Հանրագիտարանի Գլխավոր Խմբագրություն, 1996), p. 139.

²³⁸ *Jagadamard*, Հայրենակցական Միութիւններու Երեկուան Ժողովը [The Meeting of Patriotic Unions Held Yesterday], 25 January 1919, no. 61.

international recognition of ‘the Independent and United Armenia’.²³⁹ One of the Armenian patriotic unions was the Union of Hayk, which was established to defend the rights of Armenians in the Six Provinces. This coincided with the Vilayat-i Şarkiye Müdafa-i Hukuk Cemiyeti (Society for the National Defence of the Rights of the Eastern Provinces), established in Eastern Anatolia to defend the rights of the Ottoman Muslims based on the Wilson Principles. The Union of Hayk deputies were elected from Garin (Erzurum), Papert (Bayburt), Erznga (Erzincan), Khnus (Hınıs), Dayk‘ (contemporary Turkish districts of Artvin, Oltu and İspir), and Kighë (Kiğı).²⁴⁰

The denominational differences within the Ottoman Armenian community began to erode. Surrounded by social, economic and political crisis, the different groups of the Armenian community came together to organise an aid campaign for the Armenian refugees and to form a united front in the face of the political crisis. According to the *Yerevan* daily from Istanbul, the Armenians should protect their unity between religious denominations, calling upon the Armenian religious leaders to act urgently to resolve the disagreements and create harmony within the greater community: ‘If, God forbid, we fail to unite and to serve our fatherland, why then this much blood, pain and suffering? Unity! Unity! Unity!...and to the work ahead!’²⁴¹

For our analysis, we see the process of ethnic bargaining in progress here. The establishment of the Union of Hayk is used as a component of mobilisation of the entire community. The launch of the Union was preceded by the organisation of donations campaigns for the Armenian state and the publication of articles

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ *Jagadamard*, Բարձր Հայկի Միութիւն [The Union of Hayk], 19 January 1919, no. 55.

²⁴¹ *Yerevan*, Թէ Ինչ Հիմերու Վրայ Կազմուելու Է Հայկական Հանրապետութիւնը [On What Grounds the Armenian State Will Be Established?], 26 January 1919, No. 5. ‘... Եթէ Աստուած չընէ մենք միաբանութենէ հեռու մնանք եւ չկրնանք ծառայել մեր Հայրենիքին հապա ի նշու այսչափ արիւն այսչափ գաւ, այսչափ տառապանք... Ոհ՛, Միութիւն, Միութիւն... եւ դէպի գործ:’

encouraging the community to join the growing movement towards national liberation. Indeed, these processes led to the gradual political radicalisation of Ottoman Armenians. This is not unique to the Armenians, but a pattern seen in other case studies. In Europe, for instance, other minorities had also established such organisations to mobilise the masses during the 1920s and 1930s. The Association of the German Racial Groups in Europe, the Warsaw Congress of Poles Living Abroad, and the pan-Russian Congress in Riga are a few examples of how minorities could be mobilized against host states.²⁴² As said earlier, two components are critical to radicalisation: internal and external leverages.²⁴³ In the case of Ottoman Armenians, the de facto Allied occupation was the external leverage. The fall of the CUP government and the campaign for the Vilayât-ı Sitte was the internal leverage. The mobilization and radicalisation of the Ottoman Armenian community became possible as both the internal and external leverages were available to be exploited. The ethnic bargaining theory suggests that ‘minority radicalisation is influenced by internal bargaining leverage in the first place, which is largely a function of group size and territorial concentration’.²⁴⁴ However, what is remarkable in the case of the Ottoman Armenians is that the territorial concentration was lost and the population was dramatically decreased due to the wartime deportations. The Ottoman Armenian leadership used pre-war population statistics as evidence to demonstrate that the Armenians were a majority in the Vilayât-ı Sitte, creating an argument for the relocation of Armenians from Syria to the region.

In response to the collective wish of the Ottoman Armenian community, the Armenian Catholic, Protestant, and Apostolic Patriarchates issued a joint statement to

²⁴² Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining*, p. 23.

²⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 51.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 56.

announce that the churches had united to coordinate their relief activities in this critical period when thousands of Armenians were struggling to survive in the provinces. There was an urgent need for more than one million liras in order to meet the basic needs of the refugees. It is significant that the joint statement of the Armenian religious authorities called upon the masses to aid the Armenian refugees, who were labelled as ‘the founding bodies of the fatherland’.²⁴⁵

The precious fragments of the horrible calamity, the affectionate remnants of the Armenian nation, who will be the founding columns of our fatherland, are about to lose the struggle against death... Therefore, action is needed without delay, to save our dear ones from the claws of death... From ancient times, at the time of danger, discouragement and pretentiousness have been our characteristics, from now onward each individual should try to pass his friend with the joy of winning a competition of a holy duty.²⁴⁶

Zhoghovurti Tsaynē organised a donation campaign to raise funds for the Armenian Republic in the Caucasus to be used to assist the Armenian refugees, with the secondary aim of establishing fraternity between the two branches of the Armenian nation. The significance of this donation campaign was explained in the conclusion of the lead article: ‘This donation campaign clearly proved the political position of the Ottoman Armenians by supporting their compatriots in the

²⁴⁵ *Jagadamard*, Երեք Հոգևոր Պետերուն Կոչը Հայ ժողովուրդին [The Call of the Three Religious Leaders to the Armenian Nation], 13 April 1919, no. 129.

²⁴⁶ *Jagadamard*, Երեք Հոգևոր Պետերուն Կոչը Հայ ժողովուրդին [The Statement of the Three Religious Leaders to the Armenian Nation], 13 April 1919, no. 129. ‘Ասոնք տեսնուր եղեռնին թանկագին իլեակները հայութեան այդ սիրալիր բեկորները, որոնք մեր հայրենի աշխարհին հաստատութեան սիւները պիտի ըլլան, կորսուելու վրայ են՝ կյանքի եւ մահուան պայքարը մղելով տակաւին... Շարժիլ պետք է ուրեմն եւ անյապաղ անմիջապէս շարժիլ կորզելու համար մեր սիրելիները մահուան ճիրաններէն: Ի նախնեաց անտի վտանգի պահերուն մեր գեղեցիկ նշանաբանն եղած է «տկարաց արիանալ եւ քաջաց խիզախել» ըստ այսմ թող իւրաքանչիւր ոք ջանայ գլել անցնիլ իր ընկերը աւագ նուիրական պարտականութիւն մը կատարելու ազնիւ մրցակցութեամբ:’

Caucasus'.²⁴⁷ The Armenian community in Izmir similarly organised a donation campaign to send aid to the Armenian Republic in the Caucasus. The campaign created heated debates within the community because the collected amount fell far short of the initial goal. Around forty thousand Ottoman liras were donated, whereas the targeted amount was more than two hundred thousand Ottoman liras. The religious leader of the Izmir Armenian community, Bishop Madt'eos, was disappointed with the result of the donation campaign and even resigned, feeling that he himself had failed. In particular, the upper class of Izmir Armenians was criticised for being indifferent towards the campaign, donating only a small amount, ranging from one thousand to two thousand Ottoman liras. Bishop Madt'eos in a public speech castigated the Izmir elite:

You are all informed who has donated how much, so I do not feel the miserable need of mentioning names one by one... May their conscience be their judge. But if those who donated three thousand, two thousand and one thousand liras feel comfortable and lull their conscience, I could not lull my conscience, unfortunately; I feel ashamed before the entire humanity.²⁴⁸

Indeed, the prospect of famine was grave in the Republic of Armenia.

According to reports, there were more than five hundred thousand Ottoman Armenian refugees in the Republic of Armenia, as well as fifty thousand in the North Caucasus,

²⁴⁷ *Zhoghovurti Tsaynē*, Փրկենք Հայ Անկախութեան Ռահվիրաները [Let's Save the Pioneers of Armenian Independence], 12 February 1919, no. 22-101.

²⁴⁸ *Tashink'*, Գաւառական Ժողով Պատմական Նիստ [Provincial Assembly—A Historic Session], 9 May 1919, no. 1936. 'Ամենքդ տեղեկացաք անշուղտ թէ որոնք ինչ տուին, հետեւաբար եւ պէտք չեմ ունենար անուններ տալու տխուր հարկին ներքեւ գտնուիլ:... Ամենուն խիղճը թող իր դատաւորը ըլլայ: Բայց եթէ այդ 3,000, 2000, 1000 թուղթ տուողները կրցան քնացնել իրենց խղճմըտանքը եւ գոհ զգալ իրենք իրենցմէ, դժբաղդաբար եւ չեմ կրնար քնացնել իմ խիղճս եւ ոչ թէ միայն ինքնիրմէս գոհ չեմ այլ ամօթապարտ կը նկատեմ ինքզինքս բովանդակ մարդկութեան առջեւ:'

living in poverty and danger of famine.²⁴⁹ Even in the capital Yerevan, approximately one hundred fifty people died each day from hunger and typhus, and in the second largest city, Gyumri, the rate was one hundred people per day. In total, one thousand people died each day within the borders of Armenia. Reports stated that there were not enough doctors, there was a shortage of medicine, and people were reduced to collecting dead animals in the streets for food. Georgia and Azerbaijan closed their borders, making it even more challenging to deliver aid. The situation was so serious that H. Manugean, an Armenian correspondent, wrote in his report that Caucasian Armenians were waiting and dying before the gate of the cemetery; instead of an ‘Independent and United Armenia’, the Armenians would see ‘an independent and mass cemetery’.²⁵⁰ In another report, it was underlined that three thousand people were dying of hunger and diseases per day in Armenia. Because the government had no money, the only food that was distributed to the people was free meat, rice, and water.²⁵¹

While organising donation campaigns in Izmir and Istanbul for the Armenian refugees, the Ottoman Turkish dailies accused the Armenian political parties and press of pressuring the Armenians living in Central and Western Anatolia to migrate to Eastern Anatolia to create an Armenian majority in the region. *Alemdar* claimed that the ARF was encouraging Armenian communities in Anatolia to migrate to Adana and Van to establish an Armenian majority in these regions; however, the local Armenians were reluctant to migrate to unfamiliar regions, and they were also concerned by the possibility of paying high taxes to the new Armenian state and the

²⁴⁹ *Jagadamard*, ‘Իսկական Աղետ Մը Պիտի Ըլլայ Եթէ...’ [It Will Be a Real Disaster if...], 22 January 1919, no. 57.

²⁵⁰ *Jagadamard*, ‘Հոգեվարքի Հոնդիւններ’ [Snoring Agony], 18 February 1919, no. 84.

²⁵¹ *Alemdar*, ‘Ermenistan’da Kaht u Gala’ [Famine and Poverty in Armenia], 22 March 1919, no. 91.

loss of livelihood caused by relocating. According to *Alemdar*, the reluctance and hesitation of the Armenian citizens showed that this extreme migration plan was poorly conceived and would prove to be ineffective.²⁵² The Turkish dailies asserted that the local Armenians living in Western Anatolia, particularly in Izmir and Istanbul, did not welcome this migration propaganda, fearing that they could be obligated to pay heavy taxes to the new Armenian state as well as lose the welfare they had under the auspices of the Ottoman Empire. Though not completely refuting the allegations, *Verchin Lur* stated that there was at least a measure of support within the Armenian community to populate the future Armenian state. *Verchin Lur* responded to these claims as follows:

We are not surprised with the mentality of the Turkish dailies. There are no constraints anywhere. At the utmost, there could be encouragement to populate the future Armenia in advance. And the allegation that Armenians are happy with this propaganda and they prefer to stay under Turkish rule is at least a stupidity; as it impossible to imagine an Armenian who is satisfied with the governance of this country, when even the Turks are not satisfied.²⁵³

2.10. The Arrival of Patriarch Zaven and the Celebrations of Vartanants‘

The desire of the Ottoman Armenian community for independence metastasised with a series of events and demonstrations, starting with the return of the Armenian Patriarch Zaven from exile and the celebrations of Vartanants‘ Feast, all of which

²⁵² *Alemdar*, ‘Ermeniler Yeniden Hicret mi Ediyor?’ [Armenians Are Being Deported Again?], 13 February 1919, no. 59.

²⁵³ *Verchin Lur*, Հայերը Դարձեալ Կը Տարագրուին [Armenians Are Being Deported Anew], 17 February 1919, no. 1498. ‘Մենք չենք զարմանար Թուրք թերթերուն այս մտայնութեան վրայ: Ոչ մէկ տեղ բռնութիւն չկայ: Շատ շատ քաջալերութիւն մը կրնայ ըլլալ վաղուան Հայաստանը այսօրուրնէ շէնցնելու մասին: Իսկ թէ Հայերն իսկ դժգոհ են այդ բրօքականտէն ու կը նախընտրեն եղեր տակաւին թուրք իշխանութեան տակ հանգիստ ապրիլ, առնուազն ապուշութիւն է քանի որ անկարելի է երեւակայել հայ մը որ գոհ եղած ըլլայ այս երկրին վարչութենէն որմէ Թուրքերն իսկ գոհ չեն:’

reflect the collective change in the Ottoman Armenians' sociopolitical position and how the community transitioned from Ottomanism to Armenian nationalism.²⁵⁴

Patriarch Zaven, who was exiled to Baghdad in 1916 by the order of the CUP government, returned to Istanbul around midnight on 19 February 1919 on the transport vessel *Akasya*, and spent the night inside the vessel despite invitations from the officers of the Patriarchate.²⁵⁵ He disembarked during the following morning and was welcomed by a large group of Armenian clergymen, officers, school children, and businessmen, as well as the officers of the Entente. The group moved from Karaköy, passing over the Galata bridge, Sirkeci, the Governorship of Istanbul, and the Bab-ı Ali area, intermittently waving the Armenian flag and shouting slogans. This demonstration of Istanbul Armenians not only astounded the Muslims but also the Allied Power officers puzzled by the enthusiasm of the Armenians.²⁵⁶ Even

²⁵⁴ Vartanants' Feast is commemorated by the Armenian Church each year on the Thursday preceding Great Lent. It celebrates the resistance of Vartan Mamikonean against the Persian army at the Battle of Avarayr in 451, which ultimately secured the Armenians' right to practice Christianity. Vartanants' Feast both has a religious and a nationalistic character, as Vartan Mamikonean's struggle was for protecting both the Christian faith and the Armenian nation itself.

²⁵⁵ *Vakit*, 'Ermeni Patriği' [The Armenian Patriarch], 20 February 1919, no. 478; Tuğlacı, *Tarih Boyunca Batı Ermenileri 1891-1922*, p. 749. Zaven Der Yeghiaeian was born in 1868 in Mosul. After receiving his primary education in Baghdad, he moved to Armash (Akmeşe, Izmit). He graduated from the Armash Theological Seminary in 1895 and served as bishop in Erzurum in 1898 and in Van in 1908. He was the prelate for Diyarbakir from 1910 to 1913. In 1913, he became the Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul. In 1916, the CUP government issued a regulation ordering the closure of the Armenian Patriarchate in Istanbul and the exile of Patriarch Zaven to Baghdad. Patriarch Zaven spent the wartime in Baghdad, and after the signing of the Armistice, he returned to Istanbul in February 1919. He actively worked to defend the rights of the Armenians before the Allied Powers and lobbied for Armenian independence; however, following the Nationalists' victory, he left his position in 1922 and moved to Bulgaria. He died in Baghdad in 1947. For his biography, see Zaven Der Yeghiayan, *My Patriarchal Memoirs* (Barrington, RI: Mayreni Pub., 2002). For the regulation of the CUP government issued in 1916, see *Tanin*, 'Ermeni Patrikhanesi' [The Armenian Patriarchate], 11 August 1916, no. 2752; *Tanin*, 'Ermeni Patrikhanesi' [The Armenian Patriarchate], 15 August 1916, no. 2756; Ali Güler, 'Ermenilerle İlgili 1916 ve 1918 Yıllarında Yapılan Hukuki Düzenlemeler', *Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi* 6 (1995): pp. 91-137.

²⁵⁶ Ramazan Erhan Güllü, *Ermeni Sorunu ve İstanbul Ermeni Patrikhanesi (1878-1923)* [The Armenian Question and the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2015), p. 502.

though the staff of the Armenian Patriarchate had informed the Ottoman police officers of the welcome ceremony, the police administration was concerned with the complaint petitions received after the event written by Turkish individuals and chose to initiate legal proceedings against the organisers of this public event, including Dr. Torkomean²⁵⁷ and others.²⁵⁸



Figure 6. The Arrival of Patriarch Zaven (*Verchin Lur*, 19 February 1919)

²⁵⁷ Vahram Torkomean was born in Istanbul in 1858, was educated in France, and became a physician in 1884. After his graduation, he returned to Istanbul and started to become active in community life. His articles on Armenian medical history were published in the *Hantes Amsoria* journal in Vienna. During the Armenian genocide, Vahram Torkomean was arrested in April 1915 and sent to Çankırı. He was pardoned in May and safely returned to Istanbul. He continued his active participation in Armenian political and cultural life and served as the physician of the Patriarch Zaven in Istanbul until 1922. After the victory of the Nationalist forces, he moved to France, where he died in 1942. See Ստեփանյան Գառնիկ, ‘Վահրամ Թորգոմեան’, Կենսագրական Բառարան [‘Vahram Torkomyan’, Biographical Dictionary] (Երևան: Հայաստան, 1973), pp. 371-72.

²⁵⁸ *Eski Gün*, ‘Patrik Zaven Efendi’nin Muvassalatı’ [The Arrival of Patriarch Zaven], 21 February 1919, no. 30; *Yeni Gün*, ‘Ermeni Patriğine Yapılan Numayışler Hakkında’ [About the Demonstrations Made for the Armenian Patriarch], 24 February 1919, no. 172; Zeki Sarıhan, *Kurtuluş Savaşı Günlüğü* [The Diary of War of Independence] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1995), pp. 136-37; Recep Karacakaya, ‘1919-1922 Arasında Anadolu’da Türk-Ermeni İlişkilerine Genel Bir Bakış’, [An Overview of Turkish-Armenian Relations in Anatolia Between 1919-1922], *KÖK Sosyal ve Stratejik Araştırmalar Dergisi* 12 (2012): p. 6.

The Ottoman Armenians' political views were reflected in the celebrations of Vartanants' Feast. On 19 February, with the permission of the Allied authorities, the Armenian community, in honour of Vartanants' Feast, was allowed to hang the Armenian flag in front of the St. Stepannos Armenian Church in Izmir. The Allied officials urged the Armenians not to hang the Armenian flag outside of Izmir, as it might elicit an uninvited response from local Turks.²⁵⁹ Furthermore in Konya, Vartanants' Feast was celebrated at the American orphanage. Posters of Vartan Mamikonean, as well as both Armenian and American flags, were hung on the hall. The Armenian orphans sang patriotic songs, and the former president of the Armenian school in Kastamonu, Garabet Efendi Ucbecan, and B. Moskofean from Kayseri gave speeches on the significance of the feast and how it symbolised the goal of Armenian independence.²⁶⁰ On 28 February, more than 800 native Armenians from Afyon gathered at the hall of the Armenian school to celebrate Vartanants' Feast. British military officers were present at the gathering. A woman representing the Armenian community gave a speech in English emphasising the meaning of Vartanants', and B. Yerezean, a prominent member of the community, urged the crowd to migrate to 'United Armenia', to start learning Armenian, and to then speak Armenian in public places. After singing patriotic songs and selling hundreds of Armenian flags, the gathering came to an end with the playing of the British national anthem and chants of 'Long live Armenia, long live Bogos Nubar, long live the British Empire!'²⁶¹ It is remarkable that when the religious leader of the region, Ardavazt Surmeean, visited Eskişehir to celebrate the Sunday Mass, he preached that the Armenians should

²⁵⁹ *Zhamanag*, Հայկական Դրոշը Իզմիրի Մէջ [The Armenian Flag in Izmir], 26 February 1919, no. 3455.

²⁶⁰ *Zhoghovurti Tsaynĕ*, Վարդանանց Տօնը Գոնիայի Ամերիկյան Որբանոցին Մէջ [The Vartanants' Feast at Konya American Orphanage], 10 March 1919, no. 44-124.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*

migrate to ‘United Armenia’ when the time arrived. He concluded: ‘if you have a nail to use, save it for our Fatherland’.²⁶²

The Armenians in Eskişehir organised an evening party on 22 March 1919 at the Armenian girls school for the benefit of the Armenian education organisations in the city. Armenian children, families, and all the prominent members of the community attended the fete, as well as the British military officers who were visiting the city at the time. The hall was decorated with posters of Bogos Nubar and the leaders of the Allied governments, with a large Armenian flag prominently on display. The Ottoman police forces removed these posters before the start of the evening, yet the British military officers immediately intervened to hang them again. Armenian patriotic songs were sung and prayers were offered for the independence of ‘United Armenia’.²⁶³

It should be noted that this excitement was seen not only in Istanbul and the provinces of Anatolia, but also within the Armenian diaspora; declarations from the diasporan communities were sent, reiterating the call to repatriate. It was necessary to take steps to mobilise the diasporan Armenian communities in order to ease their repatriation process. The organisation of the diasporan communities was seen as a harbinger of the new Armenian state. The joint statement of the diasporan communities concluded that the Armenian state would be established by the Armenian citizens who would return from all corners of the earth, who represented ‘a multicolour harmony, a panorama of civilisation’.²⁶⁴

²⁶² Ibid. On 19 February 1920, *Zhamanag* published photos of Vartan and General Antranik together with poetry.

²⁶³ *Jagadamard*, Շարժումը Էսկիշեհիրի Մէջ [The Movement in Eskişehir], 26 March 1919, no. 113.

²⁶⁴ *Jagadamard*, Գաղութները Կողջունեն Ազատ Հայրենիքը [Communities Salute the Independent Armenia], 4 May 1919, no. 146.

The National Assembly of the Ottoman Armenians, together with the Armenian Patriarchate and the Armenian Catholic and Protestant leaders, gathered at the Armenian National Assembly to discuss the political developments.²⁶⁵ During the meeting, the Armenian Catholic and Protestant leaders endorsed the Armenian Patriarchate, stating that during the war, Armenians from all denominations were massacred and that it was time to unite the political aspirations of the Ottoman Armenians under one umbrella. At the end of the meeting, upon a suggestion by Sarkis Srents', an Armenian intellectual, the Ottoman Armenians decided to send a letter to the Armenian Republic in the Caucasus to offer their 'sincere gratitude' to the government and to thank them for their support for the Ottoman Armenian refugees in the Caucasus. The meeting also decided to send a similar letter to the President of the Armenian delegation in Paris, Bogos Nubar, for his 'assiduous' work in the establishment of 'United Armenia'.²⁶⁶

Young Ottoman Armenians were among the supporters of the 'United Armenia' ideal. An Armenian student studying philosophy, Z. Surenean, wrote an article for the *Verchin Lur* daily stressing the importance of the repatriation movement and calling for Armenian communities to return to the eastern provinces:

²⁶⁵ The Armenian National Assembly was formed following the approval of the *Nizamname-i Millet-i Ermeniyen* (Armenian National Constitution) by the Sublime Porte in 1863. The Assembly consisted of twenty ecclesiastical deputies elected by the clergy of Istanbul, forty provincial deputies elected from the provinces outside Istanbul, and eighty deputies elected by the various districts of Istanbul. While the Armenian Patriarchate was considered to be the leader of the Armenian nation, his decisions were to be approved by the Assembly before taking effect. The elected Patriarchs were also obliged to take an oath that they would uphold the Constitution and respect the authority of the Assembly. For details on the Constitution, see Aylin Beşiryan, 'Hopes of Secularization in the Ottoman Empire: The Armenian National Constitution and the Armenian Newspaper Masis, 1856-1863' (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2007); Vartan Artinian, *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Ermeni Anayasası'nın Doğuşu 1839-1863*, [The Armenian Constitutional System in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1863: A Study of Its Historical Development] trans. Zülal Kılıç (Istanbul: Aras Yayıncılık, 2004).

²⁶⁶ *Zhamanag*, Սգահանդէս Եւ Շնորհաւորական Հեռագիրներ [Ceremony and Congratulatory Telegrams], 22 March 1919, no. 3476; Հ.Յ. Դաշնակցութիւն, Միացեալ Եւ Անկախ Հայաստան [United and Independent Armenia], (Պոլիս: Օ. Արզուման, 1919), p. 69.

For the ultimate solution of our case, as I mentioned above, we need to be in our land as much as possible. This is a necessity that each and every Armenian can understand instinctively... Today we need to return to our fatherland, to cling to our land inextricably, to show the civilised world that we are totally not the same as Jews, whose majority are divided into different parts of the world and are reluctant to relocate to Palestine, despite the huge efforts of Jewish nationalists and noble Zionists.²⁶⁷

These are critical indications that the Ottoman Armenians relinquished hope of being part of the Ottoman state after the signing of the Armistice of Mudros. The Wilson Principles became a guiding light for the Armenians, knowing that the right of self-determination would bring the independence of their ‘historic fatherland’. The policy makers, the Armenian dailies, and the Patriarchate knew that the Armenians were in the minority in the ‘historic fatherland’, yet they believed that the victimhood of the Armenian nation for the Allied victory would ultimately bring independence for them. To achieve this aim, the Ottoman Armenians, citing the Wilson Principles, strategised that the unification of the Ottoman Armenians with their compatriots in the Caucasus would make the Armenian populus a majority in the proposed Armenian state. Therefore, the Republic of Armenia established in the Caucasus was seen as a nucleus of ‘United Armenia’. Helping the Armenian refugees in the Caucasus meant investing in the manpower of the United Armenian state, necessitating the donation campaigns that were organised within the Ottoman Armenian community. The anniversary of the establishment of the Republic of Armenia was celebrated in the

²⁶⁷ *Verchin Lur*, Դէպի Հայաստան [To Armenia], 16 May 1919, no. 1572. ‘... Բայց ինչպէս վերը գրեցի, մեր դատին լուծումը կը պահանջէ որ կարելի եղածին չափ ... ըլլանք մեր երկրին մէջ: Ասիկա կարիք մըն է գոր ամէն հայ կրնայ բնագոյաբար ըմբռնել: ... Այսօր կարիք մըն է վեռադարնալ մեր հայրենի օջախը, կառչիլ անբաժանօրէն մեր հողերուն, ցոյց տալ քաղաքակիրթ աշխարհին թէ յամենայն դէպս շատ կը տարբերինք Հրեայ ժողովուրդէն որուն ստուար մեծամասնութիւնը տարտղնած եւ արմատացած այլուր, պիտի դժկաւեր երթալ հաստատուիլ Պաղեստին, հակառակ Հրեայ ազգասերներու եւ ազնիւ սիօնականներու աննկուն ջանքերուն:’

Armenian dailies²⁶⁸ such as *Jagadamard*: ‘It has been a year that the Armenian flag waved on top of the proud and majestic Mount Ararat. It has been a year that the small Armenian state is making great efforts to form the nucleus of Great and United Armenia’.²⁶⁹

In an interview, Patriarch Zaven gave to the *Alemdar* daily, speaking about the repatriation of the Armenian refugees to the new Armenian state and the possible Kurdish problem in the region, he maintained that in order to restore welfare and security, the Armenians would not need the backing of the Allied forces, as they had a regular army consisting of 30,000 soldiers and an additional volunteer corps of 20,000 men. Further, the Patriarch stated that Erzurum would be the capital of the ‘United Armenian state’, given its central position and the role it had played in Armenian history as a cultural, religious, and social centre.²⁷⁰

2.11. Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated how the collective political position of the Ottoman Armenian community pivoted from pro-Ottoman to pro-Armenian, pre- and post-signing of the Armistice of Mudros, respectively. The change in the Ottoman Armenians’ collective position toward the political developments happened within a very short period. On the one hand, there are indications of a pro-Ottoman approach

²⁶⁸ Հ.Յ. Դաշնակցութիւն, Միացեալ Եւ Անկախ Հայաստան [United and Independent Armenia] (Պոլիս: 1919), pp. 104-12.

²⁶⁹ *Jagadamard*, Հայաստանի Հանրապետութիւնը Կորիզ Մեծ Հայաստանի [The Armenian State as the Nucleus of Great Armenia], 17 May 1919, no. 157. ‘... Արդէն տարի մըն է որ սեզ ու վսեմ Արարատին վրայ կը ծածանի հայկական եռագոյնը ու տարի մըն է որ Հայաստանի փոքրիկ հանրապետութիւնը գերագոյն ճիգը կընէ կազմելու կորիզը Մեծ ու Միացեալ Հայաստանին:’

²⁷⁰ *Alemdar*, ‘Ermeni Patriğinin Beyanı’ [The Statements of Armenian Patriarch], 12 April 1919, no. 111.

of the Ottoman Armenians before the Armistice of Mudros, including publications regarding Turkish-Armenian brotherhood; on the other hand, there is ample evidence that the political position of the Ottoman Armenians was reshaped after the signing of the Armistice of Mudros. The Ottoman Armenians started to identify themselves as part of the 'United Armenia' project, organised aid campaigns for their compatriots in the Caucasus, and displayed the Armenian flag together with the flags and posters of the Allied Powers.

It is crucial to underscore these indicators which reflect the transformation of the Armenian political position. Firstly, when rumours of the signing of the Armistice of Mudros first spread through the community, thousands of Armenians rushed to the streets and greeted each other, crying, 'Christ is risen!'. This celebration was the beginning of a new chapter in the Ottoman Armenians' history, which would last until the defeat of the Greek army in Anatolia by the Nationalists in 1922. The publishing of the population statistics of the Ottoman Armenians in the Armenian dailies can be considered as a second indicator. The primary aim of publishing the population statistics was to demonstrate the 'Armenianness' of the Vilayât-ı Sitte, which supposedly evidenced the pro-Armenian approach of the Ottoman Armenian community. Based on the Wilson Principles, the Ottoman Armenian press propagated the right to independence of the Ottoman Armenians, arguing that the majority of the population in the Vilayât-ı Sitte was of Armenian origin. The donation campaigns organised by the Armenian societies which were established in the various districts of Istanbul could be seen as a third indicator for the transformation of the Armenian political position, as they demonstrated the community's support for the Armenian Republic, which was seen as the nucleus of the 'Greater Armenia'. Following the Armistice of Mudros, the Ottoman Armenians established a friendship with the

Romioi to pursue independence, with the additional help of the Allied Powers. This movement can be viewed as in opposition to the Ottoman government, and therefore the Romioi-Armenian friendship can be seen as a fourth indicator, to be discussed in the next chapter.

As argued in this chapter, all layers of the Armenian community in the Ottoman Empire expressed their ardent support for Armenian independence, regardless of political orientation. The Armenian dailies published hundreds of articles advocating for the establishment of an independent Armenia in the eastern provinces. What is crucial for our discussion is that, as argued in this chapter, with the emergence of external support, the Armenian community was mobilised within a very short period of time. As discussed in this chapter, the case of Ottoman Armenians is similar to that of Hungarians in Romania, Moldova, and Yugoslavia in 1990s. Thus, as argued, the reactions of the Ottoman Armenians *vis-à-vis* the political developments can be analysed within the framework of the ethnic bargaining theory. Furthermore, according to the ethnic bargaining theory, minorities accommodate repressive governments when there is no external support. The ethnic bargaining theory highlights two crucial inputs in minority radicalisation: majority repression and outside support.²⁷¹ Majority repression was started during the war by the CUP government when it declared that the Armenian population was to be deported, resulting in genocide. Repression by the majority was to be continued during the Armistice years by the activities of the Turkish National movement. Outside support, on the other hand, became apparent after the occupation of the Ottoman lands by the Allied Powers and the establishment of the Armenian State in the Caucasus. In the following chapters, I shall further discuss how the Ottoman Armenians were at first

²⁷¹ Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining*, p. 57.

radicalised by the ‘outside support’ but later accommodated and accepted the Kemalist regime after the ultimate victory of Nationalist forces in Anatolia in 1922.

This chapter contributes to the historiography of the period by utilising thus far unexplored material in Ottoman Turkish and Armenian newspapers of the time, especially by analysing the position of the Armenian community in the Ottoman Empire and the existing political atmosphere in the country. Indeed, discussion of the discourse in the local newspapers on the thinking and realities of the Armenian community in the Ottoman Empire has been absent in the recent literature on the history of the Armistice period.

The establishment of the Romioi-Armenian friendship was a milestone in the evolution of the Armenian political position. Following the Armistice of Mudros, both the Romioi in Istanbul, Izmir and Trabzon, as well as the Armenians scattered throughout the Empire, disseminated propaganda based on the Wilson Principles, which they argued legitimised the Greeks’ demand for an independent state in the Eastern Black Sea region and the Armenians’ demand for an independent state in the Vilayât-ı Sitte, despite the fact that they no longer constituted the majority, due to the wartime massacres and deportations. The foundation of the Romioi-Armenian friendship underlines the fact that the Ottoman Armenians no longer supported the idea of Ottomanism but had become ardent supporters of the right to self-determination. Therefore, a friendship with the Romioi, the majority of whom were also seeking independence from the Ottoman government in particular regions of Anatolia, could be understood as one of the vital turning points in the transformation of the Armenian political position during this period. The following chapter will scrutinise the Romioi-Armenian friendship, which is an important development in

understanding the political position of the Ottoman Armenians at the beginning of the Armistice period.

CHAPTER III

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ROMIOI-ARMENIAN FRIENDSHIP

3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter has analysed how the political position in the Armenian community was transformed from a pro-Turkish approach to one of pro-Entente following the signing of the Armistice of Mudros and the developments regarding the establishment of ‘United Armenia’. This chapter further explores the pro-Entente approach of the Armenian community by analysing the establishment of the Romioi-Armenian friendship association.²⁷² I call the Greek Orthodox communities of Western Anatolia, Central Anatolia, the Black Sea, and Istanbul as the greater Romioi (Rum) community, who were subjects of the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottoman cities were designed to have religiously defined neighbourhoods to create a coexistence for the communities.²⁷³ Each *mahalle* (neighbourhood) was designed to be populated by a certain religious group, either Muslim, Christian, or Jewish, with the latter two granted cultural and social autonomy.²⁷⁴ However, this coexistence of religious communities in the Empire was significantly changed following the demands of Christian communities for independence in the Balkan region throughout the nineteenth century. The Greek independence won in 1821 was followed by that of the Serbs and Bulgarians in 1878 and in 1908, respectively. The

²⁷² A version of this chapter has been published as Ari Şekeryan, ‘Romioi–Armenian Friendship in the Ottoman Empire During the Armistice Period (1918-1923)’, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/13530194.2017.1388766.

²⁷³ Nicholas Doumanis, *Before the Nation: Muslim-Christian Coexistence and Its Destruction in Late Ottoman Anatolia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 23.

²⁷⁴ Feroz Ahmad, *The Young Turks and the Ottoman Nationalities: Armenians, Greeks, Albanians, Jews and Arabs, 1909-1918* (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2014), p. 2.

Sublime Porte embarked upon a campaign of Western-style reforms to end discrimination against non-Muslims as well as to centralise the imperial administration.²⁷⁵ Ottomanism was introduced as the new imperial citizenship in an effort to attract non-Muslims to display their fealty to the state.²⁷⁶ All individuals born of an Ottoman father were accepted as Ottomans, regardless of ethnic or religious origin.²⁷⁷ However, these reforms were unsuccessful in returning to the previous intercommunal society. Christian communities of the Ottoman Empire began to pursue secessionist policies to break free from the Ottoman yoke. After achieving independence in 1829, for the rest of the century, Greek politicians sought to expand the borders of the state, aiming at liberating the Greek Orthodox populations in Macedonia, Thrace, and Western Anatolia.²⁷⁸ The national awakening among the Ottoman Armenians, however, first emerged only after the founding of the Hunchak Party in 1887 and that of the ARF in 1890.

Until the second half of the nineteenth century, formal relations between the Armenian and Romioi communities of the Ottoman Empire were managed by the two Patriarchates in Istanbul, taking place in an environment in which there was no room for political affiliations. Indeed, the existence of political institutions within the Ottoman Empire was not permitted, leaving the Armenian and Romioi clergymen as the only means for the two communities to express their views to one another. Since the structural features of the Ottoman *millet* system provided a degree of ‘elbow room’ for the religious authorities of the non-Muslim communities, the relationships were initiated, developed, and dissolved by their decisions. The denominational

²⁷⁵ Doumanis, *Before the Nation: Muslim-Christian Coexistence and Its Destruction in Late Ottoman Anatolia*, pp. 25-26.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

²⁷⁷ Ahmad, *The Young Turks and the Ottoman Nationalities: Armenians, Greeks, Albanians, Jews and Arabs, 1909-1918*, p. 4.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

differences and the general political inactivity of the clergymen in producing political agendas left the two communities in a state of political deadlock. At the civic level, the Armenian and Romioi communities in the Ottoman Empire—particularly the upper socio-economic classes of those communities, who tended to reside in cities such as Istanbul, Izmir, Adana, and Trabzon—were engaged in a rivalry in the fields of economics and intellectualism.²⁷⁹ This competition in the ecclesiastical and social realms was a constant state and in fact played a vital role in the formation of Romioi-Armenian relations. On the other hand, in terms of culture, the two communities were closely related. There were *Hay-Horoum* villages in various parts of Anatolia where the Romioi spoke Armenian as their mother tongue, and in Izmir, for instance, the Armenian community was able to speak Greek.²⁸⁰

The relationship between the two communities became complex and interest-based after the emergence of the political movements within Ottoman society.²⁸¹ It should be noted that prior to the Balkan Wars in 1912, the Anatolian Romioi community did not involve itself in the political struggle of its compatriots in Greece,

²⁷⁹ I. K. Hassiotis, 'Greek Foreign Policy towards the Armenian Question: A Historical Survey', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 36, no. 2 (2012): p. 222; I. K. Hassiotis, 'Historical Background to the Greek and Armenian National Movements: An Initial Comparison', in *To Hellenikon: Studies in Honor of Speros Vryonis, Jr.* (Athens: Aristide D. Caratzas, 1993), pp. 294-95; I. K. Hassiotis, 'The Armenian Genocide and the Greeks: Response and Records (1915-1923)', in *The Armenian Genocide: History, Politics, Ethics*, ed. Richard Hovannisian (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), pp. 133-34.

²⁸⁰ Hervé Georgelin, 'Perception of the Other's Fate: What Greek Orthodox Refugees from the Ottoman Empire Reported about the Destruction of Ottoman Armenians', *Journal of Genocide Research* 10, no. 1 (2008): pp. 62-63.

²⁸¹ For the emergence of political life in the Ottoman Empire, see Mete Tunçay and Erik Jan Zürcher, eds., *Socialism and Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1994); Tarık Zafer Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler*, [The Political Parties in Turkey] 3 vols. (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2015); Kemal Karpat, *Turkey's Politics: The Transition to a Multi-Party System* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), pp. 3-31; D. A. Rustow, 'The Development of Political Parties in Turkey', in *Political Parties and Political Development*, by Joseph La Palombara and Myron Weiner (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), pp. 107-34; Çağlar Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey: A Study in Capitalist Development* (London: Verso, 1987), pp. 7-70.

instead remaining loyal to the Ottoman Empire.²⁸² However, particularly for the Greek politicians, the Armenians were natural allies in the case of Turkish-Greek tensions.²⁸³ Especially after the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-1878, when the ‘Armenian Question’ was publicly raised and the erstwhile *millet-i sadıka* (loyal nation) of the Ottoman Empire was no longer accepted as ‘loyal’ to the Porte, the pragmatic approach of the Greek politicians saw the Armenians as sure partners who could be brought into the Greek-Turkish conflict as allies.²⁸⁴ However, the Greek policy makers betrayed an inconsistency in their approach towards the Armenians. For instance, in the summer of 1905, when the Greek authorities discovered ammunition which was being transferred to Anatolia via Piraeus to be supplied to the ARF, the authorities arrested those accused of transferring the ammunition.²⁸⁵ The Greek authorities declared the Armenian revolutionaries to be as ‘harmful’ as the Bulgarian *komitajis* who sought to destabilise the borders in the Near East.²⁸⁶ As

²⁸² Doumanis, *Before the Nation: Muslim-Christian Coexistence and Its Destruction in Late Ottoman Anatolia*, pp. 32-33.

²⁸³ Hassiotis, ‘Greek Foreign Policy Towards the Armenian Question: A Historical Survey’, p. 222.

²⁸⁴ The Armenian community in the Ottoman Empire was designated as *millet-i sadıka* by the Ottoman Turks because of the loyalty of the Armenians and their disinterest in the independence movement of the Balkan nations. Because of this loyalty, especially after Greek independence, the Armenians were favoured by the Sublime Porte and given the posts previously held by Greeks. See Elke Hartmann, ‘The “Loyal Nation” and Its Deputies. The Armenians in the First Ottoman Parliament’, in *The First Ottoman Experiment in Democracy*, eds. Christoph Herzog and Malek Sharif, (Würzburg: Ergon in Kommission, 2010), pp. 187-222; Hassiotis, ‘Historical Background to the Greek and Armenian National Movements: An Initial Comparison’, pp. 297-98.

²⁸⁵ Hassiotis, ‘Greek Foreign Policy Towards the Armenian Question: A Historical Survey’, p. 223.

²⁸⁶ Hassiotis, ‘The Armenian Genocide and the Greeks: Response and Records (1915-1923)’, pp. 132-33. For bandit movements in the Balkans in the Ottoman Empire, see Hasan Ünal, ‘Ottoman Policy During the Bulgarian Independence Crisis, 1908-9: Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria at the Outset of the Young Turk Revolution’, *Middle Eastern Studies* 34, no. 4 (1998): pp. 135-76; John S. Koliopoulos, *Brigands with a Cause: Brigandage and Irredentism in Modern Greece 1821-1912* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); Kemal Karpat, ‘The Balkan National States and Nationalism: Image and Reality’, *Islamic Studies* 36, no. 2/3 (1997): pp. 329-59; M. Hüdai Şentürk, *Osmanlı Devleti’nde Bulgar Meselesi (1850-1875)* [The Bulgarian Problem in the Ottoman Empire (1850-1875)] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu,

Ioannis K. Hassiotis argues, this inconsistency can also be seen in the Greek dailies. On the one hand, Athens-based dailies strongly criticised the establishment of an Armenian state within the borders of the Ottoman Empire, while on the other hand, the dailies such as *Akropolis*, *Asty*, *Estia* and *Makedonia* criticised the Greek government of indifference towards the Sublime Porte's aggressive anti-Armenian policy.²⁸⁷ Furthermore, the alliance between the CUP and the ARF only increased the Greek authorities' suspicions of the Armenians. Thus, the Greeks preferred to keep a distance with the Armenian political movements.²⁸⁸

After the Revolution of 1908, however, Greek policy began to change when the Ottoman deputies of Romioi origin were elected to the Ottoman parliament and collaborated with the Armenian deputies to create common policies.²⁸⁹ In 1912, the clandestine Romioi Constantinople Organization recommended that the two communities band together.²⁹⁰ Nonetheless, no major cooperation existed between the two communities during the wartime. The Armenian Patriarch Zaven was sent into exile, and the Armenian intellectuals were mostly deported from Istanbul, with the majority losing their lives en route. The conservative Ecumenical Patriarch Germanos V, in his elderly state, chose not to involve himself in such matters.²⁹¹

1992); Paschalis M. Kitromilides, "Imagined Communities" and the Origins of the National Question in the Balkans', *European History Quarterly* 19 (1989): pp. 149-94.

²⁸⁷ Hassiotis, 'Greek Foreign Policy Towards the Armenian Question: A Historical Survey', p. 223.

²⁸⁸ Hassiotis, 'The Armenian Genocide and the Greeks: Response and Records (1915-1923)', p. 135. For the relationship between the ARF and the CUP, see Kaligian, *Armenian Organization and Ideology under Ottoman Rule: 1908-1914*; Suny, *They Can Live in the Desert but Nowhere Else': A History of the Armenian Genocide*, pp. 149-55.

²⁸⁹ For the analysis of the Revolution of 1908 in the Ottoman Empire, see Bedross Der Matossian, *Shattered Dreams of Revolution: From Liberty to Violence in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014).

²⁹⁰ Hassiotis, 'Greek Foreign Policy Towards the Armenian Question: A Historical Survey', p. 224. For the history of the Society of Constantinople, see A. Souliotes-Nicolaides, *Organosis Konstantinoupoleos* [The Society of Constantinople] (Athens: Dodoni, 1984).

²⁹¹ Hassiotis, 'Greek Foreign Policy Towards the Armenian Question: A Historical Survey', p. 226.

The Romioi-Armenian friendship which emerged after the signing of the Armistice of Mudros in October 1918 portrays a unique chapter in the history of the Romioi-Armenian relations, as during this particular period, the two communities established strong ties of friendship which united them in opposition to the Ottoman state. The only period in which the two communities maintained a consistent friendship was the Armistice years, which has not yet been comprehensively analysed by historians. This chapter is a novel attempt to explore the extent of the Romioi-Armenian friendship during the Armistice period by benefiting from an extensive collection of primary sources such as Armenian and Ottoman Turkish newspapers which have not been used in the recent historiography on the subject matter. The Armenian and Ottoman Turkish dailies which were published in Istanbul and Izmir were methodically examined in depth to trace the intercommunal relations between the Armenian and Romioi communities.

It should be noted here that the willingness of the Armenian community to establish a friendship with the Romioi community represents the pro-Allied position of the community. Therefore, within the framework of our theoretical discussion, I suggest that the community leadership and the Armenian Patriarchate aimed at establishing close connections with the Romioi community, as being friends with the Romioi community and Greece meant friendship with the Allied Powers. This was seen as a way of establishing connections with the ‘external support’ needed. Throughout the duration of Armenian-Romioi relations, as demonstrated above, the Armistice period was the only period of time in which the two communities aimed at working together on the political field—both had secessionist ambitions and received support from the same source, the Allied Powers. Indeed, the effort of institutional Armenian-Romioi friendship through a formal organisation was part of the

mobilisation process discussed above. It further supports the main argument that in the presence of an external support, minorities mobilise and radicalise for gaining independence.

Before moving to the subject matter, I shall provide the framework of the recent historiography on Romioi-Armenian relations, in particular examining the Armistice period.

The historiography on the Romioi-Armenian relations during the Armistice period is not rich. Indeed, no previous academic work has dealt with the topic directly. The authoritative works of Ioannis K. Hassiostis laid the foundation of the history of this subject matter. In his article entitled ‘Greek Foreign Policy Towards the Armenian Question: A Historical Survey’, Hassiostis portrays the Greek approach towards the Armenian community from the second half of the nineteenth century through the 1990s. While the Armistice period is not analysed in the article, he emphasises the importance of the Armistice period in the Romioi-Armenian relations as follows:

More was now done in the space of three years than had hitherto been achieved in half a century: official and systematic negotiations were held between the two sides at the two Patriarchates in Constantinople, Athens, Tiflis (Tbilisi), Yerevan (the capital of the young Armenian Republic), Paris, and London; efforts were made to engage in joint military action or at least to co-ordinate similar efforts in the Pontus in 1916-18, in the Kars region in 1918-19, in Cilicia in 1919, in Nicomedia (İzmit) in 1921, and in Smyrna in 1922; a common or co-ordinated relief programme was inaugurated for orphans and refugees; the Greek and the Armenian press of Constantinople and the Diaspora worked together...

Another article by Ioannis K. Hassiotis, ‘The Armenian Genocide and the Greeks: Response and Records (1915-23)’, examines Romioi-Armenian relations before 1915 and the subsequent Greek reactions to the Armenian massacres. The

article provides a survey of the primary Greek sources regarding the Armenian genocide and utilises reports from the Greek vice-consul sent from Anatolian towns regarding the deportation conditions of the Armenians.²⁹² Similarly, Hervé Georgelin analyses the Romioi responses to the Armenian genocide in his article entitled ‘Perception of the Other’s Fate: What Greek Orthodox Refugees from the Ottoman Empire Reported about the Destruction of Ottoman Armenians’.²⁹³

The authoritative work of Nicholas Doumanis examines the intercommunal relations in the Ottoman Empire by comparing the dynamics of the pre-nationalism period with those of the nationalism period. Doumanis analyses the socio-political life of the Anatolian Romioi and their reactions *vis-à-vis* political developments and how the perception of identity among the Greek Orthodox communities was shaped both during and after the wartime. Doumanis puts forward that the violence committed against Christians in Anatolia during WWI promoted the secessionist nationalism among the Romioi proletariat.²⁹⁴ The promotion of secessionist nationalism among the Anatolian Romioi community can be seen in the establishment of the Armenian-Romioi friendship, which strove for the independence of the two nations.

Feroz Ahmad examines the relations of the Christian and Jewish communities *vis-à-vis* the CUP and the Ottoman state.²⁹⁵ He explores how the non-Muslim minorities of the Ottoman Empire pursued secessionist political goals during an age of decolonization. However, his study lacks an adequate analysis of the intercommunal relations between Armenians, Greeks, and Muslims. Therefore, this

²⁹² Hassiotis, ‘The Armenian Genocide and the Greeks: Response and Records (1915-1923)’.

²⁹³ Georgelin, ‘Perception of the Other’s Fate: What Greek Orthodox Refugees from the Ottoman Empire Reported about the Destruction of Ottoman Armenians’.

²⁹⁴ Doumanis, *Before the Nation: Muslim-Christian Coexistence and Its Destruction in Late Ottoman Anatolia*, p. 157.

²⁹⁵ Ahmad, *The Young Turks and the Ottoman Nationalities: Armenians, Greeks, Albanians, Jews and Arabs, 1909-1918*.

chapter, which aims to analyse the relations between Armenians and Romioi during the Armistice years, contributes to the body of literature.

Besides these works, no other analysis exists to my knowledge in the English-language historiography of Romioi-Armenian relations during the Armistice years. In the Armenian language, though, there is a limited amount of academic work concentrating on this subject matter. H. Avedissian's articles, 'Greek Archive Documents on Greek-Armenian Relations in the Period of the First Republic (1918-1920)' and 'Greek-Armenian Relations in 1919-1920 (Documents and Materials of Armenian State Archives)', shed light on the diplomatic relations between the Armenian government established in the Caucasus and the Greek government.²⁹⁶ However, both articles focus on the diplomatic relations between the two states and do not analyse the relations between the Armenian and Greek communities in the Ottoman Empire during the Armistice years. Turkish historiography, on the other hand, includes work on the Romioi-Armenian relations, narrowed in scope to the 'betrayal of the Armenians and the Romioi' against the Ottoman state during the Armistice years. According to the prevailing rhetoric of the Turkish historiography, the Armenians and the Romioi worked against the interests of the Ottomans in international politics during the Armistice years. Limited to biased approaches, the academic works published in Turkish fail to analyse the Romioi-Armenian relations

²⁹⁶ Հ. Ա. Ավետիսյան, 'Հունական Արխիվային Փաստաթղթեր Հայ-Հունական Հարաբերությունների Մասին Առաջին Հանրապետության Շրջանում (1918-1920թթ.)' [Greek Archival Documents on the Armenian-Greek Relations During the First Republic Period (1918-1920)], Լրաբեր Հասարակական Գիտությունների, no. 1 (1999): pp. 22-33; Հ. Ա. Ավետիսյան, 'Հայ-Հունական Հարաբերությունները 1919-1920 Թվականներին (Հայաստանի Պետական Արխիվների Փաստաթղթեր)' [The Armenian-Greek Relations During the Years 1919-1920 (The Official Documents of the Armenia State Archives)], Լրաբեր Հասարակական Գիտությունների, no. 2 (2000): pp. 192-210.

using a systematic methodology with an objective approach.²⁹⁷ As mentioned above, Romioi-Armenian relations during the Armistice period have not been comprehensively analysed by historians. This chapter tries to place the importance of the Armistice period in the wider context of Romioi-Armenian relations in the Ottoman Empire.

3.2. The Emergence of the Romioi-Armenian Friendship

The Romioi-Armenian friendship was established in the first days of the Armistice of Mudros, particularly in cities abroad such as Geneva and Manchester. In Geneva, in 1918, the *Ligue des Nationalités Opprimées de Turquie* (The Society of Oppressed Nations of Turkey) was founded with the participation of Armenian, Romioi, Arab, and Jewish refugees who had fled the Ottoman Empire during wartime.²⁹⁸ The manifesto of the society stated that its primary aim was to organise conferences, meetings, and solidarity celebrations, as well as to create networks to lobby the Allied

²⁹⁷ Ali Güler, 'Birinci Dünya Savaşı Sonrasında Rum-Ermeni İşbirliği', [The Armenian-Greek Alliance After the First World War] *Milli Kültür Dergisi* 74 (1990); Ramazan Erhan Güllü, 'Mondros Mütarekesi'nin Ardından Ermeni Ve Rum Patrikhanelerinin İşbirliği (30 Ekim 1918- 11 Ekim 1922)', [The Alliance Between the Armenian and the Romioi Patriarchates After the Armistice of Mudros] *ATAM*, no. 75 (November 2009), pp. 575-605; Rahmi Çiçek, 'Milli Mücadele'de Ermeni-Rum-Yunan İttifakı'nın Anadolu Basınındaki Yankıları', [The Reflections of the Alliance Between Armenian Romioi and Greek in the Anatolian Press] *Ankara Üniversitesi Türk İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü Atatürk Yolu Dergisi* 2, no. 6 (1990), pp. 295-306; Hasan Ali Polat, 'Milli Mücadele Yıllarında Marmara Bölgesinde Faaliyet Gösteren Rum ve Ermeni Çeteleri', [The Romioi and Armenian Bands in the Marmara Region During the National Struggle Period] *Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 26 (2011), pp. 263-290.

²⁹⁸ Ali Güler, 'Birinci Dünya Savaşı Sonrasında Rum-Ermeni İşbirliği', [The Armenian-Greek Alliance After the First World War] p. 45; Selahattin Salıxık, *Tarih Boyunca Türk-Yunan İlişkileri ve Etniki Eterya* [The Turkish-Greek Relations Throughout History and Etniki Eterya] (Istanbul: Kitapçılık Ticaret Ltd. Şirketi Yayınları, 1968), p. 182; Salim Gökçen, 'Mütareke Dönemi ve Sonrasında Rum-Ermeni İttifakı' [The Armenian-Greek Alliance During the Armistice Period] (Uluslararası Türk-Ermeni İlişkileri ve Büyük Güçler Sempozyumu, Erzurum: Atatürk Üniversitesi, 2012), p. 177.

Powers.²⁹⁹ In Manchester, in November 1918, the prominent members of the Armenian, Romioi, and Assyrian communities sent a joint telegram to the Allied Powers to applaud the Allied victory and demand the independence of the Christian minorities from the ‘brutal Turks’.³⁰⁰

Following the de facto occupation of Istanbul by the Allied forces on 12 November 1918, relations between the Armenians and Romioi entered a new period, being ‘closer’ than ever before.³⁰¹ Particularly, the religious authorities of the two communities looked to foster a friendship between the two Christian nations by finding common ground in the shared calamities that the two communities suffered during the wartime. The initial offer was made by the Romioi Metropolitan of Çatalca, Bishop Joachim, who was fluent in Armenian and had close connections with the local Armenian community. He suggested that the two nations should organise a friendship club in order to improve relations.³⁰² Meanwhile, the popular Armenian newspaper *Ariamard* claimed that the Romioi-Armenian friendship was established long before the Ottoman constitution, crediting the efforts of Dikran Yergat’.³⁰³ When Dikran Yergat’ migrated to Athens, he defended Greek independence and supported the local Greek population in their fight against the Ottoman government. As an Armenian intellectual, Dikran Yergat’ gained the support of Greek public opinion and

²⁹⁹ Dimitri Kitsikis, *Yunan Propagandası* [The Greek Propaganda] (Istanbul: Kaynak Kitaplar, 1974), 184.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

³⁰¹ For analysis of the Allied occupation of Istanbul, see Bilge Criss, *Istanbul Under Allied Occupation, 1918-1923* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 1999).

³⁰² *Ariamard*, ‘Հայ Եւ Յոյն Եղբայրակցութիւնը Եւ Տիրբան Երկաթ’ [The Armenian-Greek Friendship and Dikran Yergat’], 25 December 1918, no. 31.

³⁰³ Dikran Yergat’ was born in Istanbul in 1870. At the age of 10, he moved to Paris with his mother. He specialised in French language and literature, and published articles in French journals regarding Oriental culture, politics, and the Armenian issue. He returned to Istanbul in 1893 and worked as a French teacher in Armenian schools. He wrote articles for the *Hairenik* Armenian daily. In 1895, he moved to Greece and published articles in the Greek dailies. He died in 1899. See Գառնիկ Ստեփանյան, ‘Տիրբան Երկաթ’, *Կենսագրական Բառարան* [‘Dikran Yergat’ in Bibliographical Dictionary], (Yerevan: Hayasdan, 1973), p. 314.

the spectrum of political circles, so that when he died, the Greek parliament declared a state of national mourning in his name.³⁰⁴ Indeed, during the Greco-Turkish war in 1897, the volunteers of the Hnch‘ag party, around six hundred individuals, established an Armenian division under the command of Nishan Mirakean to assist the Greek army.³⁰⁵

The idea of the establishment of a Romioi-Armenian friendship committee elicited positive reactions among the Armenian dailies, which asserted that the two nations were brothers in fate, as they both had survived catastrophes which could have resulted in complete and total annihilation. Thus, having the shared experience of enduring through such ordeals, it seemed natural that the Armenians and Romioi would establish a friendship.³⁰⁶ According to the articles published in the Armenian dailies on this topic, it was logical to ally with the Romioi because the ruling power had targeted these two Christian minority groups throughout the centuries. An Armenian individual, A.S., wrote: ‘The CUP ideology desired to deal a blow to the Christian minorities and, in this way, wanted to get rid of the dangerous and troublesome “germs” of the country. Afterwards it would have been possible for the CUP to rule the country under their dictatorship and to lead it to paradise’. According

³⁰⁴ *Ariamard*, ‘Հայ Եւ Յոյն Եղբայրակցութիւնը Եւ Տիբրան Երկար’ [The Armenian-Greek Friendship and Dikran Yergat], 25 December 1918, no. 31.

³⁰⁵ Գևորգ Վարդանյան, ‘Հոյն Բնակչությունն Օսմանյան Կայսրությունում Եվ Փոքրասիական Աղետը’ [The Greek Population in the Ottoman Empire and the Asia Minor Catastrophe] (Yerevan: The Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, 2013), p. 135. For the history of Greco-Turkish in 1897, see Theodore G. Tatsios, *The Megali Idea and the Greek Turkish War of 1897* (Bradenton: East European Monograph, 1984); G.H. Perris, *The Eastern Crisis of 1897 and British Policy in the Near East* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1897); Metin Hülagü, *Türk-Yunan İlişkileri Çerçevesinde 1897 Osmanlı-Yunan Savaşı* [The Greco-Turkish War of 1897 Within the Frame of Turkish-Greek Relations] (Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi, 2001).

³⁰⁶ *Verchin Lur*, Հայ Եւ Յոյն Եղբայրակցութիւնը [The Armenian-Greek Friendship], 21 December 1918, no: 1450.

to A.S., the strategy of Greek statesman Eleftherios Venizelos³⁰⁷ saved the Greek population from atrocities similar to those experienced by Armenians at the hands of the CUP, and the Armenians should be ‘grateful to Eleftherios Venizelos’ for his efforts to advocate on behalf of the Armenians at the Paris Peace Conference.³⁰⁸ There was a visible increase in sympathy in Armenian public opinion toward the Romioi community during the first months of the Armistice. The idea of Romioi independence in Asia Minor was fully supported by the Armenians. The *Tashink*‘ daily elaborated in an editorial: ‘We do not understand why the Romioi in Asia Minor are supposed to live under the auspices of a primitive administration, when yesterday’s slaves in the farthest parts of Africa have started to live in complete independence’. According to the daily, Izmir had been a Hellenic city from its very first centuries, and during the Ottoman period it was also labelled as ‘gâvur Izmir’, referencing its Christian tradition. The daily argued that the Romioi in Asia Minor, particularly Western Anatolia, deserved to be independent.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁷ Eleftherios Kyriakou Venizelos (1864-1936), a Greek statesman, was the leader of the Liberal Party. He was elected as prime minister of Greece in 1910 and served until November 1920 when he lost re-election. During his time in office, Greece participated in the Balkan Wars, doubling its size and population. Because of the pro-Allied policy of Venizelos during WWI, Greece was awarded Izmir and its surrounding areas by the Allied Powers. Venizelos returned to politics in 1922 after a two-year break and pursued a policy of peace and stability by reaching an agreement with the newly established Republic of Turkey.

³⁰⁸ *Zhoghovurt*, Հայ Եւ Յոյն Եղբայրակցութիւն [The Armenian-Greek Friendship], 30 December 1918, no. 58.

³⁰⁹ *Tashink*‘, Փոքր Ասիոյ Հելլենականութիւնը [The Asia Minor Hellenism], 28 November 1918, no. 1802.



Figure 7. The Portrait of Venizelos (*Koyamard*, 15 August 1920)

The strengthening of the Romioi-Armenian friendship was in part based on the two communities' shared religion of Christianity. The feasts and church masses were transformed into a public space for the individuals from the two nations to share thoughts and to create common policies, with many such events taking place in Istanbul. On 30 December 1918, for instance, a special ceremony was held in honour of Armenians and Romiois who lost their lives during the wartime. The liturgy was led by Father Knel Kalemkarean at the Armenian church in the Pera district, *Surb Yerrortut iwn* (Holy Trinity Church), with the participation of the local Armenian community as well as the Romioi of Pera. It was reported that another liturgy was to

be held on 12 January 1919, again at Surb Yerrortut‘iwn.³¹⁰ On that day, the church was so full of Armenian and Romioi attendees that they spilled out of the church courtyard. Father Knel Kalemkarean and the Greek Orthodox Metropolitan Bishop of Kayseri preached sermons on Romioi-Armenian friendship and the common sufferings of the two ‘brother nations’ during wartime. Efthymios Kanellopoulos, representative of the Greek government; Kunduriotis, one of the commanders of the Greek fleet; a group of Romioi clergymen from the Ecumenical Patriarchate; B. Tahtajean, representative of the Armenian government; Dr. Antipa, representative of the Greek Red Cross; members of the Greek press; B. Vutiras, president of the Bank of Athens; and hundreds of Armenian and Greek businessmen were present at the liturgy. After the liturgy, a reception was held in the hall of *Azkayin Madenataran* (the National Library), which was decorated with the Armenian and Greek flags. When the prominent guests left the church after the reception, hundreds of Armenians and Romioi who were waiting in the courtyard shouted slogans for the Romioi-Armenian friendship.³¹¹ On 5 February 1919, the Armenian community in the Kadıköy district, together with Father Knel Kalemkarean, organised a religious ceremony in the Armenian church *Sourp T‘akawor* (Holy King) in memory of the Armenians and Romioi who lost their lives during the war. There were two large crowns inside the church (one for the Armenians and the other for the Romioi), the seats were decorated with colourful ribbons consisting of the colours of the Greek and Armenian flags, and there were posters written in Armenian and Greek. The Greek Orthodox Metropolitan Bishop of Kadıköy, Ghrizarios, together with a group of Romioi clergymen attended the gathering and spoke about Romioi-Armenian

³¹⁰ *Jagadamard*, Հոգեհանգիստ Հայ Եւ Յոյն Նահատակներուն Համար [Requiem for the Armenian and Greek Martyrs], 11 January 1919, no. 48.

³¹¹ *Jagadamard*, Երէկուան Հոգեհանգիստը Հայ Եւ Յոյն Նահատակներուն Համար [Yesterday’s Requiem for the Armenian and Greek Martyrs], 13 January 1919, no. 50.

friendship. After the religious ceremony, the crowd moved to the hall of the Armenian club, which was located at the rear of the church. The meeting commenced with the singing of the Armenian patriotic march, *Pamp Vorodan* (Բամբ Որոտան), followed by the national anthems of Greece, Britain, France, and Italy. Besides the local Armenian and Romioi community of Kadıköy, the Jewish religious leaders together with Jewish businessmen and Allied military officers were present at this gathering. The meeting ended with a slogan: ‘Long live the Romioi-Armenian alliance, long live Bogos Nubar and Venizelos, long live the Entente!’³¹² Another ceremony was held in memory of the Armenian and Romioi lost in battle on the same day at the Greek Orthodox church in the Beşiktaş district, with the participation of local Armenian religious and community leaders.³¹³ The local Armenian and Greek Orthodox clergymen of the Makriköy (Bakirköy) district gathered for a religious ceremony at the district’s Armenian church and held a reception afterwards. It is significant that B. K. İwtiwjiwean, who was serving as a clergyman in the Izmit region, took the floor and displayed two photos of the Bible, which he asserted had been used as a floor mat by the Turks. It was propagated that the Armenian and Romioi should unite against the Muslims to defend Christianity.³¹⁴ In Adana, the Armenian and Romioi communities held a religious ceremony at the Greek Orthodox church in honour of the fallen. The Greek Orthodox clergymen preached both in Greek and in Armenian, and at the end of the ceremony the same slogans were shouted: ‘Long live Bogos Nubar and Venizelos, long live Armenia, long live the Entente!’³¹⁵

³¹² *Zhamanag*, Հայ Եւ Հէլլէն Ապագայ Դաշնակցութեան Հիմերը [The Foundation of the Future Armenian-Greek Alliance], 6 February 1919, no. 3443.

³¹³ *Ibid.*

³¹⁴ *Zhamanag*, Հայ Եւ Յոյն Եղբայրակցութիւն [The Armenian-Greek Friendship], 25 February 1919, no. 3454.

³¹⁵ *Zhamanag*, Հայ Եւ Յոյն Եղբայրակցութիւն [The Armenian-Greek Friendship], 28 February 1919, no. 3457.



Figure 8. The Portrait of Venizelos (*Horizon*, 27 December 1919)

While these developments were occurring in the capital of the Ottoman Empire, on the other side of the Aegean Sea, the Greek parliament was discussing the importance of the Romioi-Armenian friendship. The Greek deputy and famous lawyer M. Stamatis brought forward the moral responsibility of the Greek nation toward the Armenians in the 16 January 1919 parliamentary session. He stated that the Armenians had struggled for the Allied cause during the war and that they shared the same fate as the Anatolian Greeks. Therefore, M. Stamatis argued that the Greek parliament should pass a statement declaring the full support of the Greek government regarding Armenian independence, which was soon to be discussed at the Paris Peace Conference. The speaker of the Greek parliament, M. Sofulis, similarly supported the

proposal of M. Stamatis and claimed that there were strong ties between the two ‘brother nations’, as they had fought for the same ideals throughout their centuries under Ottoman rule. The following statement was announced by the parliament:

Following the latest national struggle of the Armenian nation for restoration, with great sympathy, the Greek parliament wishes to see the efforts and demands of the Armenian nation accomplished and announces that the Greek government will demand the ultimate recognition of the righteous longings of the Armenian nation at the peace conference.

After the statement was read, it was noteworthy that regardless of their political affiliations, the entire parliament gave an extended standing ovation.³¹⁶ Both the ruling political circles and the opposition in the Greek parliament unanimously reflected the full support of the Greek nation for the Armenian case by highlighting the fact that ‘both nations had suffered during the war under the suppression of the common enemy’.³¹⁷

Armenian intellectuals were ardent supporters of the Romioi-Armenian friendship. Yenovk Armen, in an article in *Zhamanag*, echoed the notion of Armenians and Romioi as ‘brother nations’, unfortunately divided by ‘strange religious fanaticism’. He argued that there was no difference between the two nations, but only a dichotomy between the churches created by religious authorities, and it was that which was responsible for this centuries-long coldness in the relationship.

³¹⁶ *Jagadamard*, Երկու Քոյր Ազգերու Համերաշխութիւնը Աթէնքի խորհրդարանին Մէջ [The Harmony of the Two Brother Nations in the Parliament in Athens], 17 January 1919, no. 54. ‘Հելլէն խորհրդարանը խորին համակրութեամբ հետեւած ըլլալով հայ ցեղին վերահաստատութեան վերջին օրերուն տեղի ունեցած ազգային պայքարներուն, կը մաղթէ վերջնական յաջողութեամբ մը պսակուած տեսնել հայ ազգին ջանքերն ու պահանջները եւ յոյս կը յայտնէ որ կառավարութիւնը հաշտութեան համաժողովին մէջ իր ձեռնարկներուն միջոցին պահանջէ նաեւ վերջնական ճանաչումը հայ ժողովուրդին արդար ցանկութեանց:’

³¹⁷ *Zhamanag*, Հայ Եւ Յոյն Եղբայրակցութեան Արտայայտութիւններ Հելլէն Ժողովին Մէջ [Statements on the Armenian Greek Friendship in the Greek Parliament], 1 May 1919, no. 3509.

According to him, the Armenians would not have encountered ‘annihilation’ during the wartime had the two nations been united under ‘the flag of Christianity’. He wrote: ‘The hearts of Armenians and Romioi should keep carrying the deepest sympathy toward the symbols of the greatest ideal of the two nations, Bogos Nubar and Venizelos, who lead the destinies of the nations to the horizons of the brightest future’.³¹⁸ Yenovk Armen suggested the establishment of a new daily focusing on the Romioi-Armenian friendship and relations.³¹⁹ In response to his public support for the Romioi-Armenian friendship, a Greek Orthodox clergyman visited *Zhamanag* to discuss these ideas with Yenovk Armen. The archimandrite proposed that a joint commission of Armenian and Greek Orthodox clergymen and laymen should be established to improve the friendship and to discuss the religious topics that had caused separation between the two churches. According to the archimandrite, it was an ideal moment for the unification of the two churches.³²⁰

The development of the Romioi-Armenian friendship can be described under three aspects. The first was the political aspect, which was primarily between the Greek government and the Armenian government and delegation of Ottoman Armenians, led by Bogos Nubar. The second was the religious aspect, which was between the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Armenian Patriarchate in Istanbul. The third was the social aspect, which was the connection between Armenian, Greek, and Romioi public opinion created by Armenian, Greek, and Romioi intellectuals and dailies, as well as businessmen and ordinary people. In the religious dimension, the two churches were in close contact at this time. The suggestions made by the Greek

³¹⁸ *Zhamanag*, Հայ Եւ Յոյն Եղբայրակցութիւն [The Armenian-Greek Friendship], 18 January 1919, no. 3419.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*

³²⁰ *Zhamanag*, Հայ Եւ Յոյն Եղբայրակցութեան Շուրջը [Regarding Armenian-Greek Friendship], 30 January 1919, no. 3430.

archimandrite to Yenovk Armen in their meeting at *Zhamanag* reflected the desires of the churches. On 18 January 1919, for instance, the Armenian and Ecumenical Patriarchates submitted a joint statement to the Paris Peace Conference, including the demands of the two nations. The statement, which was signed by the Armenian Patriarch Zaven and the Greek *locum-tenens* (deputy), Bishop Dorotheos, included severe criticism of the Ottoman rule under which the Armenian and Greek communities had lived for centuries:

The approach of the Turkish nation never changed since it arrived in Asia Minor and Europe. The Turkish administration has used vulgar methods with a merciless conservatism. No reforms, neither the *Tanzimat* nor the Constitution, were sufficient to change this characteristic of the Ottoman government. . . . We want Greater Armenia, which has free and total access to the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. We, Greeks, will be delighted to see the unification of Cilicia with the six Armenian provinces. We, Armenians, hope to see the unification of Thrace, Istanbul, Aydın and Bursa provinces, as well as the Biga and Izmit regions with Greece.³²¹

The religious authorities contended that the Turks—and Muslims in general—‘had acted barbarously against the Christian minorities for centuries’ and it was no longer possible for the two Christian nations to live under Ottoman rule. It should be noted that the religious dimension of the Romioi-Armenian friendship was the core of the relations, in the sense that it created the public space for the social and political dimensions to flourish. For instance, the Armenian community celebrated the birth of Jesus Christ on 6 January 1919 at the Saint Stepanos Church in Izmir. The Greek Orthodox metropolitan Chrysostomos Kalafatis, together with a group of Greek Orthodox bishops, joined the religious rite, including liturgy, the blessing of holy oil, and the sprinkling of the Holy Cross with water. This was a historic moment in the

³²¹ Güllü, *Ermeni Sorunu ve Istanbul Ermeni Patrikhanesi (1878-1923)* [The Armenian Question and the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul (1878-1923)], p. 509.

sense that a group of Greek Orthodox clergymen were allowed to join the Armenian liturgy. Even more, the sermon was given by the Greek Orthodox metropolitan. During his sermon, Chrysostomos Kalafatis highlighted that the Romioi-Armenian friendship first emerged in the days of the Byzantine Empire, when many Armenians served for the glory of the Empire. The moment he concluded his sermon by praying for Woodrow Wilson, Lloyd George, Georges Clemenceau, Eleftherios Venizelos, and Bogos Nubar, the church was filled with applause and cries of ‘Zito Venizelos! Zito Bogos Nubar!’³²²After the liturgy, when the clergymen moved to the hall, the Romioi metropolitan blessed the Armenian flag, and the posters of Bogos Nubar and Eleftherios Venizelos which were hung in the courtyard.

3.3. The Establishment of the Romioi-Armenian Friendship Committee

The initial attempts to establish the Romioi-Armenian Friendship Committee were made by the Armenian Patriarch Zaven and prominent members of the two communities.³²³ Efthymios Kanellopoulos, the representative of the Greek government in Istanbul at the time, organised the first initiatives in order to facilitate the establishment of the Romioi-Armenian friendship, and Armenian and Romioi intellectuals published articles in the dailies to shape public opinion in line with their objectives. *Ati*, an Ottoman Turkish daily, printed that the Romioi metropolitan of Çatalca, Bishop Joachim Efendi, held meetings with prominent members of the

³²² *Tashink* ‘, Ծննդեան Տօնը [Christmas], 22 January 1919, no. 1848. ‘Long live Venizelos! Long live Bogos Nubar!’

³²³ Güllü, *Ermeni Sorunu ve Istanbul Ermeni Patrikhanesi (1878-1923)* [The Armenian Question and the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul (1878-1923)], p. 506; Bayar, Ben de Yazdım [And So I Wrote], p. 21. 6 December 1918 was the date in Sarıhan, *Kurtuluş Savaşı Günlüğü* [War of Independence Diary], vol. 1, p. 54; Yusuf Gedikli, *Pontus Meselesi* [The Pontus Question] (Istanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2008), p. 92; Bülent Atalay, *Fener Rum Ortodoks Patrikhanesi'nin Siyasi Faaliyetleri, 1908-1923* [The Political Activities of the Fener Rum Orthodox Patriarchate] (Istanbul: TATAV, 2001), p. 116.

Armenian community.³²⁴ On 29 January, more than eighty prominent Armenian and Romioi intellectuals, deputies, lawyers, teachers, and businessmen gathered at the *Elinikos Filologikos Sillogos Konstantinupoleos* (the Greek Syllogos) in Pera to establish the Romioi-Armenian Friendship Committee, as a result of the lobbying efforts of Torkom Kasarjean and M. Karamanov.³²⁵ E. Emmanuelidis, deputy in the Ottoman parliament; Sdep‘an Karaean, president of the Armenian Bar Association; and Dr. Vahan Balasanean made speeches on the importance of Romioi-Armenian cooperation. When Sdep‘an Karaean mentioned that the Armenian and Ecumenical Patriarchates jointly declared to the Ottoman government that the Armenians and Romioi would not enlist in the Ottoman army, the crowd in the hall applauded enthusiastically. Dr. Vahan Balasanean offered the unification of the Armenian and Greek Red Cross organisations in order to more effectively help refugees and orphans. Sdep‘an Karaean, Emmanuel Emmanuelidis, Dr. Vahan Balasanean, Dr. Teberios (Dr. Tuberianu), civil engineer M. Yazijjean, and M. Simirkotis (P. Simirioti) were elected as committee members, and Stavro Vuitiras (editor of *Neologos*) was elected as president.³²⁶

Michael Rodas, a Romioi intellectual who was also the correspondent of several French and Greek newspapers, travelled to Izmir and paid a visit to the *Tashink‘* daily’s offices. His editorial on the Romioi-Armenian friendship published in the columns of *Tashink‘* the following day stressed that while the Armenian nation had suffered during the war, now ‘the time for rebirth’ had come. He assured that

³²⁴ *Ati*, ‘Rumlar ve Ermeniler’ [Greeks and Armenians], 19 December 1918, no. 340.

³²⁵ *Jagadamard*, Հայ Եւ Յոյն Միութիւնը [The Armenian-Greek Association], 30 January 1919, no. 66.

³²⁶ *Zhamanag*, Հայ Եւ Յոյն Եղբայրակցութիւն [The Armenian-Greek Friendship], 30 January 1919, no. 3430.

regardless of their political affiliation, all the layers of Romioi public opinion desired to see the complete independence of the Armenian state in Eastern Anatolia.³²⁷

The Ecumenical Patriarchate intended to prepare a statement to submit to the Vatican to unite the Greek Orthodox, Armenian, Anglican, Old Catholic, and Roman Catholic churches under one umbrella. Furthermore, the Patriarchate established a commission consisting of representatives from different Christian churches to improve relationships between the Christian communities.³²⁸

When the Greek government presented its demands at the Paris Peace Conference three weeks before the Armenian delegation was to make its case, Eleftherios Venizelos openly insisted upon the establishment of an Armenian state in Eastern Anatolia, to include the Trabzon region, in which a considerable amount of Pontus-Greeks resided.³²⁹ The Pontus-Greek community consistently demanded their complete independence, seeking an area from Sinop to Artvin, including Amasya, Tokat, and Gümüşhane as the southern border. However, the Greek government expressed concerns about the security of such a Pontus-Greek state, as its distance from the Greek fatherland compromised its ability to receive military aid in times of crisis. Nonetheless, Venizelos insisted that the Pontus-Greek community join the Armenian government under an autonomous structure. Although the committee representing the Pontus-Greek community did not attempt to negotiate their independence, they paid visits to Tbilisi and Yerevan to engage in discussions related to the topic with the Armenian government. After prolonged negotiations, the Pontus-Greek community agreed to join the Republic of Armenia; however, they stipulated

³²⁷ *Tashink*, Յոյն Եւ Հայ Բարեկամութիւն [The Greek and Armenian Friendship], 26 January 1919, no. 1852.

³²⁸ *Jagadamard*, Հայ Եւ Յոյն Միութիւնը [The Armenian-Greek Association], 30 January 1919, no. 66.

³²⁹ *Jagadamard*, Մեր Դատը Բացարձակապէս Շահուած է [Our Case Has Definitely Been Won], 10 April 1919, no. 126.

that the structure of the government be a federation, refusing to join if the Armenian government maintained a unitary structure.³³⁰ Eleftherios Venizelos, particularly in his speeches made on 3 and 4 February 1919, expressed his support for the establishment of ‘United Armenia’ in the eastern provinces.³³¹ Bogos Nubar, in parallel to the statements of Venizelos, articulated that the Armenians supported the annexation of the regions in Western Anatolia to Greece.³³²

At the beginning of February 1919, after delivering his remarks at the Peace Conference, Eleftherios Venizelos became a hero to the Armenian press, second to Bogos Nubar. His portrait, together with that of Bogos Nubar, began to be published in the dailies, and his statements on Armenian independence drew particular attention. For instance, in *Tashink*, heroic adjectives were placed before his name: ‘... the great patriot and the vessel of the Hellenic nation who leads the nation to the prosperous shores through the stormy oceans, the Great Greek Venizelos...’³³³ The daily hoped that Eleftherios Venizelos would soon achieve his goals regarding Greek ambitions, so that he could then turn his attention fully to the Armenian cause. Therefore, a Greek victory in the Peace Conference would mean ‘a victory for the Armenian nation’.³³⁴ A group of Armenian authorities met with the Greek high commissioner of

³³⁰ Ավետիսյան Հ. Ա, ‘Հայ-Հունական Հարաբերությունները 1919-1920 Թվականներին (Հայաստանի պետական արխիվների փաստաթղթեր)’ [The Armenian-Greek Relations During the Years 1919-1920 (The Official Documents of the Armenia State Archives)], no. 2; Gökçen, ‘Mütareke Dönemi ve Sonrasında Rum-Ermeni İttifakı’, p. 180.

³³¹ Վարդանյան, Հույն Բնակչությունն Օսմանյան Կայսրությունում Եվ Փոքրասիական Աղետը [The Greek Population in the Ottoman Empire and the Asia Minor Catastrophe], p. 138.

³³² Güllü, ‘Mondros Mütarekesi’nin Ardından Ermeni Ve Rum Patrikhanelerinin İşbirliği (30 Ekim 1918- 11 Ekim 1922)’, [The Alliance Between the Armenian and Greek Patriarchates After the Armistice of Mudros] p. 588. Following these meetings, Arshag Chobanean published the speeches in a book titled *Fraternité Arméno-Greque* [The Armenian-Greek Brotherhood] in Paris. See Kitsikis, *Yunan Propagandası*, p. 185.

³³³ *Tashink*, Տազնապալի Ժամեր Կապրիիսը [Critical Moments For Us], 11 February 1919.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*

Izmir, Stergiadis, to express the support of the Armenians towards the Romioi-Armenian friendship. During the visit, Stergiadis underlined that the Armenians were seen as brothers within the Romioi community and that he had personally received orders from Eleftherios Venizelos that the Armenians in Izmir should be treated as equal citizens.³³⁵

Prominent members of the Athens Armenian community who visited Izmir informed the Armenian authorities about the developments that were taking place in Greece regarding the Romioi-Armenian friendship. Kevork Papazean, the Armenian deputy in the Greek parliament; Harutyun Këlëjean; Dikran Ch‘aeon, ambassador of the Armenian Republic in Greece; Kalusd Aslanean, Salonika consul; and Vahan Bardizbanean, Izmir consul, established a diplomatic network to discuss the developments taking place in the Greek parliament.³³⁶ Statements made in the Greek parliament in support of the establishment of United Armenia in the eastern provinces were received positively within the Armenian community in Izmir. In his article published in *Tashink*, T. Boyajiean wrote:

...Yes, today we are convinced that the Romioi-Armenian friendship, the sacred legacy of our common bloody history, corresponds to the mutual sympathy in the past between the two nations, is determined to live, perpetuate, and to become a strong base for the liberty and independence of the two nations.³³⁷

³³⁵ *Zhamanag*, Հայ Եւ Յոյն Եղբայրակցութիւն [The Armenian-Greek Friendship], 7 February 1919, no. 3438.

³³⁶ Ավետիսյան Հ. Ա, ‘Հունական Արխիվային Փաստաթղթեր Հայ-Հունական Հարաբերությունների Մասին Առաջին Հանրապետության Շրջանում (1918-1920թթ.)’ [Greek Archival Documents on the Armenian-Greek Relations During the First Republic Period (1918-1920)], p. 39.

³³⁷ *Tashink*, Հայ Եւ Յոյն Բարեկամութիւնը [The Greek-Armenian Friendship], 14 February 1919, no. 1868. ‘Այո, այսօր մենք համոզուած ենք որ Հայ Եւ Յոյն բարեկամութիւնը, նուիրական ժառանգութիւն մեր պատմական արիւնոտ անցեալի համապատասխան երկու ժողովրդոց կրած փոխադարձ համակրութեան, սահմանուած է ապրելու, տեւելու եւ երկու ազգաց ազատութեան, անկախութեան եւ յառաջդիմութեան ամուր կռուանն ըլլալու:’

According to Artaki Cebeli, the Armenians were in need of Romioi friendship because of the geopolitical position of the Armenian government. He highlighted that the ‘United Armenia’ state, which was to be established in the Vilayât-ı Sitte in Eastern Anatolia, together with the Armenian government in the Caucasus, would be surrounded by Muslim populations, such as Turks on the western border, Azerbaijanis on the eastern border, and Kurds and Arabs on the southern border. Therefore, ‘the friendship of a Christian nation’, such as the Romioi, was strategically ‘of utmost importance to the Armenians’.³³⁸ In an extended piece published in the *Arakadz* daily, H. G. Bonjukean expressed his opinions on the Romioi-Armenian friendship. He argued that the two ‘brother nations’ had struggled together in their fight for survival against the same enemy during the wartime and they should now ally themselves against further potential enemies:

The New Greece and the New Armenia will have various ethnic groups inside and outside of their borders impregnated with hostility. Particularly, we, Armenians, will be exposed to a great number of Turks, Kurds, Circassians, Lazs, Tatars and, because of our fault, even Georgians, whose moves we’ll have to keep under careful superintendence at least for half a century. In order to struggle, to fight against these [type of people/enemies/nations] as necessary, it is crucial that Armenia should enjoy a secure shoulder of a trustworthy ally in Greece, and vice versa.³³⁹

³³⁸ *Zhamanag*, Հայ Եւ Հելլէն Ապագայ Դաշնակցութեան Հիմերը [The Ground for Future Armenian-Greek Alliance], 4 February 1919, no. 3435.

³³⁹ *Arakadz*, Հայ Եւ Յոյն Բարեկամութեան Մասին [About Greek-Armenian Friendship], 15 March 1919, no. 8. ‘Նոր Յունաստան եւ նոր Հայաստան իրենց մէջ եւ իրենց շուրջ պիտի ունենան այլացեղ տարրեր՝ թշնամական ոգիով տոգորուած իրենց հանդէպ: Մասնաւորապէս մեր, հայերուս, շուրջը պիտի վիստան թուրք, քուրտ, չերքէզ, լազ, թաթար ու մեր մէղքէն նաեւ վրացի, որոնց կամեութիւնները եւ շարժումները պիտի ստիպուինք, առնուազն կէս դար, անքուն, խիստ հսկողութեան մը ենթարկել: Այսպիսիներու դէմ, ի հարկին պայքարելու, կռուելու համար, անհրաժեշտ է որ Հայաստան Յունաստանի մէջ, եւ փոխադարձաբար, վստահելի դաշնակցի մը ապահով թիկունքը գտնէ:’

H. G. Bonjukean suggested that Armenian intellectuals should produce articles on the Romioi-Armenian friendship in order to shape Armenian public opinion in favour of the Romioi; as he saw it, if the Armenian public better understood the issue, it would likely support it, and the unification of the two churches and the cooperation of the two governments would be brought about more expediently. He concluded his article by calling on the Armenian intellectuals: ‘Let’s write, talk, and work to build the Romioi-Armenian friendship on a strong basis’.³⁴⁰

3.4. Joint Activities of the Romioi and Armenian Communities in Istanbul

When the Romioi school was re-opened in Kumkapı on 11 February 1919, the local Armenian and Romioi population organised a celebration, with mutual proclamations expounding on the Romioi-Armenian friendship. During the festivities, the Armenian national anthem was sung, and French military officers were present. The walls of the Romioi school were decorated with the Greek and Armenian flags.³⁴¹ Similarly, on 22 February 1919, the Armenians and Romioi organised a gathering at the Beykoz Armenian School, and speeches were made in favour of the Romioi-Armenian friendship.³⁴²

Shortly before, on 8 February 1919, the French General d’Esperey disembarked on the Karaköy shore, where Armenians and Romioi welcomed his

³⁴⁰ *Arakadz*, Հայ Եւ Յոյն Բարեկամութեան Մասին [About Greek-Armenian Friendship], 22 March 1919, no. 9.

³⁴¹ Çiçek, ‘Milli Mücadele’de Ermeni-Rum-Yunan İttifakı’nın Anadolu Basınındaki Yankıları’, [The Repercussions of the Armenian-Greek Alliance in the Anatolian Press During the War of Independence] p. 296; Neşe Erdol, ‘Mondros’tan Samsun’a İstanbul’un Ekonomik Sosyal Kültürel Durumu ve Mustafa Kemal Paşa’ [The Economic, Social and Cultural Situation of Istanbul From the Armistice of Mudros to Samsun and Mustafa Kemal Pasha] (PhD thesis, Istanbul University, 2003), pp. 104; 121.

³⁴² Güllü, ‘Mondros Mütarekesi’nin Ardından Ermeni Ve Rum Patrikhanelerinin İşbirliği (30 Ekim 1918- 11 Ekim 1922)’, [The Alliance Between the Armenian and Greek Patriarchates After the Armistice of Mudros] p. 589.

arrival with enthusiasm. Especially, the Romioi and Armenian youth were excited to take part in the celebrations, though the Ottoman government had urged the Ecumenical Patriarchate to prevent the youth from joining these events.³⁴³ The Allied commission in Istanbul recruited mostly Armenian and Romioi youth into the police force, and there were reports that these Armenian and Romioi officers mistreated the local Muslim population, causing unlawful acts and unrest in response.³⁴⁴

Upon receiving a negative response from President Venizelos to locum-tenens Dorotheos' request regarding the political participation (both voting and running for office) of the Romioi community in elections for the Ottoman parliament, the Ecumenical Patriarchate announced that the Greek community in the Ottoman Empire would boycott the elections. Furthermore, the Patriarchate announced that the Romioi would no longer accept the authority of the Ottoman government and would even go so far as to cut all official and unofficial relations with the government, demanding that the Ottoman lands where the Romioi community constituted a majority be governed by Greece.³⁴⁵ In March 1919, before the Greek occupation of Izmir, the Ecumenical Patriarchate officially announced that the Romioi community had severed all ties with the Ottoman government and that the Romioi in the Ottoman Empire bore no civic responsibilities. The Patriarchate declared that the Romioi no longer needed the privileges, such as passports, which had been granted to them by the Ottoman government.³⁴⁶ The Ecumenical Patriarchate urged the community not to use Ottoman

³⁴³ Ibid., p. 581.

³⁴⁴ İsmail Hakkı Sunata, *İstanbul'da İşgal Yılları* [The Occupation Years in Istanbul] (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2006), p. 18.

³⁴⁵ *Alemdar*, 'Rumların İltihak Teminatı' [The Assurance of Adhesion of Greeks], 'Altı Sual Münasebetiyle' [In Response to Six Questions], 17 March 1919, no. 1296.

³⁴⁶ Polat, 'Milli Mücadele Yıllarında Marmara Bölgesinde Faaliyet Gösteren Rum ve Ermeni Çeteleri', [The Armenian and Greek Bands Active in the Marmara Region During the National Struggle] p. 266; Atalay, *Fener Rum Ortodoks Patrikhanesi'nin Siyasi Faaliyetleri, 1908-1923*, [The Political Activities of Fener Rum Orthodox Patriarchate (1908-1923)] pp. 118-22; Elçin Macar, *Cumhuriyet Döneminde İstanbul Rum Patrikhanesi* [The Greek

passports, instead issuing its own travel documents for those individuals who wanted to travel abroad.³⁴⁷ The Patriarchate also organised an election within the Romioi community, and forty deputies were elected as the representatives of the Romioi community in Istanbul on 7 September 1919.³⁴⁸

On 15 May 1919, the Greek forces landed in Izmir and began their occupation of Western Anatolia. Upon arrival, they were welcomed by the Armenian community. It was seen as ‘liberation’ after living under ‘the oppressive regime of the Ottoman Empire’. *Tashink*‘ wrote:

Yesterday, Thursday May 15, six hundred years of history came to an end. The Turkish tyranny, Turkish despotic rule and its centuries old barbarous and bilious chains were torn down, smashed, and broken to pieces. The Christian population of Izmir, Greeks, Armenians and Jews as well, had limitless joy and happiness. Elderly, women and children rushed to the streets, eyes moist with tears, each smiling, as if they were thirsty to see Christian forces to be convinced.³⁴⁹

The friendship between the two communities resulted in several developments in the political and social spheres. The Romioi population in Kars, for instance, formulated volunteer troops in 1920 to participate in the Turkish-Armenian War in the Caucasus on the side of the Armenian state. The Armenian volunteers fought with

Patriarchate of Istanbul During the Republican Period] (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2012), p. 66.

³⁴⁷ Güllü, *Ermeni Sorunu ve Istanbul Ermeni Patrikhanesi (1878-1923)*, [The Armenian Question and the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul (1878-1923)] p. 512.

³⁴⁸ Atalay, *Fener Rum Ortodoks Patrikhanesi'nin Siyasi Faaliyetleri, 1908-1923*, [The Political Activities of the Fener Rum Orthodox Patriarchate (1908-1923)] p. 120.

³⁴⁹ *Tashink*‘, Իզմիրի Գրաւումը [The Occupation of Izmir], 16 May 1919, no. 1942. ‘Վէց հարիր տարուան պատմութիւն մը ամփոփուեցաւ երէկ, հինգշաբթի օր Մայիս 15ին: Թուրք տիրապետութիւնը, Թուրք բռնակալ իշխանութիւնը, Թուրք խժողով ու ատելալատ, դարաւոր շրթաները փշրուեցան, տարտղնեցան, ցիրուցան եղան:... Իզմիրի քրիստոնէայ, Յոյն, Հայ ժողովուրդին ինչպէս նաեւ Հրէից գոհունակութիւնն ու ուրախութիւնն չափ ու սահման չունեցաւ: Ամեն դէմքեր ժպտուն էին, ամեն աչքերն տամկացած էին, կին, ծեր ու տղայ փողոց ընկած կարծես ծարաւի էին քրիստոնէայ զօրքերը տեսնելու, համոզուելու համար:’

the Greek army in Western Anatolia during the operations against the Nationalist forces in 1921-1922. The Armenian and Greek delegations in the Paris Conference worked jointly to reach their political goals.³⁵⁰

3.5. Conclusion

The Romioi-Armenian friendship was strategically vital to Greece's occupation plans of Western Anatolia. The opening of an Armenian-Turkish front on the eastern border would be beneficial to the Greek forces who disembarked upon the Izmir shores. Furthermore, the Pontus-Greeks, who were a minority and far from the intervention area of the Greek army, would secure their positions with the help of the Armenian forces. The reports prepared by the military and intelligence services of the Greek

³⁵⁰ For the formation of the Greek volunteer division, see Ավետիսյան, 'Հունական Արիսիվային Փաստաթղթեր Հայ-Հունական Հարաբերությունների Մասին Առաջին Հանրապետության Շրջանում (1918-1920 Թթ.)'. [Greek Archival Documents on the Armenian-Greek Relations During the First Republic Period (1918-1920)]. For the history of the Turkish-Armenian War in 1920, see Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: Between Crescent and Sickle: Partition and Sovietization*, vol. 4, 4 vols. (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1996); Richard Hovannisian, 'Armenia and the Caucasus in the Genesis of the Soviet-Turkish Entente', *Int. Journal of Middle East Studies*, no. 4 (1973); Ծ.Պ. Աղայան, Հայ Ժողովուրդի Ազատագրական Պայքարի Պատմությունից [The History of the Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation] (Yerevan: National Academy of Sciences, 1976); Ս.Խ Կարապետյան, *1920 Թվականի Հայ-Թուրքական Պատերազմը Եվ Սովետական Ռուսաստանը* [The Turkish-Armenian War of 1920 and Soviet Russia] (Yerevan: Hayasdan, 1965); Գալոյան Գ.Ա., *Հայաստանը Միջազգային Դիվանագիտության Եւ Սովետական Արտաքին Քաղաքականության Փաստաթղթերում 1828-1923 Թթ.* [The Armenian State in the Archival Documents of the Soviet Foreign Policy and the International Diplomacy During the Years 1828-1923] (Yerevan: Hayasdan, 1972). For the Armenian volunteers who took part in the Greek-Turkish War, see Վարդանյան, Հույն Բնակչությունն Օսմանյան Կայսրությունում Եվ Փոքրասիական Աղետը [The Greek Population in the Ottoman Empire and the Asia Minor Catastrophe]; Գևորգ Վարդանյան, 'Հայ-Հունական Համագործակցության Փորձերը Հայոց Ցեղասպանության Տարիներին (1915-1923 Թթ.)', [The Attempts for the Establishment of Armenian-Greek Alliance During the Genocide Years 1915-1923], 2012, <http://akunq.net/am/?p=26511>. For the developments in the Paris Peace Conference, see Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2003).

government suggested to Venizelos that the socio-political situation in the Black Sea region did not favour the establishment of an independent Greek state.³⁵¹ In order to protect the Romioi communities throughout Eastern Anatolia and in the Caucasus from the attacks of Turks and Kurds, it was necessary to coordinate with the Armenian government. In the first half of 1919, the Armenian government helped the Romioi community in Kars and provided ammunition and assistance to organise volunteer forces.³⁵² Additionally, although the Greek government was keen to transfer the Romioi population from Kars to Greece for their own protection, they suggested that the Armenian government should not relocate the Romioi. The relocation of the Romioi community from Kars to Greece would have caused a decrease in the total Christian population in the region relative to the local Turks and Kurds; losing their population majority could have weakened the political position of the Armenians in the region.³⁵³ Consequently, the establishment of the Romioi-Armenian friendship served dual interests for the Greek government,³⁵⁴ both saving the Pontus-Greek and Romioi populations throughout the Caucasus, as well as easing the Greek army's campaign in the Western front by opening a new front on the eastern border.

At the same time, the Armenian government in the Caucasus and also the Ottoman Armenians accepted the Romioi as an important ally in the region, not only militarily but also from a social and political perspective. Being a strong ally of

³⁵¹ Ավետիսյան, 'Հունական Արխիվային Փաստաթղթեր Հայ-Հունական Հարաբերությունների Մասին Առաջին Հանրապետության Շրջանում (1918-1920 Թթ.)', [Greek Archival Documents on the Armenian-Greek Relations During the First Republic Period (1918-1920)], p. 26.

³⁵² Ibid., p. 28.

³⁵³ Ավետիսյան, 'Հայ-Հունական Հարաբերությունները 1919-1920 Թվականներին(Հայաստանի Պետական Արխիվների Փաստաթղթեր)' [The Armenian-Greek Relations During the Years 1919-1920 (The Official Documents of the Armenia State Archives)], no. 1.

³⁵⁴ Ավետիսյան, 'Հունական Արխիվային Փաստաթղթեր Հայ-Հունական Հարաբերությունների Մասին Առաջին Հանրապետության Շրջանում (1918-1920 Թթ.)', [Greek Archival Documents on the Armenian-Greek Relations (1918-1920)], p. 35.

Greece would mean being an ally of the Entente, which they believed would ultimately catalyse Armenian independence in Eastern Anatolia. This position of the Ottoman Armenians bears significance in that the socio-political elites—religious leaders, politicians, press, and intellectuals—supported the Romioi friendship in order to ease the way towards independence for ‘United Armenia’. Muslims in general, and Turks especially, were not seen as friends but competitors, while the Romioi were seen as ‘Christian brothers’ who ‘had suffered for centuries together with the Armenians’.

This chapter demonstrates how the Armenian and Romioi communities in the Ottoman Empire established friendship during the Armistice period and worked together in the political field to achieve both their shared and respective goals. As argued above, the Armistice period was the only time that the Armenians and the Romioi established consistent political and social cooperation against the Ottoman state. They drafted common political plans and strategies in order to reach their political aspirations, created friendship organisations in the capital, organised civil society movements and gatherings, and the Armenian and the Ecumenical Patriarchates even initiated a discussion to unite the two churches. With these particular features, the relationship between the Armenian and the Romioi communities during the Armistice period emerges as a unique chapter in the broader context of the history of Greek-Armenian relations.

This chapter presented the extent of mobilisation and radicalisation and the pro-Allied approach of the Armenian community. It further supports the theoretical framework of the thesis: that is, as a minority group, the Ottoman Armenians attempted to gain independence by various opportunities available to them, including the possibility to benefit from external support and developing friendships with pro-

Allied communities. The real motivation behind this political goal was the insecurity and fear that prevailed in the Ottoman Empire starting from the wartime. In fear of falling victim to a second genocide, the remaining Armenian population in the Ottoman Empire aimed at establishing their own state while there was moral and material support from the Allied Powers.

This chapter makes a considerable contribution to the study of Romioi-Armenian relations during the Armistice years, as it has not been properly covered in recent historiographies. It provides the first substantial discussion and analysis of the subject. The academic literature on the topic is not rich, nor have the Armenian and Ottoman Turkish newspapers been used by scholars to trace the developments in Romioi-Armenian friendship. As such, this chapter fills a gap in recent historiographies and contributes to the body of knowledge on the subject matter.

The following chapter will explore the conditions of the Armenian community under the administration of the Turkish National movement and will demonstrate the extent of insecurity in the Anatolian provinces. Furthermore, the chapter will discuss the perception of the Armenian community *vis-à-vis* the emergence of the Turkish National movement and will elaborate the pro-Entente political position of the Armenian community.

CHAPTER IV

THE EMERGENCE OF THE TURKISH NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN ANATOLIA AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE OTTOMAN ARMENIANS (1919-1920)

4.1. Introduction

Following the signing of the Armistice of Mudros and the occupation of certain regions of Anatolia by the Allied forces, the Turkish armed resistance, which was primarily established by CUP underground organisations, was launched following Mustafa Kemal's landing in the port of Samsun in May 1919.³⁵⁵ Mustafa Kemal was assigned by the Ottoman government in Istanbul as inspector of the Ninth Army to control the escalating tensions between the communities in the region. When Mustafa Kemal landed in Samsun on 19 May 1919, the Greeks had already occupied Izmir; the British had occupied Urfa, Maraş, Antep, and Samsun; the French forces had occupied Adana; and the Italians had occupied Antalya and Konya.³⁵⁶ The *Milli Mücadele* (Turkish National movement) was initiated by Mustafa Kemal in order to protect the national rights of the Ottoman Turkish society in the aftermath of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the occupation of its lands by Allied troops. The participation and support of Turkish society for the Turkish National movement was

³⁵⁵ A version of this chapter has been published as Ari Şekeryan. 'Reactions of the Armenian Community to the Emergence of the Turkish National Movement (1919–20)'. *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 4, no. 2 (2017): 381-401.

³⁵⁶ See A. L. Macfie, *The End of the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1923*, pp. 310-12; Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975*, p. 342; Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 2nd ed., pp. 242-48; Briton Cooper Busch, *Mudros to Lausanne Britain's Frontier in West Asia, 1918-1923*, pp. 168-69; Elaine Diana Smith, *Turkey: Origins of the Kemalist Movement and the Government of the Grand National Assembly (1919-1923)* (Washington DC: 1959), pp. 11-15.

significantly increased by the Greek invasion of Western Anatolia.³⁵⁷ At the beginning of 1919, the sociopolitical atmosphere in Anatolia was descending into chaos. The Allied forces established presence in the Ottoman capital of Istanbul and several strategically important regions, including western, southern, and southeastern Anatolia. While the Turkish National movement was winning the support of the Ottoman Muslim population in interior Anatolia, there were supporters of Sultan Mehmed VI who openly opposed the movement.

In this period, characterised by a political power vacuum and economic turmoil in Anatolia,³⁵⁸ the Armenians, who had been exiled from their native villages and towns and had lost most of their property and wealth, were attempting to return to their native lands. This chapter will discuss how the Ottoman Armenians perceived the emerging Turkish National movement in Anatolia by examining opinion articles, reports, and letters published in Armenian and Ottoman Turkish dailies. The political unrest will be scrutinised in detail to reveal as to what extent it was a determinant factor in the formation of the Armenian community's perception regarding the Turkish National movement.

As Turkish National movement emerged in Anatolia, dozens of Armenian individuals sent letters to the Armenian dailies in Istanbul to draw the public's attention to the condition of the Armenians in Anatolia. These personal letters written by ordinary Armenians and the articles written by Armenian intellectuals are crucial

³⁵⁷ While there is extensive literature on the emergence and development of the Turkish National movement, it is primarily in Turkish; below is a selection of the available literature on the subject in English. Erik Jan Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*; idem, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1926*; Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*; Stanford J. Shaw, *From Empire to Republic: The Turkish War of National Liberation 1918-1923: A Documentary Study*, (5 vols.), vol. 3, part 2; Sina Akşin, *Turkey from Empire to Revolutionary Republic: The Emergence of the Turkish Nation from 1789 to the Present*; Smith, *Turkey*.

³⁵⁸ I use Anatolia as a geographical name to encompass contemporary Turkey's Asian side, including the Aegean, Mediterranean, eastern Anatolia, central Anatolia, Black Sea, and southeastern Anatolia regions.

sources in terms of reflecting the inner dynamics of the Armenian community. This chapter aims to understand the perception of the Ottoman Armenians *vis-à-vis* the Turkish National movement. The chapter will neither discuss the emergence of the Turkish National movement in Anatolia nor analyse the conflict between the Nationalist forces and the occupying forces, but it will investigate the collective position of the Ottoman Armenians towards the Turkish National movement. As such, this study benefits from the Armenian and Ottoman Turkish dailies, which to date have been minimally used in the existing literature.

4.2. The Formation of the CUP Resistance Militias and the Armenians in Anatolia

Before the occupation of Izmir and the arrival of Mustafa Kemal in Samsun in May 1919, the CUP underground organisations embarked upon a planned resistance campaign against the native Christian population of the Anatolian provinces.³⁵⁹ Those non-Muslims who were living outside of the Allied occupation zones in an atmosphere of lawlessness and uncertainty were the primary subjects of the CUP campaign. Even though the Armenian as well as the Greek population had decreased substantially because of the wartime massacres and deportations, there were still communities in southern Marmara, the eastern Black Sea (Pontus), central Anatolia and the Adana (Cilicia) regions. At the beginning of 1919, there were five thousand Armenian refugee families in Konya and thousands more in various towns of interior Anatolia, including Ankara, Kayseri, Malatya, Adapazarı, Düzce, Yozgat, Sivas,

³⁵⁹ Polat, 'Milli Mücadele Yıllarında Marmara Bölgesi'nde Faaliyet Gösteren Müfrezeler, Milis Kuvvetleri ve Çeteler (1918-1922)', pp. 72-95; Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1912-1923*, pp. 55-81; Criss, *Istanbul under Allied Occupation, 1918-1923*, pp. 98-115.

Kayseri, Afyon Karahisar, and Bolu, comprising a total Armenian population of one hundred fifty thousand.³⁶⁰ The aspect of the CUP's campaign of oppression against the non-Muslim populations found a basis among the Muslim population, particularly with the proliferation of hatred caused by the occupation of Izmir by the Greek troops.³⁶¹ The Armenians of Anatolia who survived the wartime massacres and deportations and returned to their native villages and towns were again the target of anger; labelled as the partners of the occupying forces, they were deemed 'traitors'.³⁶²

The resistance campaign against the Christian population of Anatolia was initiated by the CUP headquarters during a meeting held at the villa of Enver Pasha in Kuruçeşme in late October 1918, a few weeks before the signing of the Armistice of Mudros. The *Karakol* underground organisation was established with the purpose of organising resistance forces in the interior parts of Anatolia, supplying these forces with ammunition stockpiled in Istanbul, and easing the transportation of high-ranking military officials to the interior parts of Anatolia.³⁶³ Thanks to its secret road plan,

³⁶⁰ For the population statistics of the Ottoman Armenians before and after WWI, see Karpas, *Ottoman Population, 1830-1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics*; Raymond Kevorkian and Paul Paboudjian, *1915 Öncesinde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Ermeniler* (Istanbul: Yayıncılık, 2013); Ari Şekeryan, 'The Aftermath of the Deportation: The Armenian Population After the Great War and the Jamanak Daily' (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2014).

³⁶¹ Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1912-1923*, p. 71; Erzurum, 'The Greek Occupation of Izmir and Protest Meetings in Istanbul (15 May 1919-13 January 1920)'. (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2015).

³⁶² For more information on the treatment of the Ottoman Armenians after WWI and during the first years of the Turkish Republic, see Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*.

³⁶³ Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1926*, pp. 86-88. Karakol was established and put under the command of Kara Vasif and Kara Kemal, who were close allies of Talat Pasha. Karakol benefited from the underground network which was established by affiliates of the *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa*, and it organised militia forces consisting of fifty to two hundred members in cities and five to ten members in villages. Karakol's aim was explained in the fourth article of its declaration as follows: 'The activities of Karakol inside the country are confined to protect and, where non-existent, establish national unity and territorial integrity by legitimate means, behind the scenes. When faced with oppressors of freedom and justice, however, we shall resort to revolutionary ways. We shall fight and die as free men rather than live as prisoners in shame'. The transportation of arms and men was conducted through the *Menzil Hattı* (Line

Karakol secured the safe passage of captured Ottoman armouries and the transfer of Turkish intellectuals and high-ranking military officers to inner Anatolia. In addition, Karakol was able to establish an intelligence network within the Ottoman government, including an intelligence network within Damat Ferit's mansion.³⁶⁴ In addition to the activities of Karakol, it should be noted that Enver Pasha urged the *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa* in 1918 to ready itself for the second phase of the war, which included a series of preparations, such as creating secret ammunition depots in various parts of interior Anatolia.³⁶⁵ Moreover, it was well known that Enver sought to benefit from the Ottoman army in the Caucasus to defend Anatolia in case of an Allied

of Transport), which was organised by Karakol. The first stop of the line was the Özbekler Tekkesi, a dervish lodge in Üsküdar. The line had other stops in Dudullu and Geyve. Prominent members of the National movement including İsmet İnönü and Fevzi Çakmak moved to Anatolia via this line. See Criss, *Istanbul under Allied Occupation, 1918-1923*, pp. 98-113; Hasan Ali Polat, 'Milli Mücadele Yıllarında Marmara Bölgesinde Faaliyet Gösteren Rum ve Ermeni Çeteleri'[The Romioi and Armenian Bands in the Marmara Region During the National Struggle Period], *Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 26 (2011): p. 74; Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1912-1923*, p. 70; A.A Cruickshank, 'The Young Turk Challenge in Postwar Turkey', *Middle East Journal* 22, p. 18.

³⁶⁴ Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1926*, p. 85. Damat Ferid Pasha was an Ottoman statesman who held the office of Grand Vizier twice during the Armistice years. The first period was between 4 March 1919 and 2 October 1919. The second period was between 5 April 1920 and 21 October 1920, during which he approved the signing of the Treaty of Sevres. He was also one of the founders of the Freedom and Accord Party, which was in opposition to the CUP. After the victories of the National movement against the Greek forces, Damat Ferit fled to France and died in Nice in 1923. See Can Ş. Erdem, 'Sadrazam Damat Ferit Paşa' (PhD thesis, Marmara University, 2002); İbrahim Alaettin Gövsa, *Türk Meşhurları Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul: Yedigün, 1945), pp. 136-37.

³⁶⁵ Polat Safi explains *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa* in his article as follows: '... the Special Organization (SO, *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa*) was one of the most important products of this endeavour. The SO emerged primarily out of the experience of the CUP in the Tripolitanian and Balkan wars. As an early type of unconventional warfare organization, the SO, which officially existed from 13 November 1913 to 30 October 1918, had no precedent in Ottoman history. Its operations included the recruitment, training, and supervision of armed groups tasked with conducting asymmetric warfare to weaken enemy morale and fighting strength. The SO also engaged in small-scale intelligence activity aimed both at strengthening solidarity among Muslims and revealing internal and external threats to Ottoman interests'. See Polat Safi, 'History in the Trench: The Ottoman Special Organization—*Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa* Literature', *Middle Eastern Studies* 48 (2012): pp. 89-106.

occupation.³⁶⁶ On his way back from Germany in October 1918, Talat Pasha urged Deputy of Edirne Faik Kaltakkıran to establish a local organisation to ‘prove the Turkishness’ of Edirne and to prevent any occupation.³⁶⁷ Yakup Şevki Pasha, the commander of the ninth army in the *Elviye-i Selase* (Three Provinces) region,³⁶⁸ handed over the administration of the region to the *Milli Şura* government and armed the local population rather than evacuating entirely prior to the arrival of the British forces.³⁶⁹ Furthermore, the associations for the defence of national rights—which were established in various provinces of Anatolia including Adana, Izmir, Trabzon, Edirne, and the eastern provinces—were all organised by the CUP authorities.³⁷⁰ Even though the Turkish historiography reflected that the Turkish resistance was started by Mustafa Kemal with his landing in Samsun, it is clear that the CUP played the pivotal role in organising the resistance campaign against the Allied Powers and the native non-Muslims in Anatolia. When Mustafa Kemal arrived in Anatolia in May 1919, as Zürcher highlighted in his authoritative work, there were already organised local forces, organisations, ammunition depots, and a well-established underground

³⁶⁶ Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1926*, pp. 85-86.

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 86-87.

³⁶⁸ *Elviye-i Selase* (Three Provinces) was a geographical term used for the area of Kars, Ardahan, and Batum. This area was left to the Russian Empire during the war in 1877-1878. During the Turkish-Armenian War in 1920, the Ankara government managed to bring Kars and Ardahan back under Turkish control; Batum was left to the Bolsheviks.

³⁶⁹ Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1926*, pp. 88-89. Following the signing of the Armistice of Mudros, the Ottoman government agreed to evacuate the Elviye-yi Selase region. However, rather than evacuating the region and handing over the guns and ammunition to the British authorities, the CUP encouraged the establishment of a local government in the region to protect the rights of the local Muslims. The *Milli Şura* government (*Cenüb-i Garbi Kafkas Hükümet-i Muvakkate-i Milliyesi*) was established on 18 January 1919. For detailed information, see Ahmet Ender Gökdemir, *Cenüb-i Garbi Kafkas Hükümeti* (Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 1998).

³⁷⁰ Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1912-1923*, pp. 77-80; Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1926*, pp. 68-105.

organisation in Istanbul which provided material support for the Turkish National movement in the interior parts of Anatolia.

The CUP underground organisation, Karakol, was instructed by the CUP headquarters to establish a paramilitary network in the Southern Marmara region, a defensive front against the Allied occupants.³⁷¹ Loyal officers, former members of Teşkilat-i Mahsusa, former guerrilla leaders, and experienced diplomats such as Fuat Carım and Sırrı (Kıbrıslı), together with the bands of Karakol, established a network of militias ranging from Adapazarı to the borders of Istanbul.³⁷² It was reported by the British officers that in the surrounding areas of Izmit there were acts of violence, which were traced to the CUP, perpetrated by militias towards the Armenians and Greeks. Indeed, Dr. Fahri Can, one of the organisers of the Karakol bands in the district, stated in his memoir that Yenibahçeli Şükrü, a former Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa spy and one of the leaders of the Karakol bands, declared that the only target of their militia activities was the non-Muslim population of the region.³⁷³ The motivation of the militia groups was to preclude land reclamation of the Armenians and Greeks by oppressing the remaining population in the provinces and preventing the return of those in exile.³⁷⁴ It should be noted that the references and motivations of the Turkish National movement were not based on ethnicity but rather on religion. As Gingeras highlighted, at the beginning of the movement, particularly until the Sivas Congress, where Mustafa Kemal initiated the disbanding of Karakol, the movement benefited

³⁷¹ Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1912-1923*, p. 78.

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ Ibid., pp. 79-80.

³⁷⁴ Վարդանյան, Հույն Բնակչությունն Օսմանյան Կայսրությունում Եվ Փոքրասիական Աղէտը [The Greek Population of the Ottoman Empire and the Asia Minor Disaster], p. 109.

from the unifying power of Islamic rhetoric, reflecting the movement as jihad against the Allied occupants.³⁷⁵

At the same time, the Ottoman government in Istanbul embarked upon a counter-campaign against the CUP activities. Ahmet Anzavur, an elderly Circassian lieutenant loyal to the Sultanate, together with the assistance of the *Nigehban Cemiyet-i Askeriyesi* (Military Guardian Society),³⁷⁶ raised the resistance flag to stop the Turkish National movement, which he argued was ‘controlled by the CUP members who sucked the blood of the innocent nation and made a fortune’.³⁷⁷ The native Armenians of the South Marmara region, amid the clashes between the Loyalists and Nationalists, tried to move to Istanbul or Izmir to save their lives, and some of them participated in the acts of violence and fought alongside the Loyalist forces.³⁷⁸

³⁷⁵ Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1912-1923*, pp. 70-80. For the rhetoric of the Turkish National movement, see Erik Jan Zürcher, ‘The Vocabulary of Muslim Nationalism’, *International Journal of the Sociology of Science*, 1999, pp. 81-92; Ahmet Yıldız, *Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyene: Türk Ulusal Kimliğinin Etno-Seküler Sınırları (1919-1938)* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001), pp. 90-95; Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1912-1923*, pp. 74-75.

³⁷⁶ The *Nigehban Cemiyet-i Askeriyesi* (Military Guardian Society or Society of Army Watchmen) was formed in January 1919 to eliminate the underground activities of the CUP in the capital, Istanbul, as well as in the provinces. The members of the society were ardent supporters of the Sultanate and the Ottoman Cabinet against the Turkish National movement.

³⁷⁷ Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1912-1923*, p. 95.

³⁷⁸ Loyalists were those who supported the Ottoman government and fought against the Turkish National movement. While the Turkish National movement was growing in the interior of Anatolia, opposition movements within the Ottoman/Muslim community started to emerge against the Nationalists. On the political ground, the *Hürriyet ve İtilaf Fırkası* (The Liberty and Understanding Party) was the major opponent of the National movement, and it established close alliances with the Sultanate. Additionally, the Association of the Friends of England, founded by Sait Molla, owner of the *Türkçe İstanbul* daily, supported the British mandate over Anatolia and provided financial assistance to Loyalist paramilitaries. The *Nigehban Cemiyet-i Askeriyesi*, which was established by a group of officers who were loyal to the Sultanate, and the *Teali İslam Cemiyeti* (Advancement of Islam Society), which was established by Sheikh-al-islam Mustafa Sabri, are examples of prominent opposition groups that opposed the Turkish National movement. On the battlefield, the Ottoman government gathered a new army, the *Kuva-yı İnzibatiye* (The Disciplinary Forces), the roughly three thousand members of which were mostly attached to the *Nigehban*. Furthermore, a Circassian

4.3. The Turkish National Movement as a Continuation of the CUP

There is a general consensus in Turkish historiography that the occupation of Izmir awoke the sleeping giant, which is to say that the Turkish-Muslim majority discovered that the occupation of certain parts of Anatolia by Allied forces could be permanent, therefore catalysing the organisation of armed resistance.³⁷⁹ After the occupation, it was easier for Mustafa Kemal and his compatriots to attract more support for their struggle.³⁸⁰ It is the thoughts of the Ottoman Armenians regarding the Turkish National movement that are absent from the historiography.

It can be argued that the majority of the Armenian public opinion was of the belief that the fledging Turkish National movement in Anatolia was organised by CUP headquarters. The editorial published in the *Koyamard* daily on 2 May 1920 put forward that the Turkish National movement was benefiting from the intelligence service established by the CUP. It argued that this intelligence service received

major who served in the Ottoman army during WWI, Ahmet Anzavur, also joined the Loyalist ranks.

³⁷⁹ After the occupation of Izmir by the Greek forces on 15 May 1919, tens of meetings were organised by the Ottoman Muslim community in various locations in Anatolia and Thrace. For example, on 16 May, 19 May, and 28 November 1919, thousands of people gathered in Bursa, İnegöl, and Balıkesir, respectively. Local communities in the Anatolian towns and cities submitted protest telegrams to Istanbul. See Fahri Yetim, 'Milli Mücadele Döneminde Mitingler 1918-1920' (MA thesis, Anadolu University, 1994), pp. 60-75; *Alemdar*, 24 May 1919, no: 152; Şirin Güneşer Erzurum, 'The Greek Occupation of Izmir and Protest Meetings in Istanbul (15 May 1919-13 January 1920)' (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2015), pp. 50-51. In Istanbul, university students organised a gathering of thirty thousand people in Üsküdar on 20 May. On the following day the university lecturers declared that the occupation of Izmir by the Greeks was unlawful and they would resist to the end. On 23 May, three hundred thousand people were gathered at Sultanahmet Square to protest the occupation. See Hasan Ali Polat, 'Milli Mücadele Yıllarında Marmara Bölgesi'nde Faaliyet Gösteren Müfrezeler, Milis Kuvvetleri ve Çeteler (1918-1922)' [Militia Forces, Gangs and Corps Operating in the Marmara Region During the National Struggle Period (1918-1922)] (MA thesis, Selçuk University, 2008), pp. 22-26; Erzurum, 'The Greek Occupation of Izmir', pp. 58-195; Edhem Eldem, 'L'Illustration'dan Seçmeler: 7 Şubat 1920 - Sultanahmet Mitingleri', *Toplumsal Tarih* 212 (2011).

³⁸⁰ After the occupation of Izmir by the Greeks forces, hundreds of telegrams written by the local Muslim communities were sent from Anatolian towns and cities protesting the aggressive campaign of the Greek forces. See Erzurum, 'The Greek Occupation of Izmir', pp. 49-51.

intelligence from the Sublime Porte, ministries, opposition party centres, and even the Allied Powers' headquarters.³⁸¹ *Koyamard* further asserted that the Turkish National movement was 'the movement started by Talat and Enver and run by Mustafa Kemal and Rauf Bey'.³⁸² Similarly, historians Enver Behnan Şapolyo and Erik Jan Zürcher argue that the underground organizations of the CUP were providing intelligence to the Turkish National movement. Additionally, it has been well established that the transportation of both ammunition and manpower was managed with the assistance of these underground organisations.³⁸³

Another organ of the ARF, *Jagadamard*, also put forward that the Turkish National movement was started at the end of WWI by military troops returning from the Ottoman battlefields to the interior parts of Anatolia and by those 'CUP criminals' who 'committed crimes during the war'.³⁸⁴ Hovhannes Amaduni, an active member of the ARF in Istanbul and editor of *Jagadamard* during the Armistice years, underlined that even though the CUP was no longer in power, it continued to work in the provinces, together with the help of the local Muslim population, to prevent the return of the native Armenian population to the Six Provinces. He argued that the Turkish National movement in Anatolia was 'nothing but the new cover of the CUP' and that the new faces in the movement shared the same ultimate goal with CUP, namely,

³⁸¹ *Koyamard*, Ինչպէս Վազմունէցաւ Միլիի [How was the National Movement Established?], 2 May 1920, no. 13.

³⁸² Hüseyin Rauf (Orbay) was an Ottoman naval officer and statesman. He was chief of naval staff during WWI and he participated in the Ottoman delegation to sign the Armistice of Mudros. Following the establishment of the Turkish National movement in Ankara, he joined Mustafa Kemal in his endeavour. He played an active role in the Erzurum and Sivas Congresses and the War of Independence. For his biography, see Cemal Kutay, *Osmanlıdan Cumhuriyete: Yüzyılımızda Bir İnsanımız Hüseyin Rauf Orbay*, [From Empire to Republic: One of Our People in Our Century Rauf Orbay] 5 vols. (Istanbul: Kazancı Kitap Ticaret, 1992). For his memoirs, see Rauf Orbay, *Cehennem Değirmeni-Siyasi Hatıralarım* [Hell's Mill: My Political Memoirs] (Istanbul: Emre Yayınevi, 1993).

³⁸³ Enver Behnan Şapolyo, *Kuvayı Milliye Tarihi: Gerilla*, pp. 197-98.

³⁸⁴ *Jagadamard*, Միլիի Շարժումը Եւ Մուսթաֆա Քէմալ [The National Movement and Mustafa Kemal], 23 July 1920, no. 509.

‘expelling the native Christian population from Anatolia’.³⁸⁵ Hovhannes Amaduni further asserted that the secret organisation of the CUP armed local paramilitary groups to protect the lands and resettled thousands of Muslim refugees from the Caucasus to engineer the demographic features of the region in favour of the Ottoman government.³⁸⁶ The argument by Hovhannes Amaduni that the CUP paramilitary groups targeted the Christian population is echoed in the work of Ryan Gingeras, who emphasises that the reports sent after the first clashes in the South Marmara region in January 1919 detailed how the pro-Nationalist units targeted Armenians and Greeks returning from exile.³⁸⁷ An editorial published in *Giligia* argued that while the Turkish National movement presented itself as anti-Entente, its primary aim was ‘to eliminate the native Christian population’, particularly the Armenians. The editorial concluded, ‘It [the Turkish National movement] is the continuation of the bloody plan of the CUP’.³⁸⁸

What is relevant and important in the context of this chapter is that both *Koyamard* and *Jagadamard*, which were publications of the ARF, and *Giligia*, whose politics were close to those of the ARF, agreed on the idea that the Turkish National movement was the continuation of the CUP. Informed by the publications of patriotic/nationalist Armenian dailies such as *Koyamard*, *Jagadamard*, and *Giligia*, I argue that the Turkish National movement was equivalent to the CUP for the patriotic/nationalist factions of the Armenian community. Significantly, besides the patriotic/nationalist factions of the Armenian community, the liberal and independent

³⁸⁵ *Jagadamard*, Իթթիհաստական Դաւերը Կը Շարունակուին [CUP Conspiracy Continues], 18 July 1919, no. 209.

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁷ Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores*, p. 69.

³⁸⁸ *Giligia*, Քէմալականները Եւ Քրիստոնէաները [Kemalists and Armenians], 15 October 1920, no. 442.

factions also agreed with this notion. For instance, Hovhannes Asbed,³⁸⁹ a liberal Armenian intellectual, argued that the Turkish National movement was developed by a select group of people who were active participants in the CUP's wartime operations, including the Armenian massacres and the nationalisation of the economy. He affirmed that it was not possible for the Armenian population to trust the Turkish National movement, which had emerged under these circumstances.³⁹⁰

The analysis of another liberal/independent daily, *Zhamanag*, further supports the argumentation that the majority of the Armenian community agreed that the Turkish National movement was the product of the CUP. An example of the analysis of *Zhamanag* illustrates the position of the daily:

The Armenians in the provinces have the right to be afraid, because they know and see that that organisation [the Turkish National movement] is a name-change of CUP, which led the annihilation of the Armenian population... The situation in Anatolia is insecure because CUP's satellites have taken office. The new organisation [the Turkish National movement] is covering them.³⁹¹

Ardashes Kalpakjjean, a liberal Armenian intellectual contributor to *Zhamanag*, stressed that the Turkish National movement had not been born from a sense of nationalism but rather from 'the envy, arrogance and unwillingness of a group of CUP members' who 'could not digest the defeats that they faced on the battlefields'.³⁹²

³⁸⁹ Hovhannes Asbed, an Armenian intellectual and politician, was born in Istanbul in 1873. He was one of the members of the editorial board of *Verchin Lur* during the Armistice years. In addition to his position at *Verchin Lur*, he published the Armenian weekly magazine *Hay Midk* (The Armenian Mind). He was elected to the Armenian Assembly during the Armistice years.

³⁹⁰ *Verchin Lur*, Այժմէական Խօսքեր Միլլի [Actual Words—National Movement], 14 August 1920, no. 1951.

³⁹¹ *Zhamanag*, Գոյուրթեան Պայքարը [The Struggle of Existence], 22 October 1919, no. 3655.

³⁹² *Zhamanag*, Մենք Մեր Իրաւունքը Միայն Կ'ուզենք [We Demand Only Our Rights], 16 October 1919, no. 3650.

It is important here to highlight that the viewpoint of the Armenian intellectuals regarding the Turkish National movement supports Zürcher's conceptualisation, which traces the connection between the CUP and the Turkish National movement.³⁹³ Although members of the Turkish National movement supposedly pledged that they had no ties with the CUP³⁹⁴ and Mustafa Kemal repeatedly expressed that the movement was not related to the CUP, Zürcher reveals strong evidence that not only the ideology but also the executive team, underground organizations, policies, and strategies were identical to those of the CUP.³⁹⁵ As exhibited in this section, the Armenian intellectuals, regardless of their diverse political affiliations or worldviews—be they patriotic/nationalist or independent/liberal—agreed that the movement of Mustafa Kemal was ‘the second phase of the plan of CUP’.

4.4. Insecurity and Instability: The Anatolian Armenians and the Political

Vacuum in Anatolia

The previous section established that the Turkish National movement was perceived by the Armenian public opinion as the continuation of CUP. However, how was this conclusion reached? What conditions led the Armenians to believe that the Turkish National movement was one and the same as the CUP? In this section, documentation

³⁹³ Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor*.

³⁹⁴ During the Sivas Congress, the members took the following pledge: ‘I pledge that I shall not pursue any personal aim other than the happiness and salvation of the fatherland during the Congress. I shall not work to restore the CUP and shall not work for any political parties’. *Yerevan*, no. 42, 6 Oct. 1919; A. A. Cruickshank, ‘The Young Turk Challenge in Postwar Turkey’, *Middle East Journal* 22, no. 1 (1968): p. 18; Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor*, pp. 68-69.

³⁹⁵ Zürcher, in his authoritative work, demonstrates the connection between the CUP and the Turkish National movement. See Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor*. Sina Akşin, however, argues that the movement, which was democratic and national, was created by Mustafa Kemal and his cadre. See Sina Akşin, *İstanbul Hükümetleri ve Milli Mücadele*.

will be provided to understand the conditions of the Armenian community under the Nationalist administration in Anatolia and the hardships endured by the Armenian community in the warzones where the Turkish Nationalists and Greek forces clashed. In doing so, it will be argued that since the wartime conflict in Anatolia, initiated by the policies of CUP, continued during the Armistice years under the umbrella of the Turkish National movement, the Armenian community marked the Turkish National movement as the descendent of the CUP. Building upon that argument, I contend that within the broader context of post-war politics in the Ottoman Empire, the Armenian community shared the same view as the Loyalists, who similarly blamed the Turkish National movement for perpetuating the CUP's governance/reign.

As previously noted, the occupation of Izmir by Greek troops escalated tensions in the interior parts of Anatolia. The hatred among the local Muslim population towards the Armenians and Greeks significantly increased. Hundreds of reports sent to the Armenian dailies by local correspondents urged the authorities to take immediate action to protect the Armenians. For instance, in the very early days of the Greek occupation of Izmir, in Gürle (Gemlik), the former Ittihadist *kaymakam* Orhan Gazi gathered gendarmes and a group of Albanian paramilitaries and took to the hills to prepare for the plundering of Armenian and Greek businesses. The Armenians of Gürle and the surrounding villages were bewildered that they could not find a government authority whom they could address regarding the threat posed by these paramilitary groups.³⁹⁶ In Malatya, CUP officials claimed that the Armenian commander Antranik would occupy the eastern provinces, including Malatya, within fifteen days, and local Muslims should arm themselves against this threat. The son of the famous Ittihadist Halim Bey organised a volunteer brigade in the town to defend

³⁹⁶ *Jagadamard*, Կիւրլիէն Ահ ու Սարսափի Մէջ [Gürle in Terror], 24 May 1919, no. 163.

against the Armenians.³⁹⁷ In Keskin (a Muslim populated town close to Ankara), a meeting was held in front of the town hall and the kaymakam gave a speech explaining that ‘the new war against the Christians’ was about to begin. Lieutenant Kaplan Bey, who returned from the Caucasian battlefield, organised an irregular brigade in Keskin, which provided its members with monthly salaries and the necessary weapons and ammunition.³⁹⁸ It is important to highlight a point for our discussion here: as in the example of Keskin and Malatya, the propaganda of the CUP-attached officials was based on creating conspiracies around the non-Muslims in order to galvanise the Turkish Muslim population. The propaganda and the underground activities of the CUP resulted in the creation of an insecure environment for the Armenians in Anatolia.

A report from Balıkesir written by an Armenian volunteer correspondent, entitled ‘They Forcefully Demand Soldiers from Armenians’, provides crucial insights into the conditions of the Armenians. The headmen of the Armenian and Greek villages were invited to the police department and forced to sign a document stating, ‘We will recruit your youth when we need. If you issue fake certificates, at the first opportunity, we will send you to the court-martial’. According to the report, the local Armenian population in Balıkesir was in complete disarray, as the approach of the Turkish-Muslim population had pivoted after the occupation of Izmir, with paramilitary groups beginning to organise in the region. The local Armenian population had no choice but to sell their properties at twenty percent of their real values and migrate to Izmir or Istanbul. It is important for our discussion to emphasise that these reports—be they propaganda, dramatisation, or reality—reflected the

³⁹⁷ *Hay Tsayn*, Ապահովութիւնը Մալաթիոյ Մէջ [Security in Malatya], 12 June 1919, no. 146.

³⁹⁸ *Jagadamard*, Չարդի Սպաննալիք Քէսքինի Մէջ [Massacre Threat in Keskin], 15 June 1919, no. 180.

sentiments of the local Armenian population; thus, they are crucial for our analysis to better understand the collective position of the Armenians. The conclusion of the following report is significant in illustrating the mindset of the community:

The fear within the community is huge. The government authorities, who were keen on listening to our complaints at the beginning of the Armistice, no longer want to hear our complaints... This will be *yergroort darakrutyun* [a second deportation] for us.³⁹⁹

As an Armenian individual expressed in a letter sent from Tokat, even though the local Armenian community was hopeful about the future at the beginning of the Armistice period, when the CUP government had fallen, it was understood in the following months that, while the CUP administration had departed from Istanbul, it continued to work in the provinces under the name of the ‘National movement’. The situation in Tokat was explained as follows:

The approach of our neighbours toward us has changed dramatically. Here, almost each day they organise meetings.... [Censored]. Almost all of the shops of Armenians stayed closed last Friday. It was a day of horror and fear. Each day that we pass is a gift... [Censored] I cannot explain with words. Our life is discouraging here and if we do not receive any help we will be in a position of total annihilation. They think that ‘Because we died, our enemies should also be annihilated’. It is better for us to creep, to starve and to do portage in the streets of Istanbul rather than be killed here.⁴⁰⁰

³⁹⁹ *Jagadamard*, Հայերէն Բռնի Ջիւնուոր Կուզէն [They Forcefully Demand Soldiers from Armenians], 20 June 1919, no. 185.

⁴⁰⁰ *Jagadamard*, Ահ ու Մարսափ Եւրոկիոյ Մէջ [Horror in Tokat], 30 July 1919, no. 219. During WWI, censorship of the Ottoman press was directed by the *Matbuat Müdürlüğü* (Press Bureau), which was controlled by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. After the signing of the Armistice of Mudros and the occupation of Istanbul, the Allied authorities organised joint censorship commissions together with the governmental officials to censor publications. On 10 February 1919, the *Sansür Kararnamesi* (Censorship Enactment) was issued. According to this decree, each issue of a daily required official approval from the censorship commissions before it went to press. *Zhamanag* highlighted the meaning of the censorship as an alliance between the Istanbul and Ankara governments and asked, ‘In a country which is not at war, what is the meaning of censorship of the mail?’ See *Zhamanag*, 15 October 1919, no. 3649. For general information on the censorship during the Armistice years, see Ender Korkmaz, ‘Mondros Mütarekesi Döneminde Sansür’, *Yakın Dönem Türkiye Araştırmaları* 19-20 (2011).

There was strong censorship of the Armenian press, especially for news related to the Armenian genocide, such as memoirs, reports explaining the wartime events, and letters which were sent from Anatolian towns and villages. These two reports sent from Balıkesir and Tokat demonstrate an important point for our discussion. The local Armenians feared that the political turmoil would result in a ‘second deportation’ for them. The conditions of the Armenian community in certain parts of Anatolia were so miserable that the locals reported their unfortunate situation to the Armenian dailies. As seen above, an individual from Tokat begged the authorities in Istanbul for help to relocate to Istanbul from Tokat. Furthermore, the Armenian dailies claimed that the CUP underground organisations organised an economic boycott of Armenian businesses, further increasing the level of insecurity for the Armenians. This economic boycott of Armenian businesses was so successful that the Armenians could not cover their daily expenses.⁴⁰¹ In Bursa, the boycott against Armenian shopkeepers left the Armenian community in a desperate situation, and news regarding the activities of bands such as the gang leader Davut was heard from neighbouring towns.⁴⁰² The same situation of disorder was described in another report regarding the Izmit and Adapazarı regions, calling the area extending from Izmit to Geyve ‘a nest of bands’.⁴⁰³

It should be stressed here that after the assembly of the Sivas Congress in September 1919, the local paramilitaries, which previously were organised by the CUP underground organisations, were transformed into supporters of the Turkish

⁴⁰¹ *Hay Tsayn*, Հայաստան Անսպաշտով [Armenia Insecure], 1 August 1919, no. 188.

⁴⁰² *Jagadamard*, Երկիրդալի Վիճակ Պրուսայի Մէջ [Frightening Condition in Bursa], 12 August 1919, no. 230.

⁴⁰³ *Jagadamard*, Բիւթանիոյ Շրջանը [Bithynia Region], 16 August 1919, no. 234.

National movement and served to enact its policies.⁴⁰⁴ Circassian and Albanian armed groups affiliated with the Nationalists were active in the Adapazarı and İzmit regions. According to reports received from Adapazarı, the Nationalist forces pressured the kaymakam to resign from his position and appointed new pro-Nationalist officers. Similarly, in Kırması and Bandırma, the Nationalist forces occupied the telegram offices and forced the government officers who were loyal to the Ottoman government in Istanbul to resign and leave the town. In Konya, the 11th Regiment of the Ottoman military joined the Nationalist forces and took control of Ereğli and central Konya after convincing the Italian forces that their struggle was a product of the country's internal politics.⁴⁰⁵ After assuming control of the city centre in Konya, the Nationalist authorities started to recruit Muslim and Christian men in their military organisations, disregarding the articles of the Armistice of Mudros regarding the demobilisation of the military.⁴⁰⁶ Following the news that the Nationalist authorities were recruiting Armenian men who were living in their controlled zone to the military, the Armenian Patriarch Zaven put pen to paper, protesting that the native Armenian families were not secure under the Nationalist administration.⁴⁰⁷ Mustafa Kemal, in response, published a statement that the Armenian and Turkish-Muslim

⁴⁰⁴ After the Sivas Congress, Mustafa Kemal and his cadre decided to centralise the armed resistance. See Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores*, pp. 75-77. For the developments in the Sivas Congress and the efforts of Mustafa Kemal to unite the movement under one umbrella and organise the paramilitaries under one command, see Fatih Gümüş, 'Decentralism Versus Centralism in Ottoman Anatolia, 1919-1922' (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2002), pp. 52-79.

⁴⁰⁵ *Verchin Lur*, Միլիտերը Եւ Հայերը [Nationalists and Armenians], 4 October 1919, no. 1690.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid. According to the fifth and twentieth articles of the Armistice of Mudros, recruiting men into military organisations was prohibited and the immediate demobilisation of the Ottoman army was accepted by the Ottoman government. See Gwynne Dyer, 'The Turkish Armistice of 1918 2: A Lost Opportunity: The Armistice Negotiations of Moudros', *Middle Eastern Studies* 8, no. 3 (1972): pp. 340-41.

⁴⁰⁷ *İkdam*, 'Anadolu'da Gayrimüslime ve Türkler', 22 October 1919, no. 8152; *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 'Ermeni Patriğini Bir Tekzip', 22 October 1919, no. 2878; *Vakit*, 'Anadolu'da Asayiş Berkemeldir', 22 October 1919, no. 708; *Alemdar*, 'Anadolu'daki Hristiyanlar', 22 October 1919.

communities in Anatolia were living in prosperity.⁴⁰⁸ What is noteworthy here is that the contact between the leader of the Turkish National movement and the Armenian Patriarch regarding the conditions of Armenians in Anatolia led to discussion in the press. While the pro-Nationalist dailies such as *Vakit* and *İkdam* defended the assertion that there was no security issue in Anatolia for Armenians, pro-Loyalist Turkish dailies such as *Peyam* and *Alemdar* welcomed the claims of the Patriarch in earnest. The pro-Loyalist and the Armenian press paid particular attention to the conditions of Armenians in interior Anatolia.

Indeed, the disorder and insecurity in Anatolian towns grew to critical levels. Even the authorities of the Turkish National movement did not have complete authority over the local paramilitaries. The majority of plundering of villages happened without their permission. For instance, the commander of Nationalist forces in the Bursa region, Bekir Sami (Günsav), after receiving news regarding the plundering of villages in the Çanakkale region, asked his colleague in a telegram whether these burglar militias were under his command or not.⁴⁰⁹ Köprülülü Hamdi Bey, a prominent pro-Nationalist in the South Marmara region, illustrated the seriousness of the events by reporting that the Nationalist authorities were demanding high taxes from the villagers, which they refused to pay; additionally, he stated that they were unsuccessful in controlling the brigades of Çerkes Ethem, which were causing great economic hardships for the villagers due to their plundering.⁴¹⁰

⁴⁰⁸ *İkdam*, 'Anadolu'da Gayrümüsleme ve Türkler'; *Tasvir-i Efkar*, 'Ermeni Patriğini Bir Tekzip'; *Vakit*, 'Anadolu'da Asayiş Berkemaldir'; *Alemdar*, 'Anadolu'daki Hristiyanlar'; Recep Karacakaya, *Türk Kamuoyu ve Ermeni Meselesi 1908-1923* (Istanbul: Toplumsal Dönüşüm Yayınları, 2005), pp. 356-57.

⁴⁰⁹ Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores*, p. 82.

⁴¹⁰ Sedat Çizmeci, 'Marmara Bölgesi'nde Milli Mücadeleye Karşı Çıkarılan Ayaklanmalar' (MA thesis, Fırat Üniversitesi, 2010), p. 16.

4.5. An Example of Insecurity: The South Marmara Region

As it has been put forward in the previous chapters, I argue that the Ottoman Armenians became pro-independence and pro-Allied following the signing of the Armistice of Mudros because support of the Allied Powers increased and the oppressive CUP government was no longer in power. In addition to the notion of ‘external support’, I argued that in an atmosphere of ‘insecurity’, the Ottoman Armenians feared becoming victims of mass violence for a second time. Thus, the insecure environment affected the formation of their political position. In this section, I shall explain the events that happened in the South Marmara region to illustrate the extent of insecurity that prevailed in the provinces of Anatolia. It was in this environment that the pro-independence and pro-Allied position of the Armenian community was shaped.

Insecurity played a vital role in the formation of the Armenian community’s view of the Turkish National movement. Even though the wartime Armenian deportations ceased after the signing of the Armistice of Mudros, the armed conflict in the towns continued, especially following the occupation of the lands by the Allied forces. Consequently, the Armenians who were able to return from exile to their native towns and villages found themselves in an insecure habitus where, on the one hand, the Nationalist paramilitaries were actively working to win the favour of the local Muslim populations, while on the other hand, the Loyalists and Allied occupation forces were focused on eliminating the Turkish National movement. The case of the South Marmara region is an example of the insecure environment which impacted the perception of the Armenian community regarding the Turkish National movement.

When the Nationalist forces entered Adapazarı on 23 May 1920, they arrested the local notables who were pro-Loyalist and forced the Armenian men to enlist in the military. Those who were too old to serve in the military were forced to pay bribes to save their lives. Those who had Circassian or Abkhazian acquaintances were spared after giving relatively small payments, but the Armenians and Greeks were required to give vastly greater amounts. Shirin Odabashean, who fought against the Nationalist forces, was hanged together with an Arab *alim* who supported the fatwa of the caliph and was thus pro-Loyalist.⁴¹¹ In Izmit some members of the Armenian community escaped from Adapazarı to the Armaş region during the night via mountain paths. On 29 May, one thousand five hundred refugees arrived in Izmit from the surrounding villages. The local Armenian leadership asked the British representatives in Izmit to take the necessary measures to ensure the safe passage of these Armenian refugees from the surrounding areas, which were under the authority of the Nationalist forces. Nevertheless, the British authorities responded that they could not provide this assistance, but they did pledge to provide humanitarian aid if the refugees were able to reach Izmit.⁴¹²

According to the official bulletin of the Armenian church in Izmit, on 8 July 1920, village headsmen were summoned to a meeting held by the Nationalist authorities, in which they stated that the establishment of Turkish-Armenian friendship was discussed and the Armenians were given assurance that they would be safe in Geyve. The following week the kaymakam of Geyve, together with Turkish

⁴¹¹ *Yergir*, Միլիտարիստներու Խժոժութիւնները [Oppression of Nationalists], 13 June 1920, no. 230. According to the fatwa, those who organised the Turkish National movement were declared as ‘irreligious, poisonous, factious and so-called patriots’ who wanted to destroy the Ottoman Empire. See *Jagadamard*, 14 April 1920, no. 428; Smith, *Turkey*, 27; Şerife Özkan, ‘Yüzellilikler and Süleyman Şefik Kemali: A Legitimacy and Security Issue’ (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2005), pp. 8-9; Polat, ‘Milli Mücadele Yıllarında’, p. 32.

⁴¹² *Jagadamard*, Ինչ Վիճակի Մէջ է Պարտիզալը [What Is the Condition of Bardizak?], 5 June 1920, no. 470.

notables, went to the train station and ordered some four hundred Armenian and Greek refugees sheltering there to leave for the village of Eşme within two hours. The Greek population of Ortaköy village, consisting of two thousand members, was moved to Eşme village, and the armed forces, under the order of the commander of the gendarmes of Geyve, set fire to all properties. Kıncılar village, which was populated by Armenians, and the Greek villages of Saraçlı, Burhaniye, Saklı, and Kup shared the same fate.⁴¹³ Testimony from a young Armenian man who witnessed the events in Geyve detailed how on 10 July Ortaköy, Burhaniye, Saraçlı, and Kup—villages containing Hay-hourum populations⁴¹⁴—were plundered. According to him, the Armenian and Greek refugees, around one hundred fifty families who were sheltering at the railway station in Geyve, were forced to move to Eşme village and were attacked en route.⁴¹⁵

An incident in the villages of Sölöz—there were two villages in fact sharing the same name, one Armenian and one Turkish—illustrates the complexity of the conflict. On 28 July, the pro-Nationalist commander Yahya Bey sent a message to the Armenians of Armenian Sölöz, asking for weapons, ammunition, and horses. The Armenian men of Armenian Sölöz decided to establish a self-defence unit, sent their wives and children to Gemlik, and responded to the pro-Nationalist commander that they would not pay any tribute. The spokesperson of the Armenian self-defence unit answered, ‘We do not have any horses, money or weapons to give you. Come, we

⁴¹³ *Jagadamard*, Ի՞նչպէս Վատարուեցաւ Կէլվէի Ահաւոր Սպանդը [How Did the Terrible Slaughter Take Place in Geyve?], 24 July 1920, no. 510.

⁴¹⁴ Hervé Georgelin, ‘Perception of the Other’s Fate: What Greek Orthodox Refugees from the Ottoman Empire Reported about the Destruction of Ottoman Armenians’, *Journal of Genocide Research*, 10(1) (2008), pp. 62–63.

⁴¹⁵ *Jagadamard*, Ի՞նչպէս Վատարուեցաւ Կէլվէի Ահաւոր Սպանդը [How Did the Terrible Slaughter Take Place in Geyve?]; *Yergir*, Կէլվէի Ջարդը [The Massacre of Geyve], 24 July 1920, no. 263.

know how to deal with you'.⁴¹⁶ On 6 August, the Armenian self-defence unit in Armenian Sölöz faced the Nationalists on the southeastern edge of the town and started firing, forcing the Nationalists to withdraw. The following day, seventy-six Nationalist troops entered Turkish Sölöz. The Armenians declared to the Turkish population in the neighbouring village that if they were to accommodate these Nationalist forces in their village, the Armenians would have no other choice but to attack them. Following the ultimatum of the Sölöz Armenians, the Turkish population in Turkish Sölöz resisted the Nationalist forces, clearing them from their village. Two days later, a prominent Nationalist leader in the region, Cemal Bey, together with his one hundred fifty cavaliers, attacked Turkish Sölöz in response. Cemal Bey ordered the artillery to fire on the village, and the Turks in Turkish Sölöz abandoned their positions in fright. At that moment, the Armenians in Armenian Sölöz entered the village to aid their Turkish neighbours in their fight against the Nationalists. After hours of clashes, Cemal Bey and his forces withdrew from the village, leaving twenty-eight mausers and a great amount of ammunition, but it was reported that two hundred fifty houses in the village, all of them belonging to Turkish families, had been damaged by the Nationalists.⁴¹⁷ It was stated in another report that when the Turkish population of Turkish Sölöz tried to escape, the neighbouring Tutlıca village, which was entirely populated by Turks, did not welcome them and even refused to provide accommodations in their village.⁴¹⁸ The Sölöz Turks, whose village was set on fire by the Nationalists, asked for aid from the Greek administration in Bursa via the mediation of the Armenian prelate in Bursa, Sarkis Vartabed. The majority of the Sölöz Turks were given accommodation in the houses of Armenians in Armenian

⁴¹⁶ *Jagadamard*, Մէնլէնզի Մէջ [In Sölöz], 12 August 1920, no. 52.

⁴¹⁷ *Jagadamard*, Մէնլէնզի Հայերուն Հերոսական Դիմադրութիւնը [The Heroic Resistance of Sölöz], 8 August 1920, no. 523.

⁴¹⁸ *Jagadamard*, Մոտիք Ճակատէն [From a Closer Front], 14 August 1920, no. 528.

Sölöz and Gemlik.⁴¹⁹ The Armenians of Arslanbeg, as in Sölöz, defended themselves against the attacks of Nationalist forces; six Armenians died during the clashes, and the Nationalist forces withdrew after the intervention of the British cruiser.⁴²⁰

Sölöz is a prime example of the conflict that was occurring in the small towns of the South Marmara region. On one side, there were Armenians and Turks who were collaborating on self-defence activities in opposition to the Turkish National movement; on the other side, there were the irregular forces who were siding with the Nationalists. It is important to note that the Armenians believed that they were in an insecure environment in Anatolia, and as a result they were often allied with those Loyalist Turkish Muslim groups which were also in opposition to the Turkish National movement. These episodes support the argument that the Armenians were part of the anti-Nationalist camp of the post-war political landscape.

This alliance could be seen in Bardizag (Bahçecik) as well. On 28 August 1920, it was reported that a division consisting of three hundred men, of which seventy were Nationalists, attacked Bardizag (Bahçecik), but the local Armenians, together with native Greeks and Turks who organised a self-defence unit consisting of two hundred fifty men, defended the region and forced the Nationalist forces to fall back. The clashes that occurred in the surrounding areas of Izmit caused the Armenian and Greek population to move to the Izmit city centre, where at the beginning of September there were four thousand Armenian and Greek refugees. The British authorities transported these refugees to Derince, a town close to Istanbul, and provided water, food, and shelter.⁴²¹

⁴¹⁹ Ibid.

⁴²⁰ *Jagadamard*, Արսլանապէկի Դիմադրութիւնը [The Resistance of Arslanbeg], 1 August 1920, no. 517.

⁴²¹ *Jagadamard*, Միլլիական Շարժումը Իզմիթի Շրջանին Մէջ [The National Movement in the Izmit Region], 2 September 1920, no. 543.

It is noteworthy to provide insight into the extent of the Armenian self-defence units that were organised during this period in the small towns of the South Marmara region. As discussed above, the Armenian groups organised armed resistance against the Nationalist forces on very few occasions. For instance, in Sölöz, Arslanbeg, and Bardizag (Bahçecik), the Armenian units succeeding in pushing the Nationalist forces back. However, these were small-scale local clashes which did not significantly impact the overall conflict. In addition to Sölöz and Arslanbeg, self-defence units were organised by the Armenians, Greeks, and a group of Circassians in the Sarı-Soğan and Çiftlik villages (both located in Adapazarı). Avedis and Stavri were the leaders of these two paramilitary groups, each consisting of around one hundred volunteers.⁴²² It is clear that the Armenians, particularly those living in the warzones in the South Marmara region, allied with the Greek occupation forces and the Loyalists in order to save their lives amid the clashes between the Loyalists and Nationalists, and the war between the Greek and Nationalist forces.

As has been demonstrated in this section, for the Armenian community, the towns—especially those located in the interior parts of Anatolia—and the conflict zones between the Nationalists and Greek occupying forces were not secure. In the eyes of the Armenian community, this insecurity was the intended result of the objectives of the Turkish National movement, and it played a vital role in the formation of the Armenians' perception regarding the movement. The alliance between the Loyalists and the local Armenians is of particular importance here, as it supports the main argument that the greater Armenian community was opposed to the Turkish National movement.

⁴²² *Jagadamard*, Հայ Եւ Յոյն Ինքնապաշտմանուժեան Խումբերը Վերակազմուած Եւ Ատափագարի Շուրջը [Armenian and Greek Self-Defence Units Are Re-Organised in the Adapazarı Region], 5 December 1920, no. 624.

4.6. Conclusion

The Ottoman Armenians were facing three kinds of insecurity and existential concerns. First among these was the insecurity which prevailed in the post-genocide habitus. The Armenians were subject to loss of property, displacement, and dispossession. Many Armenians who managed to stay alive and returned to their hometowns found that their properties were already occupied by newcomers; consequently, many of them became refugees who were living in tents on the streets. Further concern were the insecurities brought about by the Allied occupation and the Turkish insurgency. As has been discussed, the occupation of Izmir by the Greek forces and Istanbul by the Allied Powers increased the anger of the Ottoman Muslims toward the non-Muslim populations. As a result, the Armenians found themselves in a situation in which they became targets of this increasing hatred. A third concern were the insecurities caused by being mired in inter-Turkish conflict, such as the conflict between the Loyalist and the Turkish National movement. As has been demonstrated in this chapter, the Armenians of Sölöz, for instance, were victims of the second and third types of insecurities, i.e., insecurities brought about by Allied and Greek occupation, plus insecurities caused by being caught in the conflict zones of Loyalists and Nationalist.

It was against this background that the Ottoman Armenians aimed at securing their independence by benefiting from the support of Allied Powers. Thus, insecurity triggered a change in their political position. Therefore, in addition to the ‘external power’ component of the ethnic bargaining theory, I argue that ‘insecurity’ also played a vital role in the formation of the Armenian political position.

It is clear that the Armenians in the interior parts of Anatolia were not living in security, given that they were located in the midst of two conflict zones, between the Loyalist forces and the Nationalists, as well as between the Greeks and Turks. After returning from exile, even though the Armenians had already lost their property, wealth, and sources of income, they were additionally required to pay extra taxes to the Nationalist forces or to fight on their behalf.

In utilising Armenian and Ottoman Turkish dailies, one can see how the Turkish National movement was perceived as the continuation of the CUP in the eyes of the Ottoman Armenian community. This research of Armenian dailies with their different political affiliations provides the evidence that both patriotic/nationalist factions and liberal/independent factions of the community situated themselves against the Turkish National movement. By demonstrating how the Armenian dailies approached the Turkish National movement and conceptualising how the experiences of the Armenian community in the warzones of Anatolia during 1919-1920 affected their understanding of the Turkish National movement, I argued that since the wartime conflict and chaos caused by the CUP continued under the administration of the Nationalists, the Armenian community considered them the descendants of the CUP. Moreover, it should be stressed that the main argument regarding the Armenian community was situated in the broader context of post-war Ottoman politics, siding with the Loyalists who, like the Armenian community, opposed the Turkish National movement.

The perception of the Armenian community regarding the Turkish National movement has been absent in the existing academic literature. The purpose of this chapter was to deepen an understanding of the Turkish National movement by examining a non-Muslim community, the Armenians, and to consider implications for

the members of said community. This chapter has attempted to shed light on the previously understudied reactions of the Ottoman Armenian community *vis-à-vis* the emergence of the Turkish National movement. Neither in Turkish nor in Armenian historiography have the reactions of the Ottoman Armenian community regarding the Turkish National movement been analysed comprehensively. As such, this chapter fills a gap in the recent historiographies and contributes to the body of knowledge on the subject matter.

CHAPTER V

THE TURKISH-ARMENIAN WAR IN THE CAUCASUS AND THE OTTOMAN ARMENIANS

5.1. Introduction

During WWI, the Russian Empire occupied the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire, including Erzurum, Van, Bitlis, Trabzon, and Muş. Thousands of Armenians volunteered to join the Russian offensive, in the hope that the Russians might leave these Vilayât-ı Sitte to be established as 'United Armenia', as promised by the Allied Powers. Following the collapse of the Russian Empire and the beginning of civil war in Russia, Russian forces retreated from Eastern Anatolia in 1918, leaving the disorganised Armenians vulnerable to Turkish forces. The Armenian political parties assembled a congress in Tbilisi with two hundred delegates and formed an Armenian National Council consisting of fifteen members. To fill the power vacuum in the region, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan formed the Transcaucasian Commissariat, though they would each soon pursue their respective independence. In 1918, during the last months of WWI, the Ottoman army launched a campaign to regain the provinces which had been abandoned by the retreating Russian forces. In order to put down the Ottoman offensive towards the Armenian nucleus of Yerevan and the holy city of Echmiadzin, the Armenian National Council declared on 30 May 1918 that it would protect the right of the Armenian people, thus in essence declaring the independence of Armenia.⁴²³ Soon after the signing of the Armistice of Mudros on 30

⁴²³ Richard Hovannisian, 'Genocide and Independence 1914-1921', in *The Armenians: Past and Present in the Making of National Identity*, ed. Edmund Herzig and Marina Kurkchian

October 1918, the Ottoman military was to cease its activities on the Eastern border.⁴²⁴ With the aid of British authorities, the Armenians were able to take back lands including Kars, Ardahan, and as far as the Sarıkamış region.⁴²⁵ However, in the beginning of the summer of 1920, after the Turkish National movement organised and began to mobilise troops on the eastern border under the leadership of Kazım Karabekir, tensions began to rise. Ultimately, in September 1920, the Nationalist forces embarked on an offensive towards the tiny Armenian state, thus beginning the four-month Turkish-Armenian War.

The historiography on the Turkish-Armenian War was written primarily by Armenian historians who studied in the Soviet period; as such, due to their Soviet affinity, many were not sufficiently objective towards the subject matter. For instance, criticism was hardly levelled at the Bolshevik invasion of the Armenian state, which

(Routledge, 2005), pp. 97-104; Panossian, *The Armenians from Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars*, pp. 243-45; Jeremy Smith, 'Non-Russians in the Soviet Union and After', in *The Twentieth Century*, vol. 3, *The Cambridge History of Russia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 496; Bülent Gökay, 'Turkish Settlement and the Caucasus, 1918-20', *Middle Eastern Studies* 32 (1996): p. 54; Firuz Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia, 1917-1921* (New York: Templar Press, 1951), pp. 211-21; Michael A. Reynolds, 'Buffers, Not Brethren: Young Turk Military Policy in the First World War and the Myth of Panturanism', *Past & Present*, no. 203 (2009): pp. 166-67; Artin H. Arslanian and Robert L. Nichols, 'Nationalism and the Russian Civil War: The Case of Volunteer Army-Armenian Relations, 1918-20', *Soviet Studies* 31, no. 4 (n.d.): p. 564. For a detailed survey of the road to the independence struggle of the Armenians, see Ադայսան Ծատուր Պավելի, Հոկտեմբերը Եվ Հայ Ժողովրդի Ազատագրական Պայքարը [October and the Liberation Struggle of the Armenian Nation] (Երևան: Երևանի պետական համալսարան, 1982); Հարությունյան Աշոտ Հովսեփի, *Թուրքական Ինտերվենցիան Անդրկովկաս 1918 Թ. և Ինքնապաշտպանական Կռիվները* [The Turkish Intervention in the Transcaucasus and Self-Defence Fighting], (Երևան: ԳԱ հրատ., 1984); G. Hovannisian, *Armenia: On the Road to Independence 1918*.

⁴²⁴ Gwynne Dyer, 'The Turkish Armistice of 1918 1: The Turkish Decision for a Separate Peace, Autumn 1918', *Middle Eastern Studies* 8 (1972): pp. 143-78; Gwynne Dyer, 'The Turkish Armistice of 1918 2: A Lost Opportunity: The Armistice Negotiations of Moudros', *Middle Eastern Studies* 8 (1972): pp. 313-48; Albert Howe Lybyer, 'Turkey Under the Armistice', *The Journal of International Relations* 12 (1922): pp. 447-73; Erik Jan Zürcher, 'The Ottoman Empire and the Armistice of Moudros', in *At the Eleventh Hour: Reflections, Hopes and Anxieties at the Closing of the Great War, 1918*, ed. Peter H Liddle and Hugh Cecil (Leo Cooper, 1998), pp. 266-76.

⁴²⁵ Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, pp. 144-46; Gökay, 'Turkish Settlement and the Caucasus, 1918-20', p. 54.

was portrayed by many Armenian historians as a legitimate act ‘to defeat the imperialist Armenian government’. Instead, academic works written by the Armenian historians of the Soviet period focused on criticising the Tashnag government of the time, which conceded the lands such as Kars, Ardahan, and Oltu to the Turks. The literature created by Armenian historians of the Soviet period did not explore in depth the role of Ottoman Armenians in the war. The position of the Ottoman Armenians regarding the war has barely been discussed by Soviet-period Armenian historians, with the importance placed on the ‘betrayal of the Tashnags’ and the offensive fuelled by the Nationalist army’s ‘Turanic ambitions’ to unite Turkic peoples under one state.⁴²⁶ Few works have analysed and criticised Bolshevik politics during the Turkish-Armenian War, which would represent a valuable scholarly contribution that sheds light on the success of Bolshevik propaganda among the Armenian soldiers and villagers amid the clashes on the front.⁴²⁷

⁴²⁶ A comprehensive body of literature on the Turkish-Armenian War has been produced by Soviet Armenian historians. See Լեո, Հայ ժողովուրդի Պատմություն [The history of the Armenian Nation], vol. 7 (Երևան, 1967); U.S., Ալիխանյան., *Սովետական Ռուսաստանի Դերը Հայ ժողովուրդի Ազատագրման Գործում 1917-1921 ԹԹ*. [The Soviet Russia's Role in the Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation 1917-1921] (Երևան: Հայաստան, 1966); Աղայան, Հայ ժողովուրդի Ազատագրական Պայքարի Պատմությունից [The History of the Independence Struggle of the Armenian People]; Ջ.Ս. Կիրակոսյան, *Հայաստանը Միջազգային Դիվանագիտության Եւ Սովետական Արտաքին Քաղաքականության Փաստաթղթերում 1828-1923 ԹԹ*. [Armenia According to the International Diplomacy and Soviet Foreign Policy Documents 1828-1923] (Երևան, 1972); Հ.Բ. Սիմոնյան, Թուրք Ազգային Բուրժուազիայի Գաղափարաբանությունը Եւ Քաղաքականությունը [The Ideology and Politics of the Turkish National Bourgeoisie] (Երևան: Հայաստան, 1986); Կարապետյան, *1920 Թվականի Հայ-Թուրքական Պատերազմը Եվ Սովետական Ռուսաստանը* [The Soviet Russia and the Armeno-Turkish War of 1920].

⁴²⁷ Գաբրիել Լազեան, Հայաստան Եւ Հայ Դատը Հայեւոյս Յարաբերութիւններու Տակ [Armenia and the Armenian Cause Under the Armenian-Russian Relations], (Երևան: Աղանա, 1991); Արարատ Հակոբյան, *Հայաստանի Խորհրդարանը Եվ Քաղաքական Կուսակցությունները (1918-1920 Թթ.)* [The Parliament of Armenia and the Political Parties (1918-1920)], (Երևան: ՀՅԴ հրատ., 2005); Ս. Վրացեան, Հայաստանը Բոլշեւիկեան Մուրճի Եւ Թրքական Սալի Միջեւ [Armenia Between Bolshevik Hammer and Turkish Anvil], (Պէյրոյթ: Համազգային Տպարան, 1953).

I shall discuss the works of Richard Hovannisian and Raymond Kevorkian as representative examples. The four-volume monumental study of Hovannisian could be considered the most comprehensive of Armenian historiography on the Turkish-Armenian War. The objective, methodological approach of the author distinguishes his work from the previous work of Soviet academicians. Based on extensive archival research and secondary sources, Hovannisian examines the Turkish-Armenian War within the broader context of post-war ambitions of the Allied Powers and the dynamics of Soviet-Turkish relations. However, the position of the Ottoman Armenians during the Turkish-Armenian War is not extensively included in the work of Hovannisian. This chapter shall contribute a new perspective and discussion of new material to the existing literature. Raymond Kevorkian, in his authoritative book, tackles the Turkish-Armenian War in illustrating the continuity of the Turanic, nationalistic ambitions between the CUP policymakers and the Turkish National movement. He argues that the Nationalist forces launched an offensive on the Armenian state to eliminate ‘the Armenian question’ entirely and to unite with the Turkic populations in and beyond the Caucasus.⁴²⁸

Turkish historiography has employed the Turkish-Armenian War in the Caucasus as an important victory for the Turkish National movement, since it was the first victory of the Nationalists, and from the Turkish perspective, it eliminated the Armenian question. Within the Turkish historiography, Mim Kemal Öke and Kamuran Gürün have each contributed works which may be considered as the principle works in the literature on the Turkish-Armenian War. Öke puts forward the notion that the aim of the Nationalist forces’ campaign was to stop ‘the wide-ranging

⁴²⁸ Raymond Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History*; Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: Between Crescent and Sickle: Partition and Sovietization*, vol. 4, 4 vols. (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1996); Richard Hovannisian, ‘Armenia and the Caucasus in the Genesis of the Soviet-Turkish Entente’, *Int. Journal of Middle East Studies*, no. 4 (1973).

massacres of the Armenian forces against the innocent Muslims’ and to gain leverage against the Bolsheviks on the bargaining table.⁴²⁹ According to him, the Armenians were annihilating the Turkish-Muslim population in the region, and the offensive of the Nationalist forces was a fair, belated action.⁴³⁰ Öke’s analysis concludes that the Turkish-Armenian War, resulting in the signing of the Treaty of Gyumri, annulled the Treaty of Sevres’ harsh conditions for the Turkish nation.

Kamuran Gürün, similar to Öke, highlights the view that the Armenians were attacking innocent Muslim villages around the border area and the Nationalist offensive was inevitable, given the difficult conditions of the Muslims. His narrative is based on the Turkish military archives and provides a framework of how the Nationalist military elite approached the Armenian state and what political and strategic tactics were implemented.⁴³¹ In addition to these two bedrock pieces, there are other academic studies, including dissertations written on the subject matter.⁴³²

⁴²⁹ Mim Kemal Öke, *Ermeni Sorunu 1914-1923* [The Armenian Question 1914-1923], pp. 168-77. Guenter Lewy also highlights that the Armenians were organising operations against Muslim villages and attacking innocent Muslims. Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey: A Disputed Genocide* (University of Utah Press, 2007), pp. 104-6.

⁴³⁰ Öke, *Ermeni Sorunu 1914-1923* [The Armenian Question 1914-1923], pp. 168-77.

⁴³¹ Kamuran Gürün, *The Armenian File: The Myth of Innocence Exposed* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1986), pp. 253-72.

⁴³² İskender Yılmaz, *Gümrü Antlaşması* [The Gyumri Treaty], (Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 2001); İskender Yılmaz, ‘Gümrü Antlaşmasının Londra Moskova ve Kars Konferanslarına Yansıması’, [Reflections of the Gyumri Treaty on the London, Moscow and Kars Treaties], *Atatürk Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 2006; Ömer Selvi, ‘Milli Mücadele Döneminde Türk-Ermeni İlişkileri ve Gümrü Antlaşması’ [Turkish-Armenian Relations and the Gyumri Treaty During the National Struggle] (Eskişehir: Eskişehir Osmangazi Üniversitesi, 2007); Uğur Üçüncü, ‘İstikbal Gazetesine Göre Doğu Cephesinde Türk Ermeni Savaşı’, [The Turkish-Armenian War According to the Istikbal Daily], *Karadeniz İncelemeleri*, no. 16 (2014): pp. 87-114; Bilal N. Şimşir, *Ermeni Meselesi 1774-2005* [The Armenian Question 1774-2005], (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 2015); Mehmet Okur, ‘Gümrü, Moskova Ve Kars Antlaşmaları Çerçevesinde Ermeni Sorunu Üzerine Genel Bir Değerlendirme’, [A General Evaluation on the Armenian Question Within the Framework of the Gümrü, Moscow and Kars Treaties], *Kafkas Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 1 (2015): pp. 73-90; Hikmet Öksüz and İsmail Köse, ‘Bristol Raporları Işığında Taşnakçı Ermenilerin Mağlubiyeti Eylül Kasım 1920 ve Gümrü Antlaşması 3 Aralık 1920’ [The Defeat of Tashnags in Light of the Bristol Reports and the Gyumri Treaty 3 December 1920], (Geçmişten Günümüze Türk-Ermeni İlişkileri Uluslararası Sempozyumu, Bayburt, 2015).

5.2. The Ottoman Armenians and the Road to the Turkish-Armenian War in the Caucasus

There was a common belief among the Ottoman Armenians that if the Vilayât-ı Sitte were one day to be liberated from the Turkish yoke, the army of the Republic of Armenia would be the sole liberator. Thus, no other foreign power would assist the Ottoman Armenians to claim independence in those lands. Supporting the military of the Armenian Republic meant collaborating in the future annexation of the Vilayât-ı Sitte. From the beginning of 1920, the Ottoman Armenians embarked upon several fundraising campaigns to channel aid to the Armenian military. During the early days of 1920, a meeting took place at the Armenian National Assembly in the Galata neighbourhood of Istanbul to organise an extensive fundraising campaign for the Armenian military. Thirty-six Armenian associations, together with all Armenian political parties, elected to establish a central committee for fundraising. Izmir Armenians, besides fundraising activities, organised a campaign for the donation of socks for the Armenian military.⁴³³ In a single day, the fundraising campaign in Izmir gathered three thousand Ottoman liras.⁴³⁴ Armenians in Konya—who were mostly refugees sheltered around the Konya railway station, living in tents—collected seven hundred socks to send to the Armenian military.⁴³⁵

The Central Committee for fundraising included Armenian activists Armenag Horigean, Kalusd Eynatean, Vrtanes Mardigean, and Araksi Varujan. The committee decided at its first meeting that the collection of clothing for the military would be

⁴³³ *Jagadamard*, Հայ Բանակին Օգնելու Համար [To Help the Armenian Military], 2 January 1920, no. 244.

⁴³⁴ *Jagadamard*, Մեր Պարտքը Հայ Բանակին [Our Debt to the Armenian Military], 3 January 1920, no. 245.

⁴³⁵ *Jagadamard*, Մեր Պարտքը Հայ Բանակին [Our Debt to the Armenian Military], 7 January 1920, no. 349.

organised by the Armenian Red Cross and the Women's League, and the Vartanants Feast celebrations would be declared the day of the military, on which ceremonies would be held at schools and donations would be collected. On Christmas day and subsequently, boxes were placed in the courtyards of churches and an announcement was made to the wider Armenian community to collect cigarettes and tobacco for the Armenian military.⁴³⁶

In Bursa, Armenian students declined their Christmas gifts of *simit* (bagels), asking their teachers to instead donate the bagel money to the Armenian military.⁴³⁷ On Christmas day, around sixty packages of cigarettes, ten packages of tobacco, and ten thousand liras were delivered to the Kumkapı Church in Istanbul. In Gedikpaşa, during the two days, around forty packages of cigarettes and three thousand liras were donated. Similarly, in other districts of Istanbul such as Kadıköy, Yenikapı, and Ortaköy, donations were made, totalling more than one hundred liras.⁴³⁸ Regardless of political affiliation, the Ottoman Armenians participated in the donation campaigns 'to fulfil their national duties toward their fatherland'.⁴³⁹

Throughout the first half of 1920, the fundraising campaigns continued within the Armenian communities in the Ottoman Empire. In September, before the outbreak of war between the Nationalists and the Armenian State, the Armenian community in Istanbul participated in փոխառուրիւն, a loan campaign for the Armenian government, with the participation of the various Armenian associations established throughout Istanbul. The loan campaign was intended to cover the urgent pecuniary

⁴³⁶ *Jagadamard*, Մեր Պարտքը Հայ Բանակին [Our Debt to the Armenian Military], 17 January 1920, no. 357.

⁴³⁷ *Jagadamard*, Մեր Պարտքը Հայ Բանակին [Our Debt to the Armenian Military], 22 January 1920, no. 362.

⁴³⁸ *Jagadamard*, Մեր Պարտքը Հայ Բանակին [Our Debt to the Armenian Military], 23 January 1920, no. 361.

⁴³⁹ *Jagadamard*, Պզտիկ Հայաստանն Ալ Վաւերացուցած Են [Little Armenia Is Also Recognised], 27 January 1920, no. 364.

needs of the Armenian military to purchase weapons and ammunition. For this purpose, Armenians of the Pera district gathered at the Skating Palace⁴⁴⁰ and held a fundraising evening for the Armenian state. A prominent member of the Armenian community in Pera, A. Arsenean, highlighted that participating in the fundraising event was the duty of each Armenian towards his or her fatherland. Following the remarks of A. Arsenean, another prominent member, Hovhannes Amaduni, added that as the Armenian soldiers and volunteers who fought for the independence of the Armenian state had fulfilled their duties, it was now time for those who had not fought on the battlefield to pay their own debts. At the end of the night, five thousand Ottoman liras were collected from the community.⁴⁴¹ Even though it was named a loan campaign, the aim was in truth more focused on fundraising and donations, with the money lenders knowing that it was highly unlikely that they would be repaid. During the gathering on Kınalı Island, B. Khojasarean argued along similar lines that, while the Armenians in the Caucasus and Anatolia had fought for the independence of the Armenian state and paid their ‘blood debts’, the Istanbul Armenians had not participated in the struggle on the ground. Therefore, he argued that it was time for the Istanbul Armenians to pay their own ‘blood debts’ by taking part in the loan campaign. Eleven thousand Ottoman liras were collected on Kınalı Ada.⁴⁴²

For Istanbul Armenians, the campaign for the Armenian military was a historic moment to show their loyalty to their fatherland and nation. Benon Deyirmenjian, president of the Armenian community in Kuruçeşme, argued that

⁴⁴⁰ The Skating Palace was constructed in 1884 originally as the Hunters Club of Constantinople. In 1909, the building was used as a circus, and later it was transformed into an entertainment centre in which there was also a theatre. During the Republic period, it served as a movie theatre. More recently, it was known as *Emek Sineması*, which has now been demolished by the municipality for the purpose of building a shopping mall.

⁴⁴¹ *Jagadamard*, Փոխառութեան Բացումը Պոլսոյ Մէջ [Opening of Loan Campaign in Istanbul], 1 September 1920, no. 542.

⁴⁴² *Ibid.*

even though the Armenians in Istanbul were only ten per cent of the total population, thirty-five per cent of the economy of the city was in the hands of Armenian merchants. Therefore, he noted that if the Istanbul Armenians gave just two per cent of their wealth, more than one million liras would be generated through the loan campaign.⁴⁴³ During the first gatherings of the loan campaign, forty-six thousand Ottoman liras were collected in the pooled account.⁴⁴⁴ This donation campaign had such importance among the Armenian community that those Armenian businessmen who were reluctant to participate in the campaign or made very small donations were targeted for public shaming. Sebuhan Sdepanean, for instance, named those wealthy Armenian men who refused to take part in the loan campaign as ‘enemies of Armenia and the Armenian nation’. He ended his article with an open threat, that those wealthy Armenians who refused to give their money should not be surprised to see their names on a list titled ‘the enemies of Armenia’.⁴⁴⁵ These examples arguably demonstrate that the Armenian upper class was forced by the greater Armenian public opinion to bestow part of its wealth to the Armenian military. When an Armenian woman from Bardizag, Dikranuhi Der Simonean, who worked as maid in Istanbul for many years, donated her savings of around fifty thousand French francs to the Armenian government, hoping that this amount would help the construction of an Armenian orphanage in an Armenian city, the Armenian Patriarch Zaven acknowledged her donation and hoped that it would become a model for the Armenian upper class.⁴⁴⁶

⁴⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁵ *Jagadamard*, Հայաստանի Դժնամիները [The Enemies of Armenia], 29 September 1920, no. 566.

⁴⁴⁶ *Jagadamard*, Հայ Սպասուհի Մը 50,000 Ֆրանք Կը Նուիրէ Հայաստանի Կառավարութեան [An Armenian Maid Donates 50,000 Francs to the Armenian State], 9 October 1920, no. 575. Lerna Ekmekçioğlu quotes news items from the *Hay Gin* journal and

5.3. Beginning of the Nationalist Offensive and the Fall of Kars and Gyumri

Two months before the Turkish offensive, the joint commission composed of all political parties in Armenia presented a report to the Tashnag government advising that precautions should be taken in foreign and military policy to prevent the destruction of the state. Furthermore, it stated that the experience of Minister for the Military Rupen Minasean showed him to be unfit to hold the position. Under his administration, thousands were conscripted into the military, raising the total number of soldiers to fifty-six thousand, two-thirds of which had never experienced combat. The high-ranking officers as well as the privates were avaricious, and there was scant discipline to be found within the ranks. Furthermore, General Hovsepean and his units oppressed disobedient Turkish villages close to the border in the Kars region. These villagers migrated to the Turkish side and lodged complaints with the Armenian government.⁴⁴⁷

In foreign policy, given that the offensive of the Nationalist forces was inevitable and the aggressiveness of the Bolshevik and Tatar forces was evident, the Armenian government sought to secure the support of the Allied Powers in preparation to defend the borders. Nevertheless, no Allied government expressed any inclination to back the Armenian government, arguing that a new military campaign in the Caucasus could create unnecessary financial burdens for them.⁴⁴⁸

writes her name as Dikranuhi Der Minassian. However, when I checked *Hay Gin's* twenty-fourth issue for the related news item, I found that her name was Dikranuhi Der Simonyan, as indicated above. See Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*, p. 58.

⁴⁴⁷ *Zhoghovurti Tsaynē*, Հայաստանի Վերջին Աղետը [Armenia's Latest Catastrophe], 26 January 1921, no. 697; Öke, *Ermeni Sorunu 1914-1923*, pp. 168-77; Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey: A Disputed Genocide*, pp. 104-6.

⁴⁴⁸ *Jagadamard*, Հայաստանի Լիազորը Պոլիս Կը Դառնայ Իր Երկրամենայ Պտոյտէն [The Representative of Armenian Returns From His Trip to Istanbul], 8 September 1920, no. 547.

Domestically, at the beginning of September it was reported that the influence of Bolshevism was decreasing in the region after the defeat of the Bolshevik army on the Polish front. Meanwhile, the negotiations between the Armenian government and the Soviet representative Boris Legran were yielding encouraging results. The year's harvest was bountiful, and the country's economy was improving; thus, there were fewer beggars on the streets of Yerevan than in Tbilisi. The government was embarking upon various construction projects, such as railway construction in the Oltu and Kamarlu regions. In daily life, speaking Russian was prohibited in order to increase the use of the Armenian language, and streets in Yerevan were renamed after prominent Armenian historical figures.⁴⁴⁹

On the Nationalists' side, in a speech given at the Turkish parliament in Ankara, Mustafa Kemal reported that the commander of the Eastern army had sent letters stating that the local Muslim population in Armenia was in danger of massacre and the Armenians sought to occupy Erzurum at the earliest opportunity.⁴⁵⁰ In response, he gave orders to the Eastern army to prepare for an attack to occupy Sarıkamış, Oltu, and Soğanlı, which were already Turkish territory according to the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.⁴⁵¹ Although Georgy Chicherin of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union assured the Ankara government that the disagreements regarding the borders between the Turkish and Armenian governments could be solved with diplomatic negotiations, Mustafa Kemal asserted that they had rights to the Kars, Oltu, and Ardahan regions, and their occupation was thus

⁴⁴⁹ *Jagadamard*, Նոր Լուրեր Հայաստանէն [New News from Armenia], 16 September 1920, no. 555.

⁴⁵⁰ Shaw, *From Empire to Republic: The Turkish War of National Liberation 1918-1923: A Documentary Study*, 3, part 2: p. 1488.

⁴⁵¹ Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, p. 150; Panossian, *The Armenians from Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars*, p. 245.

legitimate.⁴⁵² When Bekir Sami, the foreign minister of the Ankara government, protested the military operations against the Turkish-Muslim communities in the Oltu region by the Armenian forces in June 1920, the Armenian government responded that the operations were carried out against bands in the regions but had not targeted Muslims; moreover, the Armenian government handed the administration of municipalities to local Muslims in the Oltu region.⁴⁵³ All else aside, the primary obstacle of the Nationalist authorities was, as Bülent Gökay highlights in his article, that the Armenian state prevented it from accessing the much-needed war materials from Russia.⁴⁵⁴ In an article which Gökay used as the foundation of his arguments, *Jagadamard* postulated that the offensive of the Nationalist forces sought to accomplish two primary objectives: first, recapturing Kars, Ardahan, and Batum, which were given to the Turks by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk; second, establishing a land connection with Azerbaijan in order to receive military and financial support from the Bolsheviks.⁴⁵⁵ In addition to these, as *Peyam-ı Sabah* presented in an editorial, the offensive of the Nationalists was a tactical move designed to produce certain guaranteed victories, pre-emptively guarding against potential internal opposition.⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵² *Jagadamard*, Մուսթաֆա Քէմալի ճարը [The Solution of Mustafa Kemal], 2 October 1920, no. 569. In January 1920, it was reported that a Turkish unit consisting of two hundred and fifty soldiers under the command of Mehmet Bey crossed the border and settled in the Zankipasar region. See Զոհրաբյան Էդիկ Արսեմի, *1920 թ. թուրք-հայկական պատերազմը և տերությունները* [The Turkish-Armenian War of 1920 and the Powers], (Երևան: Ոսկան Երևանցի, 1997), pp. 19-20.

⁴⁵³ Խատիսեան Ալ., Հայաստանի Հանրապետության Ծագումն Ու Չարգածումը [The Birth and Development of the Republic of Armenia], (Պէլրուբ: Համազգային Տպարան, 1968), p. 256.

⁴⁵⁴ Gökay, ‘Turkish Settlement and the Caucasus, 1918-20’, p. 61.

⁴⁵⁵ *Jagadamard*, Թուրք Ֆարցակողականը [The Turkish Offense], 8 October 1920, no. 574.

⁴⁵⁶ *Peyam-ı Sabah*, Ermenistan-Milliciler Muharebesi [The Battle Between Armenia and Nationalists], 15 October 1920, no. 11101.

By early September, Kazım Karabekir, Ottoman commander of the Eastern front, had organised the Turkish volunteer groups beyond the Armenian border, and offensive measures had been prepared. It was reported by Armenian intelligence that Turkish aerial reconnaissance had increased along the border area and some Turkish reconnaissance units were crossing the border, making contact with Armenian security forces.⁴⁵⁷ According to Turkish sources, around eight thousand soldiers were sent to the front from the Black Sea region, including a thousand each from the cities of Samsun, Rize, and Trabzon.⁴⁵⁸

In his letter addressed to Chicherin, Mustafa Kemal reiterated that the Muslim population living under the Armenian government was in danger of massacre and feared for their safety; it was therefore necessary for them to occupy strategic points in the Kars, Ardahan, and Batum regions.⁴⁵⁹ Nevertheless, Mustafa Kemal assured Chicherin that they would accept the diplomatic intervention of the Bolsheviks in order to solve the border problem with the Armenian state peacefully.⁴⁶⁰ During the Congress of the Peoples of the East, hosted in Baku in September 1920, the Turkish National government secured guarantee that the Bolsheviks would agree to the occupation of Kars, Ardahan, and Batum by the Nationalist forces.⁴⁶¹ The only point

⁴⁵⁷ Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: Between Crescent and Sickle: Partition and Sovietization*, 4: p. 185.

⁴⁵⁸ *Vakit*, Ermenistan'a Taaruz Ne Halde? [What Is the Stage of Offense Towards Armenia?], 15 October 1920, no. 1024.

⁴⁵⁹ There were thirty Turkish villages in the Zankipasar region, which was only fifteen kilometres from the capital Yerevan. It was claimed that some Turkish officers were organising plots in the area and providing intelligence reports to the Nationalist government. Attacks were launched from these villages against Armenian villages, train stations, and even Armenian forces. In June, Armenian forces counter-attacked to prevent the loss of Yerevan. Operations executed by the Armenian forces resulted in violence and disorder in the region. See *Jagadamard*, Վերջին Անցքերը Հայաստանի Մէջ [Latest Developments in Armenia], 31 December 1920, no. 646.

⁴⁶⁰ *Jagadamard*, Մուսթաֆա Քէմալի Նամակը Չիչերինի [Mustafa Kemal's Letter to Cicherin], 20 October 1920, no. 584.

⁴⁶¹ *Jagadamard*, Հայերթուրք Պատերազմին Ընթացքը [The Pace of Turkish-Armenian War], 26 October 1920, no. 589. Before the Baku Conference, on 24 August, the Nationalist

of concern for Mustafa Kemal was the uncertainty of Georgian policy in the case of a war between the Nationalists and the Armenian government. For this mission, the Turkish committee, headed by Yusuf Kemal (Tengirşenk), paid a discrete visit to Tbilisi, staying at Hotel D'orient.⁴⁶² The Turkish delegation held a meeting with Georgia's President Noe Zhordania and Minister of Foreign Affairs Evgeni Gegechkori to make certain the country's position in the case of war.⁴⁶³ After two days, Yusuf Kemal returned to Baku with the assurance that the Georgians would remain neutral if conflict were to break out and would not enter the war on the Armenian side.⁴⁶⁴ At the beginning of September, it was reported by Bekir Sami that the diplomatic arrangements were made, and the path was cleared for the Turkish army to begin its offensive.⁴⁶⁵ There were four brigades, each consisting of eight thousand soldiers, as well as Kurdish and Turkish volunteers under the command of Kazım Karabekir.⁴⁶⁶

In the middle of September, the Nationalist forces under the command of Kazım Karabekir initiated an aggressive offensive toward the Oltu front, with the objective of taking Sarıkamış as soon as possible. Meanwhile, the Bolshevik forces

representatives signed an agreement with the Bolsheviks in Moscow. See Լազեան, Հայաստան Եւ Հայ Դատը Հայեւոնս Յարաբերութիւններու Տակ, [Armenia and the Armenian Cause Under the Armenian-Russian Relations], pp. 255-56.

⁴⁶² *Verchin Lur*, Հայաստանի Վրայ Յարցակումը [Offense Toward Armenia], 19 October 1920, no. 2006.

⁴⁶³ *Vakit*, ‘Taarruz Nasıl Karar Verilmiş?’ [How Was the Offensive Decided?], 20 October 1920, no. 1029; Գալոյան Գալուստ, *Հայաստանը Եւ Մեծ Տերութիւնները 1917-1923 ԹԹ*: [Armenia and the Great Powers 1917-1923], (Երեւան, 1999), p. 315; Խատիսեան, Հայաստանի Հանրապետութեան Ծագումն Ու Ձարգածումը [The Birth and Development of the Republic of Armenia], p. 307.

⁴⁶⁴ *Jagadamard*, Ինչպէս Որոշուեցաւ Յարձակողականը Հայաստանի Դէմ [How Was the Offense Toward Armenian Decided?], 20 October 1920, no. 584; Զոհրապյան Է. Ա, *Սովետական Ռուսաստանը Եւ Հայ-Թուրքական Հարաբերութիւնները 1920-1922 ԹԹ*: [Soviet Russia and Turkish-Armenian Relations 1920-1922], (Երեւան: ԵՊՀ հրատ., 1979), p. 101.

⁴⁶⁵ *Jagadamard*, Ինչպէս Որոշուեցաւ Յարձակողականը Հայաստանի Դէմ [How Was the Offense Toward Armenian Decided?], 20 October 1920, no. 584.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*; *Vakit*, 20 October 1920, no. 1029.

began an offensive from the North-eastern border of Armenia, mainly the Ghazah region. When the Turkish offensive was launched against Sarıkamış, the border security units withdrew without resistance.⁴⁶⁷ On 28 September, the Armenian generals decided to withdraw from Sarıkamış, arguing that, given the strength of the Turkish army, it was not feasible to defend the region with two thousand five hundred men in Sarıkamış and one thousand five hundred men in the Oltu region.⁴⁶⁸ The Armenian forces, outnumbered by the Bolsheviks and Nationalists, pulled back from both fronts. The Central Committee of the Tashnagts'ut'iwn in Tbilisi made an announcement titled 'Liberty or Death' and called on all Armenian men who were capable of fighting to join the military forces.⁴⁶⁹ After the victories at the Oltu and Sarıkamış front lines, the Nationalist forces were ordered to halt operations by orders from Ankara headquarters, as it was an ideal moment to evaluate the international repercussions of these occupations, particularly in Soviet and British circles.⁴⁷⁰

Meanwhile, in Erzurum the Turkish-Muslim community was running out of patience, tired of both Armenian general Nazarbegyan's obstinance in his refusal to surrender as well as the continued demand of Karabekir's troops for their food and money. The unrest was such that at its height a group of protestors attempted to attack Kazım Bey, the deputy governor of Erzurum at that time. The hospitals in Erzurum were full of wounded soldiers who had fought at the front.⁴⁷¹ In Erzurum, Celalleddin

⁴⁶⁷ *Zhoghovurti Tsaynē*, Ի՞նչպէս Դաւաճանօրէն Հայ Զօրքը Նահանջեց [How Did the Armenian Army Betray and Fall Back?], 4 January 1921, no. 680; Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia, 1917-1921*, p. 288.

⁴⁶⁸ Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: Between Crescent and Sickle: Partition and Sovietization*, 4: p. 195; Vakit, Oltu ve Sarıkamış'ın Tahliyesi [The Evacuation of Oltu and Sarıkamış] 17 October 1920, no. 1026.

⁴⁶⁹ *Jagadamard*, Հայաստանի Դէմ Սարքուած Կռիւր [The Battle Against Armenia], 16 October 1920, no. 581.

⁴⁷⁰ Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: Between Crescent and Sickle: Partition and Sovietization*, 4: p. 197.

⁴⁷¹ *Jagadamard*, Մուսթաֆա Քէմալի Յարձակողականը Հայաստանի Դէմ [The Offense of Mustafa Kemal Against Armenia], 21 October 1920, no. 585.

Arif, the second president of the National Assembly, declared that the weaponry and ammunition of their forces had been sold to Laz and Kurds and that some officials were involved in corruption.⁴⁷² On 28 September, when the Nationalists embarked upon another offensive, a telegram criticising military officials involved in corruption was signed by more than fifty individuals and sent to Ankara.⁴⁷³ Kazım Karabekir in his telegram stated that the allegations negatively affected the morale of the army.⁴⁷⁴

On the other side of the border, on 26 September 1920, the Central Committee of the Tashnagts‘ut‘iwn in Tbilisi issued a public statement calling for the Armenian nation ‘to unite and fight’ against the Turkish offensive.⁴⁷⁵ Following the statements of the committee regarding the mobilisation of Armenian volunteers, thousands of Armenian men enlisted to join the front.⁴⁷⁶ It was indicated that more than thirty thousand Armenian volunteers registered to join the front. The Armenian merchants and wealthy men of Tbilisi said they would meet the needs of those families whose men went to the front. However, the Armenian government ultimately recruited only those who had previous battlefield experience.⁴⁷⁷ The first president of the Armenian Republic, Hovhannes Kacaznuni—whose two sons Ashot and Aram died while

⁴⁷² Ali Akbulut, ‘Şark Harekatı Öncesi Celaleddin Arif Bey’in Erzurum’a Gelişi ve Erzurum’da Bazı Hadiseler’, [The Arrival of Celaleddin Arif Bey to Erzurum Before the Eastern Campaign and Some Events in Erzurum] *Atatürk Dergisi* 1, no. 3 (1989): p. 72; Karabekir, *İstiklal Harbimiz* [Our War of Independence], pp. 844-53.

⁴⁷³ Akbulut, ‘Şark Harekatı Öncesi Celaleddin Arif Bey’in Erzurum’a Gelişi ve Erzurum’da Bazı Hadiseler’, [The Arrival of Celaleddin Arif Bey to Erzurum Before the Eastern Campaign and Some Events in Erzurum] p. 86; Karabekir, *İstiklal Harbimiz*, [Our War of Independence] pp. 844-53.

⁴⁷⁴ Akbulut, ‘Şark Harekatı Öncesi Celaleddin Arif Bey’in Erzurum’a Gelişi ve Erzurum’da Bazı Hadiseler’, [The Arrival of Celaleddin Arif Bey to Erzurum Before the Eastern Campaign and Some Events in Erzurum] p. 96; Karabekir, *İstiklal Harbimiz*, [Our War of Independence] pp. 844-53.

⁴⁷⁵ *Jagadamard*, Դաշնակցութեան Կոչը [Statement of ARF], 19 October 1920, no. 583.

⁴⁷⁶ *Jagadamard*, Համահայկական Բողոքի Ցոյց Թիֆլիսի Մէջ [Pan-Armenian Protest in Tbilisi], 19 October 1920, no. 583; *Vakit*, ‘Ermenistan’ın Millicilere İlan-ı Harbi’ [Declaration of War by Armenia to the Nationalists], 10 October 1920, no. 1019.

⁴⁷⁷ *Jagadamard*, Համահայկական Բողոքի Ցոյց Թիֆլիսի Մէջ [Pan-Armenian Protest in Tbilisi], 19 October 1920, no. 583.

serving in the military, the former in 1918 in Karakilise and the latter in 1920 in Zankipasar—registered as a volunteer.⁴⁷⁸ The Armenian government announced the full mobilisation of the nation, and Armenian men up to the age of 35 were sent to the front. Even the ministers of the government joined the troops on the fronts. Minister of Labour Vratsean went to Kars, Minister of Economy Abraham Gylhandanean went to Dilijan, Minister of Communications Arshak Camalean and Minister of Education Kevork Ghazaryan went to Gyumri, and Minister of Interior Affairs Sarkis Araradean went to the Iğdır front.⁴⁷⁹

On 6 October, the Armenians in Tbilisi organised a meeting at the Armenian Cathedral to protest against the offensive of the Nationalists and Bolsheviks. Armenian merchants closed their shops, Armenian schools were closed, and thousands rushed to the streets, crying ‘Long live the Armenian army!’, ‘Damn the Turkish-Bolshevik reaction!’, and ‘Long live free Armenia!’ At the end of the meeting, a statement was released which criticised the Entente powers for not responding to this offensive and the Bolsheviks for cooperating with the Turks, who were striving for the complete annihilation of the Armenians.⁴⁸⁰ On that day, Leonid Stark, the head of the Soviet mission in Tbilisi, made a statement that the Armenians were collaborating with the imperialists and their interests, thus making this offensive inevitable.⁴⁸¹ This statement provoked the feelings of the crowd, but security forces

⁴⁷⁸ *Verchin Lur*, Հերոսական Հայաստան [Heroic Armenia], 18 October 1920, no. 2005; Արարատ Հակոբյան, *Հայաստանի Խորհրդարանը Եվ Քաղաքական Կուսակցությունները (1918-1920)* [The Parliament of Armenia and the Political Parties (1918-1920)] (Երևան: ՀՅԴ հրատ., 2005), p. 310.

⁴⁷⁹ *Jagadamard*, 27 October 1920, no. 590; Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: Between Crescent and Sickle: Partition and Sovietization*, 4: p. 200.

⁴⁸⁰ *Jagadamard*, Համահայկական Բողոքի Ցոյց Թիֆլիսի Մէջ [Pan-Armenian Protest in Tbilisi], 19 October 1920, no. 583.

⁴⁸¹ Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: Between Crescent and Sickle: Partition and Sovietization*, 4: p. 201.

took the necessary steps to prevent any disorder.⁴⁸² The tension increased further between the Armenian government and the Bolsheviks with the annexation of the Karabakh and Zangezur regions to Azerbaijan and recurrent statements of Bolshevik officers that the Armenian government was serving ‘imperialist’ ambitions.⁴⁸³

In Tbilisi, the Armenian community organised salvation committees (Փրկութեան Կոմիտէ), which were responsible for the mobilisation of volunteers and fundraising for the Armenian military. Similar to the salvation committees, the Armenians in Istanbul organised the loan campaign units. While the salvation committees in Tbilisi had the authority to force Armenian individuals to make a donation for the military or to attend the army as privates, it was voluntary in Istanbul. *Jagadamard* suggested that there should also be salvation committees in Istanbul in order to accelerate the fundraising and recruiting campaigns. It was argued that it was time for the Armenian community to spend even their last ‘pennies’ to save the motherland.⁴⁸⁴

The Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, the governing body of the Armenian Apostolic Church, called for a national mobilisation on 6 October 1920.⁴⁸⁵ Similarly, President Ohanjanean appealed to the public to join the front as they did in 1918 in Sardarabad.⁴⁸⁶ The mottos were ‘To Erzurum!’, ‘To the Black Sea!’, and ‘Death or

⁴⁸² *Jagadamard*, Համահայկական Բողոքի Յոյց Թիֆլիսի Մէջ [Pan-Armenian Protest in Tbilisi], 19 October 1920, no. 583.

⁴⁸³ *Jagadamard*, Օրուան Տարնապը Եւ Հայ Մամուլը [Recent Crisis and the Armenian Press], 20 October 1920, no. 584.

⁴⁸⁴ *Jagadamard*, Փրկութեան Կոմիտէները [Salvation Committees], 19 October 1920, no. 583.

⁴⁸⁵ *Zhoghovurt*, Կաթողիկոսի Կոնդակը [The Decree of Catholicos], 6 October 1920, no. 167; *Jagadamard*, Կաթողիկոսին Կոչը [The Call of Catholicos], 20 October 1920, no. 584.

⁴⁸⁶ *Jagadamard*, Դէպի Ճատակ [To the Front], 21 October 1920, no. 585; The Battle of Sardarabad was a battle between the Armenian forces and the Ottoman army which took place in the Armavir region of Armenia in May 1918. The Armenian forces managed to stop the advance of the Ottoman army, which had attacked the capital, Yerevan, forty kilometres from Sardarabad. See Richard G. Hovannisian, *Armenia: On the Road to Independence 1918*,

final victory!⁴⁸⁷ Major Sebuḥ, one of the commanders leading the defence in Kars, made a statement on 1 October to calling for volunteers to join the front.⁴⁸⁸

The Armenian troops were in a position to recapture Sarıkamış, but the commanders ordered the withdrawal of the units. There were rumours among the soldiers that the commanders were traitors who had taken bribes from the Bolsheviks. The Ottoman Armenian units on the right flank of the defence line, mainly the Ardahan front, fought until the end, even while the other units were withdrawing. It should be stressed that prior to the Turkish Kars offensive, there were two pressing issues within the ranks of the Armenian military. First, the propagation of Bolshevism was so intense that low-ranking Armenian Bolshevik privates disobeyed orders and refused to attack the Nationalist forces, many of whom were their friends. Secondly, there was a disagreement between the high-ranking military officials and the Armenian volunteers, particularly those who joined the front from Istanbul and Cilicia, namely the Ottoman Armenians.⁴⁸⁹

The Turkish offensive towards Kars started under the command of Kazım Karabekir on 27 October.⁴⁹⁰ In Kars, the Turks met with no resistance, with the Armenian army of twenty-six thousand soldiers withdrawing, of which one thousand five hundred surrendered. With his unit of five thousand soldiers, Major Sebuḥ moved forward on the left flank of the front line to encircle the Nationalists, and at the same

pp. 110-20; Panossian, *The Armenians from Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars*, pp. 250-52.

⁴⁸⁷ *Jagadamard*, Հայաստանի Վարչապետին Եւ Պատերազմի Նախարարին Յայտարարութիւնները [The Statements of Armenia's President and War Minister], 19 October 1920, no. 583.

⁴⁸⁸ *Jagadamard*, Զորաւար Սեպուհի Կոչը [The Call of General Sebuḥ], 19 October 1920, no. 583.

⁴⁸⁹ *Zhoghovurti Tsaynē*, Ի՞նչպէս Դաւաճանօրէն Հայ Զօրքը Նահանջեց [How Did the Armenian Army Betray and Fall Back?], 4 January 1921, no. 680.

⁴⁹⁰ Shaw, *From Empire to Republic: The Turkish War of National Liberation 1918-1923: A Documentary Study*, 3, part 2: p. 1489; Gürün, *The Armenian File: The Myth of Innocence Exposed*, pp. 266-67.

time Major Hovhannes Marzmanean, with his unit consisting of four thousand soldiers, moved on the right flank to unite with Sebu. During the march, resultant of the effective Bolshevik propaganda, many soldiers refused to fight and deserted; desolate, Marzmanean committed suicide. Besides the desertion issue of the Armenian military, the Muslim population in the Akbaba region took up arms against the Armenians, forcing some units to leave the front to put down the insurgency.⁴⁹¹ As the Muslims were located between the Akbaba and Çıldır regions, their resistance to the Nationalist army cut communication between its front and the rear support. When Sebu and his unit were en route to the newly established front after the collapse of Kars, the Turkish Muslim militias in Akbaba attacked, slowing their arrival to the front.⁴⁹² To make matters worse, the commander of Kars, Taniel Beg Perumean had recently broken his leg in a car accident and was forced to give orders from afar in his hospital room, causing disorder in the ranks.⁴⁹³ Artillery units in Kars did not fire upon the Nationalists forces, and no serious clashes took place in the city, leaving the people of Kars in disbelief when they saw Turkish forces entering their city.⁴⁹⁴ More than one hundred prominent officers were held hostage; additionally, around one hundred thousand sacks of wheat, flour, and rice; sixty thousand sacks of sugar; and thousands of weapons, bombs, cannons, and cases of ammunition were left in the hands of the Nationalists.⁴⁹⁵ The Armenian junior officers and enlisted men

⁴⁹¹ *Vakit*, Mütarekeden Sonra Ermenistan Ahvali [The Situation in Armenia After the Armistice], 14 November 1920, no. 1054.

⁴⁹² *Jagadamard*, Ի՞նչ Կանցնի Կը Դառնայ Հայաստանի Մէջ [What Is Happening in Armenia?], 24 December 1920, no. 640; *Peyam-ı Sabah*, ‘Ermeniler-Milliciler’ [Armenians-Nationalists], 14 November 1920, no. 11128.

⁴⁹³ Աղայան, Հոկտեմբերը Եվ Հայ Ժողովրդի Ազատագրական Պայքարը, p. 307.

⁴⁹⁴ *Verchin Lur*, Հայաստանի Վերջին Դէպքերը [The Latest Events in Armenia], 25 December 1920, no. 2060; *Vakit*, ‘Kars Kalesi’ nin Sükutu’ [The Conquest of Kars Citadel], 9 November 1920, no. 1049; Öke, *The Armenian Question*, pp. 186-87.

⁴⁹⁵ *Zhoghovurti Tsaynë*, Հայաստանի Վերջին Աղէտը [The Latest Catastrophe in Armenia], 26 January 1921, no. 697; *Peyam-ı Sabah*, ‘Ermenistan Ne Halde?’ [What Is the Situation in Armenia?], 2 December 1920, no. 11146.

who were captured were taken to the railway station and transported to labour camps in Erzurum.⁴⁹⁶

5.4. The Ottoman Armenians During the Clashes

Following the first clashes between the Nationalists and the Armenian military, the Ottoman Armenians initiated a new donation campaign in the Armenian dailies, ‘Everything for the Front’, which elicited strong support from the Istanbul Armenian community, both wealthy and poor. For instance, an Armenian porter, Penyamin Safarean, who was working at the *Mahmudiye Han* (Mahmudiye Inn) in Istanbul, donated twenty-five Ottoman liras. He said that since the Armenian government had not recruited him for the military, he wanted to ‘pay his debt to the fatherland’ with this money.⁴⁹⁷ Officials of the Armenian government proposed to members of the donation committees for the Armenian military in Istanbul that these committees unite as one organisation, the National Defence Association, in the same fashion that Ankara had organised the Turkish National movement. The National Defence Association planned to have headquarters in Istanbul and organise every aspect of moral and material support for the Armenian military, from preparing the lists of volunteers to organising communications with government officials.⁴⁹⁸

Jagadamard openly admitted that the Armenian state was ‘in danger of complete destruction’ and urged Istanbul Armenians to join the struggle by giving examples from Poland, where thousands of Polish women were organised under self-

⁴⁹⁶ Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: Between Crescent and Sickle: Partition and Sovietization*, 4: p. 259; Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia, 1917-1921*, p. 288.

⁴⁹⁷ *Jagadamard*, Ամէն Բան Ճակատի Համար [Everything for the Front], 20 October 1920, no. 584.

⁴⁹⁸ *Jagadamard*, Ազգային Պաշտմասպուրթին [National Defence], 21 October 1920, no. 585.

defence units and thousands of Polish men defended their fatherland on the front lines against Soviet Russia and Soviet Ukraine in 1920.⁴⁹⁹ *Verchin Lur* initiated a donation campaign under the slogan of ‘Each Man for One Daily Wage’, and the first donations of the campaign were given by the workers of *Verchin Lur* itself.⁵⁰⁰ In Pera, Kumkapı, and Kadıköy, Armenian teachers and students participated in the campaign. The Armenian Patriarch Zaven thanked the daily for initiating such campaigns and personally donated ten Ottoman liras.⁵⁰¹ Armenian orphans, too, joined in the donation campaigns. For instance, in the Bezazean school in Bakırköy, the Armenian orphans asked the director to donate the whole value of one month’s food to the Armenian military, choosing to eat only dry bread. The director refused on the grounds that they should eat properly for their health and donated a significant amount to the military on behalf of the orphans. A few days later, the Armenian orphans collected the cheese that they were getting for breakfast, and one of the orphans attempted to sell the cheese in Bakırköy shops in order to donate the income to the military. The director donated a second amount to convince the orphans that they had made an ample donation already.⁵⁰² Similarly, the director of the Aramean-Uncuean school, M. Shamdanjjean, in his letter sent to *Verchin Lur* stated that all of

⁴⁹⁹ *Jagadamard*, Հայրենիքը Վտանքի Մէջ Է [The Fatherland Is Under Danger], 22 October 1920, no. 586.

⁵⁰⁰ *Verchin Lur*, Ճակատը Պողպատենք [Let’s Acierate the Front], 26 October 1920, no. 2012.

⁵⁰¹ *Verchin Lur*, Ճակատը Պողպատենք [Let’s Acierate the Front], 28 October 1920, no. 2014; *Verchin Lur*, Ճակատը Պողպատենք [Let’s Acierate the Front], 29 October 1920, no. 2015. It should be noted that according to the money exchange table published in *Verchin Lur*, one Ottoman lira was equal to 532 kuruş. See *Verchin Lur*, Արժեթուղթեր [Securities], 11 November 1920, no. 2026.

⁵⁰² *Verchin Lur*, Իրենց Պանիրը Կը Ծախեն Ճակատին Համար [They Sell Their Cheese for the Front], 6 November 1920, no. 2022.

the students refused to eat fruit and demanded from their families to donate the value to the Armenian military; some of them even went days without eating anything.⁵⁰³

Not only in Istanbul, the Ottoman Armenians of the remote parts of Anatolia were also engaged in the donation campaigns. On 8 November, the Armenians of Biga, a small town in Çanakkale, organised a fundraising campaign for the Armenian military, collecting five hundred Ottoman liras. The committee highlighted that the Armenians in Biga were disappointed with the actions of the Armenian government and felt that they had not sufficiently paid their debts to the fatherland; with the fundraising they hoped to be able to fulfil their duties. Students in the Armenian school in Biga collected twelve liras and participated in the fundraising event.⁵⁰⁴ Students of the Armenian orphan Karageozean school in Istanbul, after hearing the news that the Armenian army was defeated on the Kars front, refused to eat their daily food and asked the administrators to donate the food money (around twenty-five liras) to the Armenian military.⁵⁰⁵ After the fall of Kars and Gyumri, the Armenian community in Bursa declared a state of mourning on 14 November; no Armenian in the city opened his shop on that day, and a religious rite was held in the Armenian church ‘honouring the Armenian martyrs who fought on the battlefield against the Nationalist forces’.⁵⁰⁶

⁵⁰³ *Verchin Lur*, Անօթի Կը Մնան Պտտուղէ Կը Զրկուին [Staying Hungry, Depriving Their Fruit], 5 November 1920, no. 2021.

⁵⁰⁴ *Jagadamard*, Պիղացին Եւ Ճակատը [The People of Biga and the Front], 13 November 1920, no. 605.

⁵⁰⁵ *Jagadamard*, Զրկումի Օրը Գարակեօզեան Որբանոցի Մէջ [A Day of Deprivation at the Karageozean Orphanage], 14 November 1920, no. 606.

⁵⁰⁶ *Jagadamard*, Սուգի Օրը Պրուսայի Մէջ [Mourning Day in Bursa], 20 November 1920, no. 611.



Figure 9. ‘Glory to those who fight for the fatherland’ (*Verchin Lur*, 29 May 1920)

5.5. The Fall of Gyumri and the Sovietisation of the Armenian Republic

After the defeat of the Armenian military in Kars, leaving both soldiers and citizens alike begging for peace, the Armenian government was advised by authoritative politicians and military men such as Hovhannes Kacaznuni, Tovmas Nazarbekian, and Ruben Ter-Minasean to sign a ceasefire agreement.⁵⁰⁷ On 1 November, when the Armenian parliament convened in Yerevan, the president spoke on behalf of the

⁵⁰⁷ Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: Between Crescent and Sickle: Partition and Sovietization*, 4: p. 263.

government and declared that, despite the military defeats, they would continue fighting against the Turks until the last Armenian unit. Regardless of their political affiliations, members of the parliament applauded this speech for minutes.⁵⁰⁸ Ignoring the calls for a ceasefire, the Armenian government made a public announcement, calling upon the whole nation ‘to fight to the end’.⁵⁰⁹

After the fall of Kars, nonetheless, the Nationalist forces marched fifty kilometres to Gyumri. With their military forces spread thin across much territory, the Armenian government asked for a ceasefire on 6 November. Starting from 7 November, the ceasefire agreement was put into force, stipulating that the Armenian government was to pull back their forces to east of the Arpaçay River and leave the administration of the Gyumri region to the Turks, including the Gyumri train station.⁵¹⁰ After the signing of the ceasefire agreement, Kazım Karabekir discussed the agreement conditions with Ankara, and with the support of the Nationalist administration, he imposed a second agreement on 9 November. This agreement included rather strict conditions, such as the removal of the Armenian forces from Gyumri to an area consisting of only Yerevan and the surrounding villages, the free use of Armenian railways not only in Gyumri but also in Sanahin and the Georgian border zone, and the transfer of a considerable amount of weapons and ammunition to the Turkish military. The Armenian government refused these revisions, and the conflict resumed on 11 November.⁵¹¹ President Ohanjanean in his statement argued

⁵⁰⁸ *Jagadamard*, Ի՞նչպէս Ինկաւ Կարսը [How Did Kars Fall?], 16 November 1920, no. 607.

⁵⁰⁹ *Jagadamard*, Հայ Կառավարութեան Կոչը Հայ Ժողովուրդին [The Statement of the Armenian Government to the Armenian People], 16 November 1920, no. 607.

⁵¹⁰ *Jagadamard*, Ի՞նչպէս Ինկաւ Կարսը [How Did Kars Fall?], 16 November 1920, no. 607; *Vakit*, 12 November 1920, no. 1052; *Vakit*, ‘Ermenistan’ın Mütareke Şartları’ [The Ceasefire Conditions of Armenia], 13 November 1920, no. 1053.

⁵¹¹ *Jagadamard*, Անբարտաւան Պայմաններ [Haughty Conditions], 18 November 1920, no. 609; *Vakit*, ‘Ermenistan’daki Yeni Harekat-ı Harbiye’ [New Military Operation in

that the Turks did not mean to establish an agreement between the two sovereign nations but aimed to destroy the legitimacy of the Armenian state, bringing into question its independence.⁵¹² The Armenian government rejected the updated terms of the Nationalists and decided to continue fighting. The government called on the people anew: ‘To the front, to the ultimate victory and holy self-defence! This is our motto’.⁵¹³

After the occupation of Kars and Gyumri, Kazım Karabekir issued a circular to the Armenian community stating that the primary objective of the Nationalists was to overthrow the Tashnag government to save both nations from ‘the imperialist Tashnag administration’.⁵¹⁴ In practice, while the local Armenian population in the regions occupied by the Nationalists was generally spared from Nationalist violence, there were multiple reports of the Nationalists plundering the food and harvest of the villagers.⁵¹⁵ Furthermore, in the Yerevan region, with the increasing number of

Armenia], 30 November 1920, no. 1068; *Peyam-ı Sabah*, ‘Kafkasya’da Yine Harp Başladı’ [War Began in the Caucasus Again], 19 November 1920, no. 11133; Edita Gzoyan, ‘The Turkish-Armenian War of 1920 and the League of Nations’, *Central and Eastern European Review* 5 (2011): p. 10; Shaw, *From Empire to Republic: The Turkish War of National Liberation 1918-1923: A Documentary Study*, 3, part 2: pp. 1500-1502; Gürün, *The Armenian File: The Myth of Innocence Exposed*, p. 269; *Jagadamard*, Մուսթաֆա Քեմալի Կողմէ Հայաստան անաջարկուած եօթե պայմանները [Seven Conditions Proposed by Mustafa Kemal to the Armenian Government], 23 November 1920, no. 613.

⁵¹² *Jagadamard*, Կացութիւնը Հայաստանի Մէջ [The Situation in Armenia], 30 November 1920, no. 619; Գալոյան, *Հայաստանը Եւ Մեծ Տէրութիւնները 1917-1923 ԹԹ*, [Armenia and the Great Powers 1917-1923]] p. 340.

⁵¹³ *Zhoghovurt*, Կառավարական Հաղորդագրութիւն [Government Press Release], 12 November 1920, no. 184; *Zhoghovurt*, Քաղաքացիներ [Citizens], 3 November 1920, no. 179.

⁵¹⁴ Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: Between Crescent and Sickle: Partition and Sovietization*, 4: p. 260; Shaw, *From Empire to Republic: The Turkish War of National Liberation 1918-1923: A Documentary Study*, 3, part 2: pp. 1497-98.

⁵¹⁵ *Zhoghovurti Tsaynë*, Հայկական Անկախութիւնը Փրկելու Համար Հայաստանի Ժողովուրդը Փրկենք [To Save the Armenian Independence, First Let’s Protect the Population of Armenia], 16 December 1920, no. 664; *Zhoghovurti Tsaynë*, Հայաստանի Վիճակը Վերջին Աղետի Նախօրեակին [The Situation of Armenia During the Latest Catastrophe], 28 December 1920, no. 674.

refugees from the Gyumri area, there was famine and the spread of contagious diseases.⁵¹⁶

Though the Armenian government rejected the Nationalists' terms, the representative of the Bolsheviks, Boris Legran, paid a visit to Yerevan in order to come to an agreement with the Armenian government. According to the preliminary agreement between Legran and the Armenian government made on 21 October, the Armenian government was ready to allow the Bolshevik forces to pass through the Armenian border and use the train lines if the Kars, Zangezur, Ghazah, and Lori regions were left alone. Legran also agreed that the Bolsheviks would give oil and return the assets of the Armenian Lazarean Institute.⁵¹⁷ The agreement was reached by Boris Legran and Levon Shant in the fourth week of October.⁵¹⁸ Nevertheless, when Legran informed Moscow of the terms of the agreement, the Soviet authorities were hesitant, as they interpreted the agreement to be in favour of the Tashnag government. Separately, the Tashnag government was forced to yield to the terms of the Nationalists; refusal to do so would have resulted in a Nationalist march to Etchmiadzin and Yerevan, and the complete occupation of the Armenian lands.⁵¹⁹

When Khadisseean was discussing peace terms with the Nationalists in Gyumri, the Bolsheviks made a proposal to the Vratsean government. They offered the return of Nahcevan, Karabakh, and all other Turkish-occupied areas to the

⁵¹⁶ *Zhoghovurti Tsaynē*, Նամակներ Կովկասէն [Letters from the Caucasus], 30 December 1920, no. 676.

⁵¹⁷ *Jagadamard*, Վերջին Անցքերը Հայաստանի Մէջ [Latest Developments in Armenia], 29 December 1920, no. 644. The Lazarean Institute, established in 1815 in Moscow, was an Armenian school specialising in Near Eastern and Middle Eastern cultures and languages including Arabic, Armenian, Persian, Turkish, and Georgian.

⁵¹⁸ Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: Between Crescent and Sickle: Partition and Sovietization*, 4: p. 233; Լազեան, Հայաստան Եւ Հայ Դատը Հայեւոռու Յարաբերութիւններու Տակ, [Armenia and the Armenian Cause Under Armenian-Russian Relations] pp. 259-61.

⁵¹⁹ Վրացեան, Հայաստանը Բոլշեւիկեան Մուրճի Եւ Թրքական Սալի Միջեւ, p. 133.

Armenians if they accepted Bolshevik authority. However, Vratsean rejected this offer, and the Bolsheviks ordered Commander Gasean to march on Yerevan. The offensive of the Armenian Bolsheviks started from the north-eastern border; soon the forces occupied the Dilijan region and declared that the Bolsheviks took control of the country and that the Tashnags were ‘the enemies of the Armenians’. The Moscow administration assigned an army of ten thousand soldiers to support Gasean. Discussions were held in the Armenian parliament, and the majority agreed on making peace accords both with the Soviets, based on the Legran agreements, and with the Nationalists to put an end to the war.⁵²⁰ The agreement was signed on 2 December, the same day Khadisseean was signing the agreement with the Nationalists in Gyumri.⁵²¹

⁵²⁰ *Vakit*, ‘Ermenistan’la Sulh’ [Peace With Armenia], 14 December 1920, no. 1082; *Jagadamard*, Հայաստանի Մէջ Կատարուած Վերջին Փոփոկութիւններուն Ամփոփ Պատմութիւնը [The Complete History of the Recent Developments in Armenia], 14 December 1920, no. 631; Simon Payaslian, ‘United States Policy toward the Armenian Question and the Armenian Genocide’ (UCLA, 2003), p. 751; Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia, 1917-1921*, 288-92; Հակոբյան, *Հայաստանի Խորհրդարանը Եվ Քաղաքական Կուսակցությունները (1918-1920)*, [The Parliament of Armenia and the Political Parties (1918-1920)] p. 41; Gökay, ‘Turkish Settlement and the Caucasus, 1918-20’, p. 68.

⁵²¹ Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, p. 161; Panossian, *The Armenians from Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars*, p. 245; Hasan Kayalı, ‘The Struggle for Independence’, in *Turkey in the Modern World*, ed. Reşat Kasaba (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 131; Hovannisian, ‘Genocide and Independence 1914-1921’, p. 110; Ekmekçioğlu, ‘Improvising Turkishness: Being Armenian in Post-Ottoman Istanbul (1918-1933)’, pp. 61-62; Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia, 1917-1921*, p. 289; Öke, *The Armenian Question*, p. 187; Վրացեան, Հայաստանը Բոլշևիկեան Սուրճի Եւ Թրքական Սալի Միջեւ, [Armenia Between Bolshevik Hammer and Turkish Anvil] pp. 129-31; Լազեան, Հայաստան Եւ Հայ Դատը Հայեւոյ Յարաբերութիւններու Տակ, [Armenia and the Armenian Cause Under Armenian-Russian Relations] pp. 263-64; Զոհրաբյան, *1920 թ. թուրք-հայկական պատերազմը և տերությունները*, [The Turkish-Armenian War of 1920 and the Powers] pp. 42-43; *Zhoghovurti Tsaynë*, Ռուսիա, Թուրքիա, Հայաստան [Russia, Turkey, Armenia], 21 January 1921, no. 693; *Vakit*, ‘Ermenistan’da İkinci Mütareke’ [The Second Armistice in Armenia], 2 December 1920, no. 1074; *Vakit*, ‘Ermenistan Sulhu’ [Armenia’s Peace], 23 December 1920, no. 1091; *Verchin Lur*, 23 December 1920, No. 2058; *Zhoghovurti Tsaynë*, Հայաստանի Եւ Միլիտարիստներու Միջեւ Կնքուած Հաշտութեան Դաշնագիրի Պատճէկը [Copy of the Agreement Signed Between Armenia and the Nationalists], 31 December 1920, no. 677.

On 6 December, after the Bolsheviks took control of the country, the arrest of prominent Armenian politicians began.⁵²² The Tashnag leaders were imprisoned, particularly those who strongly opposed the Bolsheviks. On 10 January, General Tro and his officers were exiled to Russia, and seventy prominent officers of the Armenian military were exiled to Baku. On 24 January, one thousand two hundred Armenian military officers, including commanders Siligean and Hakhverdean, were exiled to an unknown place.⁵²³ The Armenian Bolsheviks sent hundreds of waggons of gifts to Lenin to express their gratitude.⁵²⁴

As Gökay clearly outlines in his analysis, the occupation of the Armenian state was based on an agreement between the Bolsheviks and the Nationalist authorities. Even though the Nationalists had aspirations toward formerly Russian-controlled Armenian lands, they did not venture east of Kars.⁵²⁵ On the other hand, the Bolsheviks, as Payaslian puts clearly, were not willing to discuss the return of Erzurum, Van, and Muş on behalf of the Armenian nation.⁵²⁶ Thus, both sides

⁵²² Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia, 1917-1921*, p. 293; Bloxham, *The Great Game of Genocide: Imperialism, Nationalism, and the Destruction of the Ottoman Armenians*, p. 161; Panossian, *The Armenians from Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars*, p. 246; Gökay, 'Turkish Settlement and the Caucasus, 1918-20', p. 68; Hovannisian, 'Genocide and Independence 1914-1921', p. 110; Ekmekçioğlu, 'Improvising Turkishness: Being Armenian in Post-Ottoman Istanbul (1918-1933)', p. 62; Öke, *The Armenian Question*, p. 191.

⁵²³ *Jagadamard*, Ի՞նչ Կանցնի Կը Դառնայ Հայաստանի Մէջ [What Is Happening in Armenia?], 24 December 1920, no. 640; *Jagadamard*, Կացութիւնը Հայաստանի Մէջ [The Situation in Armenia], 28 December 1920, no. 643; *Vakit*, 'Ermenistan'da Bolşevik İdaresi' [Bolshevik Administration in Armenia], 29 December 1920, no. 1097; Վրացեան, Հայաստանը Բոլշևիկեան Մուրճի Եւ Թրքական Սալի Միջեւ, [Armenia Between Bolshevik Hammer and Turkish Anvil] pp. 143-44; Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia: Between Crescent and Sickle: Partition and Sovietization*, 4: p. 404; Խատիսեան, Հայաստանի Հանրապետութեան Ծագումն Ու Չարգածումը, [The Birth and Development of the Republic of Armenia] p. 320.

⁵²⁴ Խատիսեան, Հայաստանի Հանրապետութեան Ծագումն Ու Չարգածումը, [The Birth and Development of the Republic of Armenia] p. 326.

⁵²⁵ Gökay, 'Turkish Settlement and the Caucasus, 1918-20', p. 68.

⁵²⁶ Payaslian, 'United States Policy toward the Armenian Question and the Armenian Genocide', p. 752.

adhered to the previously principles agreed upon before attacking the minute Armenian state.

5.6. Conclusion

The war between the Nationalist forces and the Armenian government is a critical vantage from which to analyse the Ottoman Armenians' collective position *vis-à-vis* the related political developments. The Ottoman Armenians sided with the Armenian Republic and in doing so became ardent supporters of the Armenian military.

Hundreds of Ottoman Armenian volunteers joined the Armenian military to fight on the front lines against the Nationalists, and those who were not able to join the armed struggle paid their 'national debts' by raising tremendous amounts of money to donate to the Armenian military. As has been analysed in this chapter, the Armenian press and all strata of the Armenian public closely followed the developments on the front lines, which then influenced their actions—for instance, the Armenian orphans in Istanbul refused to eat their daily meals to save money to send to the Armenian military, and the Armenian individuals, wealthy or poor, took part in the donation campaigns. The participation of the Ottoman Armenians in the fundraising campaigns and as volunteers in the Armenian military demonstrates how the Ottoman Armenians, who suffered wartime massacres and atrocities, saw salvation in supporting the fledgling Armenian state established in the Caucasus.

This chapter elaborated the various dimensions of the pro-Armenia position of the Ottoman Armenians. Having experienced massacre, dispossession, and oppression during and after the war, the pro-Armenia stance of the Ottoman Armenians was driven by their quest for liberation, as a means of guaranteeing their collective safety.

Widespread fund-raising campaigns for the needs of the young Armenian state and volunteering in the battles on the side of the Republic of Armenia were evidence of this stance. This position of the Ottoman Armenians seemingly became stronger after the signing of the Armistice of Mudros and the occupation of part of Ottoman lands by the Allied forces. Ottoman Armenians put their hope, however misleading, on the ‘external support’ that the Allies promised but never delivered.

This chapter brings a new perspective to the analysis of the reactions of the Ottoman Armenian community *vis-à-vis* the Turkish-Armenian War in the Caucasus in 1920. By doing so, it sheds new light on the reactions of Ottoman Armenian community during the Armistice years, which have been mostly overlooked by scholars of Late Ottoman history.

The following chapter will explore the support of the Armenian community for the French authorities in the occupation of Cilicia. By doing so, the chapter will further support the main argument of the thesis, being that before 1922, the political position among the Ottoman Armenians was pro-Entente and pro-Armenian independence.

CHAPTER VI

THE FRENCH OCCUPATION AND THE OTTOMAN ARMENIAN POPULATION OF CILICIA

6.1. Introduction

Cilicia, extending from the Taurus mountains in the west to the Anti-Taurus mountains and the Amanus in the east, is a coastal region of Anatolia which is divided into two parts. The western plain, fed by the Seyhan and Ceyhan rivers, is fertile, while the eastern plain is rocky and mountainous, not suitable for agricultural activities. In contemporary Turkey, the westernmost part of the Cilicia region is known as the *Çukurova Bölgesi* (Çukurova Region). Cilicia has been an important centre for the Armenian population in Anatolia throughout the centuries. The Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia (1198-1375) ruled the region for two centuries until it was defeated by the Mamluks in the fourteenth century. Ottoman rule followed in the fifteenth century, during which time the Armenian population consistently grew and came to control the commerce and industry in the region for centuries. Before the beginning of WWI in 1914, the total population in the region was around 406,000, including more than 83,000 Armenians.⁵²⁷ According to secret agreements made during the war, the Cilicia region was specified under the French zone of influence, and after the Ottoman defeat and signing of the Armistice of Mudros, the French and British forces occupied certain cities in the region.

⁵²⁷ Kevorkian, *1915 Öncesinde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Ermeniler* [Armenians in the Ottoman Empire Before 1915], p. 271. According to Kemal Karpat the Armenian population in the Cilicia region before WWI was around 50,000. See Karpat, *Ottoman Population, 1830-1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics*, pp. 171-73.

The French occupation of Cilicia represents a noteworthy episode in the history of the post-war Ottoman-Armenian community. The aspirations of the Cilician Armenians, who were mostly deported to Syria during the wartime and who died in significant numbers en route, were different from that of the Ottoman Armenians of Istanbul and Izmir, who had not suffered deportations during the war. Understandably, experiencing death, famine, the terrible conditions of deportation and the massacres influenced the motivation of the Cilician Armenians who, with the help of the French authorities, began returning to their native lands during the last months of 1918 and the beginning of 1919. At the same time, the Cilician Armenians, similar to the other Armenian communities in the Ottoman Empire, were pro-Entente and supporters of the establishment of a ‘United Armenia’.

The relationship between France and the Armenians began in 1916 when the Armenian community, especially in Egypt, decided to support the French and the British forces in their endeavour to occupy the Arab lands of the Ottoman Empire by establishing Armenian volunteer units to serve in the Entente’s occupation forces. Prominent figures in the Armenian political parties in Egypt—Sdep’an Sabah-Kiwean (*Hnchak* Party), Ardawazt Hanmĕean (ARF), and Mihran Damadean (*Veragazmyal Hnchak* Party)—organised the establishment of the Armenian Legion in Cyprus in 1916 and called on young Armenian men in the diaspora to join the units. Young people from the United States and Egypt in particular joined the camps to receive military training.⁵²⁸ The nucleus of the Armenian Legion was created by

⁵²⁸ Andrekos Varnava, ‘French and British Post-War Imperial Agendas and Forging an Armenian Homeland After the Genocide: The Formation of the Légion D’orient in October 1916’, *The Historical Journal* 57, no. 4 (2014): pp. 1117-22; Գանգրունի Հրանդ, Կիլիկիոյ Հայութեան Վերջին Գաղթը [The Latest Migration of Cilician Armenians] (Պէյրուս: Ա.Ն., 1998) p. 98; Եսփումեան Աւետիս, *Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ*: [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] (Գահիրէ: Հայ Ազգային Հիմնադրամ, 1977), p. 113.

Armenians of Musa Dagh origin. The French authorities assured them that the Legion would be the core of the military of the Armenian state which was to be established in Cilicia.⁵²⁹ Even though Boghos Nubar expressed reluctance regarding the establishment of the Armenian Legion, the Armenian political parties in Egypt decided independently to continue registering volunteers.⁵³⁰ When the Armenian National Union (ANU) of Egypt⁵³¹ made a statement to the public, signed by the Armenian political parties, to encourage volunteers to register, six hundred Armenians from Musa Dagh, three hundred Armenians from Egypt, and two hundred fifty Armenian soldiers who were serving in the Ottoman military but had been taken by the British army as prisoners of war answered the call.⁵³²

⁵²⁹ Varnava, ‘French and British Post-War Imperial Agendas and Forging an Armenian Homeland After the Genocide: The Formation of the Légion D’orient in October 1916’, pp. 1117-1022; Եսփուճեան, *Հայ Ճողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ.*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] p. 104.

⁵³⁰ Եսփուճեան, *Հայ Ճողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ.*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] pp. 136-37; Varnava, ‘French and British Post-War Imperial Agendas and Forging an Armenian Homeland After the Genocide: The Formation of the Légion D’orient in October 1916’, pp. 1113-14.

⁵³¹ The Armenian National Union (ANU) was founded in early 1917 in Egypt to bring together various Armenian organisations and political parties to produce common strategies before the political developments. The Cilicia branch of the ANU was established with the participation of the representatives of the four political parties and three Armenian religious denominations in Cilicia. The ANU functioned as a central administration of the Armenian community of Cilicia before the Allied authorities. It had branches in several towns in the Cilicia regions such as Mersin, Tarsus, Dörtyol, Osmaniye, Maraş, and Urfa, and it had subcommittees for property and finance management of the community, as well as the repatriation of the refugees. See Garabet K. Moundjian, ‘Cilicia Under French Administration: Armenian Aspirations, Turkish Resistance, and French Strategems’, in *Armenian Cilicia*, ed. Richard Hovannisian and Simon Payaslian (California: Mazda Publishers, 2008), pp. 477-80; Vahe Tachjian, ‘The Cilician Armenians and French Policy 1919-1921’, in *Armenian Cilicia*, ed. Richard Hovannisian and Simon Payaslian (California: Mazda Publishers, 2008), p. 542.

⁵³² Եսփուճեան, *Հայ Ճողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ.*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] pp. 148-49.



Figure 10. The Armenian Legion (*Horizon*, 19 February 1920)

It is worth highlighting here that most of these Armenian volunteers who were enrolled in the Legion had lost their families, friends, relatives, and all their possessions during the wartime massacres, galvanizing their drive for vengeance. In many cases, the lack of discipline among the Armenian legionnaires eventually resulted in incidents where the local Muslim communities were affected.⁵³³ This is

⁵³³ Թորոսյան Շ.Թ., *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ* [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] (Երեվան: Երեվանի Համալսարանի Հրատարակչություն, 1987), pp. 116-17; Եսփուճեան, *Հայ Մոլորվորդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ.* [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] p. 195; Stanford J. Shaw, 'The Armenian Legion and Its Destruction of the Armenian Community of Cilicia', in *The Armenians in the Late Ottoman Period*, ed. Türkkeya Ataöv (Ankara: Turkish Historical Society, 2001); Zeidner, *The Tricolor Over the Taurus: The Franco-Turkish War for Cilicia, Crucible of the National Liberation Movement*, pp. 140-45; Nazar Bağcı, 'An Analysis of Inter-Communal Conflicts in Cilicia During the Independence War Years 1918-1922' (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2013), p. 6. The memoirs and analyses published by the Turkish researchers claimed that the Armenian Legion acted aggressively towards the Muslim population. See Cezmi Yurtsever, *Ermeni Terör Merkezi Kilikya Kilisesi: Çukurova'da Türk Varlığının Sosyo-Ekonomik Esasları, Türkmen Aşiretler, Derebeylik Rejimi, Bunalımlar, 1865 Çukurova Reformu ve Ermeni Terörizminin Dünü, Bugünü, Yarını* [Armenian Terror Center

important for our theoretical discussion to understand the motivation of the Ottoman Armenians in becoming pro-Allied, pro-independence in the first years of the Armistice period. A considerable number of Armenian volunteers who enrolled in the Legion had lost their relatives during the genocide and were forced to abandon their properties. Thus, the insecurity which prevailed from the beginning of the war shaped their political position. When they saw ‘external support’, in this case, the French occupation forces, they started to volunteer in the Legion to gain independence in the region, as promised by the French authorities.

Cilicia Church: Socio-Economic Principles of Turkish Presence in Çukurova, Türkmen Tribes, Derebeylik Regime, Crises, 1865 Çukurova Reform and the Past, Present, and Future of Armenian Terrorism] (Istanbul: Kişisel Yayınlar, 1983); Kemal Çiçek, *Milli Mücadelede Adana ve Havalisi 1918 1922* [Adana and Its Vicinity During the National Struggle] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1999); Taha Toros, *Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Çukurova* [Çukurova During the War of Independence] (Ankara: T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı, 2001); Abdülğani Ginici, *1920 Adana Ermeni Mezalimi Hatıraları* [Memoirs of the 1920 Armenian Atrocities of Adana] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2011); Damar Arıkoğlu, *Hatıralarım* [My Memoirs] (Ankara: Tan Gazetesi, 1961).



Figure 11. Celebration of the French National Day (*Verchin Lur*, 14 July 1921)

The activities of the Armenian Legion and the military operations of the French occupation forces are beyond the scope of this study. However, the reactions of the local Armenian community in the Cilicia region are critical for our discussion with regards to the collective approach of the Cilician Armenian community towards socio-political developments at the time. When the Armenian Legion and the French forces landed in Cilicia in late 1918, the local Armenians poured into the streets to

celebrate.⁵³⁴ Thus, from the very beginning of the French occupation, the local Armenian population demonstrated its rejection of Ottoman authority by supporting the French administration, which had assured the independence of Cilicia under Armenian control.

A group of Armenian legionnaires landed in Mersin on 19 November 1918 and occupied Adana, Pozantı, and Tarsus, while another group landed in Iskenderun on 22 November and occupied Islahiye, Dörtyol, Osmaniye, and Bahçe.⁵³⁵ Toros Lusinean, who served in the Armenian Legion, described the enthusiasm of the local Armenians when the legionnaires landed in Mersin:

The station was packed with waves of people of different genders and ages. My pen cannot describe the scene which appeared before our yearful eyes, nor could the famous authors manage to do that. Along with endless clappings, thousands of mouths were shouting together: ‘Long live Armenia, long live the Armenian soldier, long live the Entente!’⁵³⁶

⁵³⁴ Richard G. Hovannisian, ‘The Postwar Contest for Cilicia and the “Marash Affair”’, in *Armenian Cilicia*, ed. Richard Hovannisian and Simon Payaslian (California: Mazda Publishers, 2008), p. 500; Yücel Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia, 1914-1923* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2012), p. 121.

⁵³⁵ Եսփուճեան, *Հայ Ճողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ.*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] p. 187; Cemil Şenalp, *Ulusal Kurtuluş Savaşında Fransız İşgal Bölgelerinde Sivil İşler ve Askeri Hükümet Faaliyetleri* [Civil Affairs and Military Government Activities in the French-Occupied Regions During the National War of Independence] (Istanbul: Harp Akademileri Komutanlığı Yayınları, 2006), p. 155; Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia, 1914-1923*, p. 104; Yusuf Ziya Bildirici, *The Massacres of the Armenians Committed in Adana Province and the French-Armenian Relations* (Ankara: Köksav, 1999), p. 125.

⁵³⁶ Եսփուճեան, *Հայ Ճողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ.*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] p. 188. ‘Կայարանը լիքն է ծովածաւալ բազմութեամբ մը ամէն սեռէ, ամէն հասակէ: Գրիչս անկարող է, ու անկարող պիտի զգար ինքզինքը ամենամեծ գրողն իսկ, նկարել փորձելու այն տեսիլքը որ պարզուեցաւ մեր կարօտաբաղձ աչքերուն առջև: Հազարաւոր բերաններ լիահագագ «Կեցցէ՛ Հայաստան, կեցցէ՛ Հայ զինուորը, կեցցէ՛ն Դաշնակիցները» կը պոռային անվերջ անդադրում ծափահարութիւններով:’

Varteres Garougian, an Armenian-American volunteer in the Legion who landed in Mersin in 1918, encapsulates the emotional experience of many volunteers:

After all that had happened to us during the past several years, we were finally in our homeland, lined up in the modern custom house. However, our men were excited, acting like enraged tigers roaring to pounce on any Turks in sight as if to eat them alive. Our officers were warning us to remain calm, to avoid bloodshed since the Armistice was now in effect. They reminded us that the Turkish Government had surrendered unconditionally, that we must wait for the decisions of the peacemakers. But to whom do you direct these logical arguments? All of the soldiers had members of their family whom this Ottoman Government had commanded to be murdered—father, mother, brother, sister, wife, children, relations, an entire nation. The Armenian legionnaire's pent up rage and frustration could no longer be contained. 'Revenge, Revenge!' was the outcry.⁵³⁷

When Colonel Raymond's unit occupied Adana on 21 December 1918, the bells of the churches rang continuously and the Armenian shops in the market were decorated with the Armenian and Allied flags. A torchlight procession was organised by the Armenian youth during the first night of the occupation.⁵³⁸ The Armenians of Urfa, similar to the Armenians of Adana, rushed to the streets to welcome the French forces, which consisted of four hundred Armenian legionnaires and one hundred fifty Algerians.⁵³⁹

Even though the Cilicia region and Syria were given to France under the Sykes-Picot Agreement, the French government primarily aimed to block the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, fearing that French companies would lose

⁵³⁷ Quoted in Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*, p. 178.

⁵³⁸ Çiçek, *Milli Mücadelede Adana ve Havalisi 1918 1922*, [Adana and Its Vicinity During the National Struggle] p. 60.

⁵³⁹ Եսփուճեան, *Հայ ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ.*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] pp. 478-79.

their shares in the Ottoman railway.⁵⁴⁰ The French government anticipated that it would face difficulties in collecting its loans from the Ottoman government and that the administration of the *Düyun-u Umumiye* (Ottoman Public Debt Administration), where the French authorities held prominent positions, would fall under new hands.⁵⁴¹ At the beginning of the war, French capital investments constituted 60.08% of the total capital investments within the Ottoman Empire, whereas the German and British capital investments were 25.42% and 14.46%, respectively.⁵⁴² Motivated to protect French investments, the French authorities were reluctant to raise the number of Armenian volunteers in the Armenian Legion to ten thousand, as increasing the number of legionnaires might result in the loss of Cilicia from the remaining Ottoman territory.⁵⁴³ Furthermore, the French agents aggressively collected the weapons of the Armenians and hindered the development of Armenian self-defence activities; they were not pro-actively supportive of the Armenian self-defence movement.⁵⁴⁴ The editorials of *Hay Tsayn* highlighted the fact that the French policy regarding the Ottoman government and the Turkish National movement gave utmost importance to the unity of the Turkish state to protect its economic interests and relationships. In recognising Mustafa Kemal's movement as the most powerful political development

⁵⁴⁰ The Sykes-Picot Agreement was a secret agreement made in 1916 between the British Empire and France to define their spheres of influence and colonial domination in Asia Minor and Mesopotamia. According to this agreement, the Cilicia region (including Maraş, Antep, and Urfa) was under French authority. See Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East*, pp. 285-87; Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace: Creating the Modern Middle East, 1914-1922*, pp. 285-89.

⁵⁴¹ Bige Yavuz, *Kurtuluş Savaşı Döneminde Türk-Fransız İlişkileri (Fransız Arşiv Belgeleri Açısından) 1919-1922* [French-Turkish Relations During the War of Independence According to French Archival Documents] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basimevi, 1994), p. 31.

⁵⁴² *Ibid.*, 81; Eliot Grinnell Mears, *Modern Turkey: A Politico-Economic Interpretation, 1908-1933 Inclusive, with Selected Chapters by Representative Authorities* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1924), pp. 356-58.

⁵⁴³ *Hay Tsayn*, Զինադադարը Եւ Անոր Հաւանական Հետեւանքները [The Armistice and Its Possible Consequences], 4 June 1920, no. 343; Եափուճեան, *Հայ Շողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ.*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] pp. 406-7.

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

in Anatolia, the French authorities adapted their policy to find more common ground with the Turkish National movement.⁵⁴⁵ Additionally, there was a shared understanding among the Cilician Armenian community that the primary target of the Turkish National movement was not the Allied Powers but the Armenians, whom they viewed as an existential threat in Anatolia.⁵⁴⁶

In theory, supporting the territorial integrity of the Ottoman state did not influence the French authorities' support for returning the Armenian deportees to their native lands. By supporting deportees in returning home, the French administration aimed to establish a balance in the region between the Muslim and Christian populations, thus benefitting from the Armenian population. They believed this would minimise the burden of the French security forces, who were in conflict with certain Muslim groups protesting the occupation. The French government spent four million francs on the construction of camps consisting of small cottages for the Armenian deportees who were returning to their native lands. Because the majority of the buildings in Cilicia that had belonged to the Armenians were either destroyed or given to Muslim refugees who arrived in the region during the wartime, the French administration had no alternative but to build camps to accommodate the Armenian deportees. The camp under supervision of High Commissioner Henri Gouraud and French diplomat François Georges-Picot housed more than eight thousand people.⁵⁴⁷ The rest of the deportees who arrived in November and December of 1919 were

⁵⁴⁵ *Hay Tsayn*, Զինադադարը Եւ Անոր Հաւանական Հետեւանքները [Armistice and Its Possible Consequences], 4 June 1920, no. 343.

⁵⁴⁶ *Giligia*, Քեմալականները Եւ Քրիստոնէաները [Nationalists and Armenians], 15 October 1920, no. 442.

⁵⁴⁷ Պրէմօնէ., *Կիլիկիա 1919-1920 ՚ին*, [Cilicia in 1919-1920] trans. Պօյաճեան Տիգրան (Պոստոն: Պահակ, 1921), p. 20; Moumdjian, 'Cilicia Under French Administration: Armenian Aspirations, Turkish Resistance, and French Strategems', p. 460.

accommodated in the barracks.⁵⁴⁸ The French administration in Cilicia spent more than four hundred thousand Ottoman liras following the return of the Armenian refugees over 1918 and 1919. At the end of 1919, sixty thousand Armenians returned to the Cilicia region. The total number of Armenians in Cilicia was about one hundred twenty thousand, including ten thousand Armenian orphans.⁵⁴⁹

With the help of French officers, thousands of Armenians were able to find the necessary means of transportation to return from the Syrian provinces to their native lands. The Armenian deportees were transferred either by vessels to the Mersin or Antakya harbours, or by train following the Damascus-Aleppo-Adana route or the Ras al-Ayn-Aleppo-Adana route. The return of the Armenian deportees was organised by French officers in collaboration with Armenian relief societies. The French officers in Aleppo, along with Dr. Louis Rolland⁵⁵⁰ and Captain Jim Ch‘ankalean⁵⁵¹

⁵⁴⁸ Եսփուճեան, *Հայ Ճողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ.*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] p. 261; Vahram Shemmassian, ‘The Repatriation of Armenian Refugees from the Arab Middle East, 1918-1920’, in *Armenian Cilicia*, ed. Richard Hovannisian and Simon Payaslian (California: Mazda Publishers, 2008), p. 451.

⁵⁴⁹ *Jagadamard*, Կիլիկիան 1919Էն 1920 [Cilicia from 1919 to 1920], 12 August 1921, no. 2653. Vahram Shemmassian notes that in July 1919 there were 74,431 repatriated Armenians in Cilicia and 72,495 Armenians were waiting in Mesopotamia, Syria, and Lebanon to be repatriated. See Shemmassian, ‘The Repatriation of Armenian Refugees from the Arab Middle East, 1918-1920’, p. 440. Garabet Moundjian, on the other hand, gives the number of repatriated Armenians from January to June 1919 as somewhere between 106,500 and 109,500. See Moundjian, ‘Cilicia Under French Administration: Armenian Aspirations, Turkish Resistance, and French Strategems’, p. 461. According to Vahe Tachjian, by 1920, around 100,000 Armenians had been repatriated to Cilicia, the Eastern Territories and Asia Minor. See Vahe Tachjian, ‘The Cilician Armenians and French Policy 1919-1921’, p. 543. Stanford Shaw claims that 120,000 Armenians were repatriated to Cilicia. See Shaw, ‘The Armenian Legion and Its Destruction of the Armenian Community of Cilicia’, p. 183. According to the Norwegian explorer and humanitarian Fridtjof Nansen, 200,000 Armenians had returned to their native lands. The 1921 annual report of Near East Relief estimates that around 300,000 Armenians were repatriated to Cilicia by the Allied Powers. See Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia, 1914-1923*, p. 103.

⁵⁵⁰ Dr (Major) Louis Rolland was a French officer who served in the French occupation forces as a physician.

⁵⁵¹ Captain Jim (Bedros) Ch‘ankalean, who was born in Diyarbakir and immigrated to the US at a young age, was an Armenian who served in the U.S. Army as an officer. Following his resignation from the military, he participated in the armed struggle of the Armenians during

in Adana, worked together to secure train coaches. Dr. Louis Rolland, in particular, worked assiduously for the return of the deportees, as Dikran Boyajean, who worked with him, writes in his memoir:

Each time a train arrival was reported by the officials, night or noon, he ran to the station in order to carry out the evacuation of the train coaches. He pulled off the babies to lighten the mother's burden or helped an old Armenian woman to get out of the coach.⁵⁵²

Even as the Ottoman government announced on 18 December 1918 that the return of the Armenian deportees would be conducted with state funding, it neither organised the transportation of the deportees nor provided their accommodation, the latter due to the fact that the majority of properties belonging to the Armenian deportees had been given to the Muslim refugees who came to the Cilicia region during wartime.⁵⁵³

Colonel Edouard Bremond was assigned by the French government as the governor of Armenia on 25 December 1918, but on 19 January 1919 his title was changed to that of 'Chief Administrator of Northern Territories Occupied by the Entente' in order to not provoke the ire of local Muslims.⁵⁵⁴ On 1 February 1919,

the wartime in Van and the Caucasus. He was a prominent leader of the Armenian legionnaires who participated in the French campaigns.

⁵⁵² Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] p. 84. 'Ամեն անգամ, որ գաղթականներով լեցուն շոգեկառքի մը ժամանունը կը ծանուցվեր, գիշեր թե ցերեկ, անիկա կայարան կը փութար պարպումի գործը ղեկավարելու համար: Հաճախ իր ձեռքով երեխա մը իր մոր ձեռքեն առնելով վար կիջեցներ, կամ ծերուկ մամիկի մը կօզներ, որ վագոնեն դուրս ելլէ:'

⁵⁵³ For the order of the Ottoman government, see Hikmet Özdemir et al., *Ermeniler: Sürgün ve Göç* [Armenians: Exile and Migration] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2010), pp. 118-28; Shemmassian, 'The Repatriation of Armenian Refugees from the Arab Middle East, 1918-1920', pp. 425 and 432; Moundjian, 'Cilicia Under French Administration: Armenian Aspirations, Turkish Resistance, and French Strategems', p. 465.

⁵⁵⁴ Պրեմոն, *Կիլիկիա 1919-1920 թթ*, p. 15; Sam Kaplan, 'Territorializing Armenians: Geo-Texts, and Political Imaginaries in French-Occupied Cilicia, 1919-1922', *History and*

Bremond arrived in Adana, and within the very first week of his arrival, in a conversation with prominent members of the Armenian community, he highlighted that the Armenian community had suffered during the wartime and that the French government would lay the foundation for an Armenian state in Cilicia.⁵⁵⁵ In February and March of 1919, the British and French governments agreed on the evacuation of Cilicia by the British forces and the entrance of French troops into the region. The first French units, consisting of two African brigades, entered Adana on 9 June 1919 and were joined by two other brigades from the 412th division on 12 July. The British forces completely evacuated the region by the end of October 1919.⁵⁵⁶

However, from the beginning of the occupation, the French administration was besieged with problems with management, communication, and military discipline. There were only twenty thousand soldiers under French command to maintain order in the entire Cilicia region at the end of 1919.⁵⁵⁷ Furthermore, the Nationalist propaganda organised by the agents of Mustafa Kemal was highly effective in the region, resulting in significant levels of participation from the local Muslim population in the Nationalist organisations. The difficulties were compounded by the communication issues faced by the French administration. There was no line of communication between the French military officers, so the French

Anthropology 15 (2004): p. 412; Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia, 1914-1923*, pp. 115-17; Tuğlacı, *Tarih Boyunca Batı Ermenileri 1891-1922*, p. 730.

⁵⁵⁵ Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] pp. 96-97. When asked, Colonel Edouard Bremond revealed France's primary intention regarding the region: 'The government of the Republic seeks neither to conquer Cilicia nor establish a Protectorate there; it has come there as an educator to bring liberty to everyone, in the most complete equality. It only pursues moral conquest, which will insure its professed work of instituting a durable influence for its culture, its commerce and industry...' See Sam Kaplan, 'Documenting History, Historicizing Documentation: French Military Officials' Ethnological Reports on Cilicia', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 44, no. 2 (2002): p. 351.

⁵⁵⁶ Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] p. 82.

⁵⁵⁷ Robert F. Zeidner, *The Tricolor Over the Taurus 1918-1922* (Ankara: Turkish Historical Society, 2005), p. 137.

lieutenants in Haçin and Antep were not able to receive instructions and orders from the headquarters in Adana.⁵⁵⁸ Although the French authorities used reconnaissance aircraft to establish communication between the central and remote areas of the region, a one-hour flight would cost ten thousand francs, and sending reports to Beirut by air would cost sixty thousand francs. With an aircraft unable to fly more than four hours without refueling and maintenance, communication by aircraft was simply not a viable option.⁵⁵⁹

At the end of 1919, when the Turkish National movement in the region started to expand rapidly, the representatives of the Armenian community demanded the French administration arrest the former CUP leaders and the contemporary Nationalist leaders in the region, along with the complete disarmament of the Turkish population, as stated in the Armistice of Mudros. Additionally, they asked for the creation of Armenian volunteer units to defend the Armenian population against the Nationalist forces.⁵⁶⁰ Contrary to the Armistice articles, the Ottoman officers did not implement the disarmament process of the troops, and the armouries were emptied into the hands of the local Muslim populations.⁵⁶¹ In Cilicia, for instance, Colonel

⁵⁵⁸ Պրեմոն, *Կիլիկիա 1919-1920'ին*, 54; Hovannisian, ‘The Postwar Contest for Cilicia and the “Marash Affair”’, pp. 500-501.

⁵⁵⁹ Ս. Սահակյան and Ս. Մուրադյան, trans., Աբբա Շապլեռոնի Օրագիրը [The Diary of Abbé Chaperon] (Երեվան: Հայոց Ցեղասպանության Թանգարան, 2002), p. 27; Hovannisian, ‘The Postwar Contest for Cilicia and the “Marash Affair”’, pp. 500-501.

⁵⁶⁰ Եսփուճեան, *Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ.*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] pp. 340-41.

⁵⁶¹ Ahmet Cevdet Çamurdan, *Kurtuluş Savaşında Doğu Kilikya Olayları* [East Cilicia Events During the War of Independence] (Adana, 1975), p. 345; Abdurrahman Kütük, ‘Kurtuluş Savaşı’nda Yukarı Çukurova’ [Upper Çukurova During the War of Independence] (Van: Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi, 2013), p. 57.

Edouard Bremond commented that the Turkish community had twenty-five thousand guns.⁵⁶²

As for the Turkish National movement, on 30 October 1919, following the Sivas Congress, the Representation Committee assigned Major Kemal (Kozanoğlu Doğan Bey) to the commandership of the Cilicia *Kuva-yi Milliye* forces, Lieutenant Salim (Yörük Salim Bey) and Lieutenant Asaf Bey (Kılıç Ali) to the commandership of the Maraş *Kuva-yi Milliye* forces, and Lieutenant Ragıp (Tekelioğlu Sinan Bey) to the commandership of the Adana *Kuva-yi Milliye* forces.⁵⁶³ Kılıç Ali, who was active in Maraş and Antep, was instructed by the Ankara government to organise armed volunteer groups in the region to fight against the French forces. While the arming of the Maraş Muslim population ceased in the autumn of 1919, the Armenian community continued to take necessary measures for self-defence in case of an attack.⁵⁶⁴

The Armenian legionnaires had differences of opinion with the French military officers.⁵⁶⁵ For instance, some of the Armenian legionnaires argued that the French policy in Cilicia was pro-Turkish, leading them to refuse to serve French interests, instead taking to the hills and robbing neighbouring Turkish villages. When the French brigade surrounded them at the village of Hovud, located on the northern side of Alexandretta, the French commander demanded their surrender, giving his

⁵⁶² Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] p. 109; Çamurdan, *Kurtuluş Savaşında Doğu Kilikya Olayları*, [East Cilicia Events During the War of Independence] pp. 345-47; Kütük, 'Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Yukarı Çukurova', [Upper Çukurova During the War of Independence] pp. 57-58.

⁵⁶³ Yavuz, *Kurtuluş Savaşı Döneminde Türk-Fransız İlişkileri (Fransız Arşiv Belgeleri Açısından) 1919-1922*, [French-Turkish Relations During the War of Independence According to French Archival Documents] p. 57.

⁵⁶⁴ Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] pp. 146-47.

⁵⁶⁵ *Jagadamard*, Կիլիկիան 1919Էն 1920 [Cilicia from 1919 to 1920], 13 August 1921, no. 2664.

word that the legionnaires would be pardoned if they laid down their arms. The Armenian legionnaires accepted this offer, but—after being forced to dig their own graves—the French commander had them executed by firing squad.⁵⁶⁶

On another occasion, on 16 February 1919, an incident occurred between a group of Armenian legionnaires and French soldiers of Algerian origin.⁵⁶⁷ When the Armenian legionnaires began singing in Armenian in a coffeehouse, the Algerian soldiers demanded that they instead sing in Arabic. The Armenian legionnaires continued to sing in Armenian, at which point the soldiers attacked the musicians, silenced the music, and hid outside of the building. The Armenian legionnaires then went outside, started firing, and killed two Algerian soldiers. During the gunfire, the Armenian legionnaires also came under fire from a Muslim's house. They entered the property and razed the house to the ground. After this event, the French authorities demanded that the Armenian legionnaires disarm themselves, but they received a negative response. The Armenian legionnaires declared that, since Algerian soldiers were armed, they too would remain armed. Upon hearing this, the French authorities gave an order to the Algerian soldiers to open fire on the muleteers of the Armenian legionnaires as they were returning to the barracks from work. Thirteen Armenian legionnaires were killed, seven were arrested and sentenced to fifteen years in prison.⁵⁶⁸

⁵⁶⁶ Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] pp. 116-17.

⁵⁶⁷ Եսափուճեան, *Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] p. 195; Moumdjian, 'Cilicia Under French Administration: Armenian Aspirations, Turkish Resistance, and French Strategems', pp. 466-67; Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia, 1914-1923*, p. 105.

⁵⁶⁸ Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] pp. 118-19; Zeidner, *The Tricolor Over the Taurus 1918-1922*, p. 156; Ulvi Keser, 'Fransa'nın Ermeni Stratejisi Bağlamında Kıbrıs'ta Ermeni Doğu Lejyonu ve Faaliyetleri' [The Activities of Armenian Legion in Cyprus in the Context of France's Armenian Strategy] (Uluslararası Türk-Ermeni

On 19 February 1919, the War Committee decided to dissolve the Armenian Legions. The three Legions thereafter were deployed in major towns along the railway such as Mersin, Tarsus, and Adana; the fourth Legion was sent to Port Said on 1 March.⁵⁶⁹ Despite the French authorities' pledge that the Armenian Legion would be the core of the Armenian state to be established in Cilicia, this episode raised suspicion among the Armenian community that the French policies in Cilicia were in fact pro-Turkish.

6.2. The First Blow: The Retreat from Maraş

Following the Sivas Congress and the establishment of Nationalist units in the region, clashes between the Nationalist and French forces spread to the various districts of Cilicia. The first incident was the retaking of Maraş by Nationalist forces, in which the French authorities demonstrated how they would abandon the region to the Turks without resistance.

On 27 December 1919, around one hundred Turkish bands⁵⁷⁰ entered Maraş from the Elbistan and Göksun route and, without facing any opposition, occupied the citadel, took down the French flag, and raised the Turkish flag, together with the green flag of Islam. Soon after, the bands directed their fire at the Armenian quarter.

İlişkileri ve Büyük Güçler Sempozyumu, Atatürk Üniversitesi, 2012), p. 643; Shaw, 'The Armenian Legion and Its Destruction of the Armenian Community of Cilicia', pp. 186-87.
⁵⁶⁹ Çiçek, *Milli Mücadelede Adana ve Havalisi 1918-1922*, [Adana and Its Vicinity During the National Struggle] p. 75; Zeidner, *The Tricolor Over the Taurus 1918-1922*, p. 159; Keser, 'Fransa'nın Ermeni Stratejisi Bağlamında Kıbrıs'ta Ermeni Doğu Lejyonu ve Faaliyetleri', [The Activities of the Armenian Legion in Cyprus in the Context of France's Armenian Strategy] p. 643.

⁵⁷⁰ I do not use the term 'bands' throughout this chapter as a negative term to refer to people who robbed properties and attacked the innocent population, but I use this term as it appears in the primary sources of pro-Nationalist literature, in which those who resisted against the French forces are named '*çeteler*' (bands).

The Armenians, who were prepared to defend themselves, closed their shops in the market and moved to the quarter to wait for the clashes.⁵⁷¹

In case of clashes between the French and the Nationalists, the pro-Nationalist Turkish committee in Maraş suggested that the Armenian community either remain neutral or join the Turkish forces against the French. Discussions were held between the two groups.⁵⁷² Initially, the Armenian community in Maraş leaned towards staying neutral, given the fact that the French occupation was temporary and the Armenians were supposed to live side by side with their Muslim neighbours after the occupation ended. The ANU of Maraş made a public statement in support of this idea:

Let's confess, it is impossible to forget how much evil Turks did to us, but we, as true Christians, smart and cautious people, should forgive them and have only one purpose: slowly, step by step restore our relations with them. Because whatever happens in the world, we must live together with the Turks and the Turks must live with us.⁵⁷³

In Maraş, besides the self-defence activities of ordinary Armenian individuals, there were Armenian legionnaires whose existence was considered a disadvantage by the Nationalist authorities, given the fact that the legionnaires were trained and experienced in combat. The Nationalist circles pursued a strategy of negative propaganda against the Armenian legionnaires in Maraş, with the goal of persuading the French to remove the legionnaires from the city. Following the successive

⁵⁷¹ Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] p. 149.

⁵⁷² Եսփուճեան, *Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] p. 510.

⁵⁷³ Ibid., p. 511. ‘Խոստովանիմք, որ Թուրքերը մեզի այնչափ չարիք հասցուցին, որ մոռնալ կարելի չէ, բայց իբրև ճղմարիտ քրիստոնեաներ, իբրև խոհեմ ու խելացի մարդիկ, պետք է ներենք անոնց ու կամաց կամաց, քայլ առ քայլ ձգտինք միակ նպատակի մը, այն է ջանալ վերահաստատելու մեր հին յարաբերութիւնները թուրքերուն հետ, որովհետև աշխարհի իրադարձութիւնները ինչ ձև ալ առնեն, մենք ստիպուած ենք թուրքերու հետ եւ թուրքերն ալ ստիպուած են մեզի հետ ապրելու:’

lobbying of the Nationalist agents, the French authorities decided to send five hundred Armenian legionnaires to Islahiye on 19 January; two days later on 21 January, when only fifty Armenian legionnaires remained in the city, the large-scale attack by Nationalist groups began.⁵⁷⁴

In Maraş, under the leadership of former Ottoman army officer Setrag Khērlakean, together with Sarkis Markarean, Aram Samuelean, and Baghdasar Otabalean, the Armenians established emplacements in Saint Atsvadzadzin, Holy Karasun Mangants, Saint Sarkis, the Latin monastery of Santa Terra, Kuyucak, Şekerdere, Kümbet, and Beyt Şalum for the self-defence of the city, meeting weekly for strategic updates.⁵⁷⁵

With the French forces lacking in numbers and weaponry, the Nationalist forces attacked the city with both their regular army and various bandit groups. In the ensuing clashes, the native Armenian population of Maraş was targeted by the Nationalists. It was reported that though the Armenians in Kümbet and Kurucak defended themselves against the attacks, the majority of Armenians throughout the city were unable to do so. One challenge faced by the Armenian self-defence activities was that the Armenian quarters were disconnected from each other, separated by Turkish quarters in between. In Maraş, the Armenian community was living in certain parts of the city, such as the German orphanage and a few surrounding buildings, the Catholic church, the Central school and a few surrounding buildings, the American establishments, and the German hospital.⁵⁷⁶ Soon after the first attacks, the Armenians decided to gather at central monasteries to continue their

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 506.

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 486; Գասպարյան Ռուբեն, Հայկական Կոտորածները Կիլիկիայում [The Armenian Massacres in Cilicia] (Երեվան: ՀՀ ԳԱԱ Գիտության Հրատարակչություն, 2005), p. 172.

⁵⁷⁶ *Giligia*, Հայերու Կացութիւնը Մարաշի Մէջ [The Situation of Armenians in Maraş], 3 October 1920, no. 435.

armed opposition to the Nationalist forces. Saint Kevork, Saint Sarkis, Saint Asdvadzazin, Holy Karasun Mangants, the Armenian Catholic Church, and the Latin monastery of Santa Terra became the self-defence centres. On 24 January, the Armenian quarters of Maraş were attacked. Saint Azdvadzazin Church, where around two thousand Armenians were sheltered and which was defended by twenty Armenian legionnaires, was the first location the Armenians evacuated. The Armenians sheltering here attempted to reach Holy Karasun Mangants Church at night; however, the Algerian soldiers opened fire on them, killing more than four hundred.⁵⁷⁷ The communication breakdown within the chain of command was so critical that, even though the French command sent two reconnaissance aircraft to investigate the situation in Maraş, the aircraft returned to Adana without understanding the events unfolding on the ground.⁵⁷⁸ As for the killings committed by the French soldiers of Algerian origin, it is apparent that this was a rogue act that was not officially ordered.⁵⁷⁹ According to eyewitness accounts, the Algerian soldiers shot the Armenian villagers despite the fact that the villagers were shouting, ‘Arménien, Arménien!’ as they approached, clearly identifying themselves.⁵⁸⁰

After facing the outrageous attacks of the Nationalist forces, the French soldiers were instructed to abandon the city at midnight without giving notice to the Armenian community. The French forces claimed that it was not a retreat but a

⁵⁷⁷ *Verchin Lur*, Գաւառի Չարքը [The Slaughter of a Province], 28 February 1920, no. 1812; Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 թթ.*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] pp. 149-57.

⁵⁷⁸ Պրէմոն, *Կիլիկիա 1919-1920'ին*, pp. 72-73; Hovannisian, ‘The Postwar Contest for Cilicia and the ‘Marash Affair’’, p. 505.

⁵⁷⁹ *Verchin Lur*, Գաւառի Չարքը [The Slaughter of a Province], 28 February 1920, no. 1812.

⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid*; Եսփումեան, *Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 թթ.*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] p. 519; Vahe Tachjian, *La France En Cilicie et En Haute-Mezopotamie: Aux Confins de La Turquie, de La Syrie et Del l'Iraq, 1919-1933* (Paris: Karthala, 2004), p. 347.

strategic move organised to ensure a new offensive against the Nationalists. Indeed, Maraş, Antep, and Kilis were located in remote parts of the occupation zone, and, according to the French authorities, the retreat from these regions was due to a shortage in food and ammunition, leaving the troops unable to fight. While the decision to retreat could be considered strategically logical, the lack of notification from the French forces to the Armenian community drove the miserable Armenian women, children and elderly, who had no means of protection, into a state of fear. Prominent Armenian community members appealed to the French commander for information about the rumours of retreat. The French commander did not respond at first, but following the second appeal, he assured them that the necessary steps would be taken to protect the Armenian population.⁵⁸¹ It was reported that the French soldiers had already begun destroying the heavy weapons which they would not be able to readily transport.⁵⁸² On 10 February, the French forces set the garrison alight and left the town and its few thousand Armenians behind.⁵⁸³ Even though the French soldiers informed the Armenians that if any of them were to follow the French troops, they would be shot, thousands of Armenians still did so. As the French forces were preparing to depart from the region, four thousand Armenians who had been sheltered in the Latin Monastery began to gather nearby. In the end, the French officers allowed the Armenian deportees—between 3,200 and 3,400 in total—to trail them from a distance of one kilometre.⁵⁸⁴ Thousands of Armenian women, children, and elderly

⁵⁸¹ *Giligia*, Ֆրանսական Ջինուորներու Նահանջը [The Retreat of French Soldiers], 27 February 1920, no. 265.

⁵⁸² *Ibid*; Hovannisian, ‘The Postwar Contest for Cilicia and the ‘Marash Affair’’, p. 511.

⁵⁸³ *Giligia*, Ֆրանսական Ջինուորներու Նահանջը [The Retreat of French Soldiers], 27 February 1920, no. 265; Hovannisian, ‘The Postwar Contest for Cilicia and the ‘Marash Affair’’, p. 511.

⁵⁸⁴ *Giligia*, Ֆրանսական Ջինուորներու Նահանջը [The Retreat of French Soldiers], 27 February 1920, no. 265; *Horizon*, 26 February 1920, no. 202; Եսփուճեան, Հայ

who were afraid of the possible massacre that could be committed after the French evacuation took to the roads behind the French forces, begging them not to leave them in Maraş.⁵⁸⁵ Only one thousand five hundred survived, with the rest perishing on the road.⁵⁸⁶ Another group of Armenians fleeing from Maraş was attacked by bands on the road to Islahiye.⁵⁸⁷ In his memoir, Nishan Saatjean, a member of the Armenian Legion, mentions that during the retreat some Algerian soldiers shot at the Armenian civilians who were trailing the French forces.⁵⁸⁸ The retreat was made during a severe snowstorm, and hundreds of Armenians who could not find the necessary warm clothing for the journey succumbed to the elements. Gaspar Menag, a member of the Armenian Legion, described the retreat scene in his memoir:

Soon after people begin to fall, gradually in larger numbers, and start to be buried under the snow... Impossible to proceed. A few surviving horses and mules try to pave the way and a few thousand people follow these animals, through their footprints... The snow falls cruelly; our fingers start to blacken. At each step, someone falls into the snow silently and mystically.⁵⁸⁹

Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ., [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] p. 536.

⁵⁸⁵ Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ.*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] p. 161; Պուտիեր Ժորժ, ‘Նօթեր Սուրիա-Կիլիկիա Ռազմական Գործողութեան Մասին’, [Notes About Military Operations in Syria-Cilicia] (Զարթոնք, 1984), pp. 7-12.

⁵⁸⁶ *Verchin Lur*, Գաւառի Չարդը [Province’s Slaughter], 28 February 1920, no. 1812; Hovannisian, ‘The Postwar Contest for Cilicia and the ‘Marash Affair’’, p. 511.

⁵⁸⁷ *Horizon*, Կացութիւնը Վերին Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ [The Situation in Upper Cilicia], 26 February 1920, no. 202.

⁵⁸⁸ Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ.*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] pp. 164-65.

⁵⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 168. ‘Քիչ էտք մարդիկ կը սկսին իյնալ, նախ քիչ քիչ, հետզհետե ավելի մեծ թիվով կիյնան ու կը թաղվին ձյունի տակ... Անկարելի է հառաջանալ: Քանի մը ողջ մնացած ձիեր ու ջորիներ ճամփա կը բանան եւ քանի մը հազար մարդիկ կը հետեւին անասուններուն, անոնց ոտքերու հետքերուն վրայեն... ձյունը կիջնէ անգթորեն, ձեռքերուս մատները սեւնալ կը սկսին... Ամեն քայլափոխին մեկը կիյնա լուռ ու խորհրդավոր:’

According to reports, two thousand Armenians eventually managed to reach Islahiye.⁵⁹⁰ After the clashes, the Armenian population in Maraş decreased from twenty thousand to eight thousand.⁵⁹¹ A subsequent editorial in *Giligia*, entitled ‘To Be or Not to Be, That Is the Question’, declared:

In response to this situation, the Armenian people should prove that it is not possible to annihilate their centuries-long existence in two seconds. Armenians should work with all of their means and with their resisting strength to tell the large and small nations that Armenians, surrounded by a solid indifference, will fight tooth and nail to protect their existence.⁵⁹²

Indeed, Kılıç Ali and the brigade under his command retreated to the village of Kerun to wait for reinforcement forces to launch another attack of the city; unaware of the events unfolding, the Turks were ready to surrender if the French authorities granted amnesty to all the Muslims who had taken up arms and agreed to provide food and shelter to all, regardless of ethnicity.⁵⁹³ However, after learning of the retreat of the French forces, Kılıç Ali entered the city and raised the Turkish flag in the military post. Kadızade Hasan Fehmi and Ziya Efendi, prominent supporters of

⁵⁹⁰ *Giligia*, 2,000 Փախստական Հայեր Իսլահիե [2,000 Refugee Armenians in Islahiye], 17 February 1920, no. 253; Մյուրե Մատերն, Մարաշի Կոտորածը, [The Marash Massacre] trans. Պողոսյան Վարուժան (Երեվան: Հայոց Ցեղասպանության Թանգարան, 2001), pp. 24-30; Bağcı, ‘An Analysis of Inter-Communal Conflicts in Cilicia During the Independence War Years 1918-1922’, p. 102.

⁵⁹¹ *Horizon*, Մարաշի Պարենաւորումը [Victualing of Maraş], 6 March 1920, no. 210.

⁵⁹² *Giligia*, Լինիլ Դէ Զլինիլ Ահա Խնդիրը [To Be or Not to Be, That Is the Question], 17 February 1920, no. 258. ‘Այս կացութեան հանդէպ հայ ժողովուրդը պէտք է ցոյց տայ որ իր դարաւոր գոյութիւնը կարելի չէ մէկ վայրկեանէն միւսը ոչնչացնել, ու բոլոր կարելի ու անկարելի միջոցներով պէտք է աշխատի՝ իր ցեղային դիմադրական ուժով, ըսել աշխարհի մեծերուն ու փոքրերուն որ զինքը շրջապատող քար անտարբերութեան մէջ, ինքը՝ հայ ժողովուրդը պիտի գիտնայ իր գոյութիւնը իր ակռաներովն իսկ պաշտպանել:’

⁵⁹³ *Giligia*, Հայերու Կացութիւնը Մարաշի Մէջ [The Conditions of Armenians in Maraş], 3 October 1920, no. 435; Bağcı, ‘An Analysis of Inter-Communal Conflicts in Cilicia During the Independence War Years 1918-1922’, p. 105.

the Turkish National movement in the city, were assigned as the representatives of the Nationalist administration in Maraş.⁵⁹⁴

Following the first atrocities in Cilicia after WWI, all the Armenian political parties and the ANU in Adana organised a joint meeting. Damadean was assigned as the representative to appeal to the Allied authorities for assistance to protect the local Armenian population. The governor of Adana, Celal Bey, offered to initiate a new Turkish-Armenian reconciliation, but it was refused by the Armenian authorities, who stated that ‘it was not possible to sit down at the table with the Turk’ at the very moment that ‘thousands of Armenians were killed in Maraş’.⁵⁹⁵

The Ottoman Turkish press, particularly the pro-Nationalist outlets, denied the factuality of reports of the Armenian slaughter. During an interview given to the *Akşam* daily, the minister of internal affairs stated that ‘according to the news we received from the locals, Maraş is at peace right now’. Similarly, *Yeni Gün* wrote ‘The news regarding the slaughter of twenty thousand Armenians in Maraş is unfounded’. K‘erovpē Zhamgoch‘ean, an Armenian individual, criticised the Turkish dailies in *Verchin Lur*, stating that there was ‘peace’ in Maraş at that time because ‘the Armenian population in the city was annihilated’.⁵⁹⁶

Following the clashes and atrocities in Maraş and the news published in the European press, the Ottoman dailies were divided into two camps. On the one hand, dailies such as *Alemdar* and *Peyam-ı Sabah* condemned the atrocities inflicted upon the Armenian population. *Alemdar*, for instance, argued that ‘not three thousand, but the bleeding of the nose of even three Armenians would negatively affect the image

⁵⁹⁴ *Giligia*, Հայերու Կացութիւնը Մարաշի Մէջ [The Conditions of Armenians in Maraş], 5 October 1920, no. 437.

⁵⁹⁵ *Verchin Lur*, Ջարդերու Առթիւ Ազգային Ձեռնարկներ [National Initiatives Following the Massacres], 2 March 1920, no. 1814.

⁵⁹⁶ *Verchin Lur*, Խաղաղութիւն Կը Տիրէ Եղեր [They Claim There Is Peace], 5 March 1920, no. 1817.

of the Ottoman government'. On the other hand, dailies such as *İkdam* argued that the news regarding the atrocities and massacres was the product of propaganda and did not reflect the truth.⁵⁹⁷ Ali Kemal in *Peyam-ı Sabah* added that the atrocities of the Turkish National movement did nothing beneficial for the Ottoman state, but that they in fact denigrated the government's image in the eyes of the Western Powers and enhanced the rationalisation of the Greek occupation.⁵⁹⁸

The events in Maraş resulted in the removal of the majority of the Armenian community and the French forces from the city, and the first victory of the Nationalist forces in the Cilicia region. The retaking of Maraş by the Nationalists increased the popularity of Mustafa Kemal in the region, which similarly affected the participation of Turkish men in the struggle. Observing these developments, the Armenian community realised that they did not indeed hold an indispensable place in the French realpolitik. Thus, the pragmatic French administration was reluctant to ensnare itself in the struggle against the locals by continuing to occupy Cilicia and protect the Armenian civilians.

6.3. The Second Blow: The Abandonment of Haçin

During the first years of the Armistice period, the hills of Haçin were swarmed with armed groups of all ethnic and religious origins, such as Armenian, Kurdish, Cherkes, and Turkish. Similar to the other armed groups, the Armenian armed groups participated in robbery, raids, and plunder. For instance, the Armenian armed groups from Kayseri and Sivas, when patrolling in the hills of Haçin, killed two Kurds and

⁵⁹⁷ *Alemdar*, 'Hal ve Mevkii' [Situation and Position], 4 March 1920, no. ?; *İkdam*, Propaganda, 4 March 1920, no. 8284.

⁵⁹⁸ *Peyam-ı Sabah*, 'Yine Kurban Mı Gideceğiz?' [Are We Going to be Sacrificed Again?], 4 March 1920, no. 455.

the brother of Cherkes Arslan Bey, who was a prominent figure in the region. Aram Çavuş, together with his *Vrej* (Vengeance) unit, plundered Muslim villages located in Haçin and the peripheries.⁵⁹⁹

There were no French forces in Haçin when—at the same time the Nationalist forces surrounded the neighbouring villages of the high altitude region—Colonel Edouard Bremond denied the aid requests of the Armenians of Haçin, highlighting that the French soldiers could not be sent to a place which was remote, mountainous, and far from the military supply network. The Armenians in the town, nonetheless, decided to oppose the Nationalist forces by their own means and organised a committee for self-defence.⁶⁰⁰ Soon after, the committee established a self-defence commandership, and Sarkis Jebejjean, an experienced soldier who fought in the Caucasus under Antranik’s command, was appointed to lead the units. Armenian men from sixteen to forty-five years old were conscripted, with around six hundred people constituting four units in total. Military training commenced, and even Armenian orphans were taught how to use basic guns and to perform ciphered communication by flags.⁶⁰¹ It was an entire mobilisation campaign within the Armenian community of Haçin to protect themselves against the attacks of the Nationalist groups.⁶⁰²

⁵⁹⁹ Եսփուճեան, *Հայ ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ.*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] pp. 585-87; Bildirici, *The Massacres of the Armenians Committed in Adana Province and the French-Armenian Relations*, pp. 132-50; Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia, 1914-1923*, pp. 114-24.

⁶⁰⁰ *Verchin Lur*, Կիլիկիոյ Կացութիւնը [Cilicia’s Situation], 24 September 1920, no. 1988; Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ.*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] pp. 180-81.

⁶⁰¹ *Verchin Lur*, Կիլիկիոյ Կացութիւնը [Cilicia’s Situation], 24 September 1920, no. 1988; Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ.*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] pp. 180-81.

⁶⁰² *Verchin Lur*, Կիլիկիոյ Կացութիւնը [Cilicia’s Situation], 24 September 1920, no. 1988; Գասպարյան, *Հայկական Կոտորածները Կիլիկիայում*, [The Armenian Massacres in Cilicia] p. 179; Եսփուճեան, *Հայ ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ*

On 12 March 1920, Governor of Sis Captain Taillardat contacted Governor of Haçin Garabed Ch'alean regarding the population of Haçin, the number of Armenian children, and the necessary measures to transport the population from Haçin to Sis. Garabed Ch'alean responded that, in order to transfer the population to Sis, the armed Armenian volunteers might be able to protect the road from Haçin to Vahgan, but protection of the road from Vahgan to Sis would require assistance from the French forces.⁶⁰³ Governor Taillardat responded that he would not provide even a small unit of French soldiers to be dedicated to rescuing the Armenian women, children, and elderly in Haçin.⁶⁰⁴ According to Tachjian, the Haçin siege occurred at a time when the French authorities were trying to reach an agreement with the Nationalists; thus, they did not want to anger them by helping the Armenians.⁶⁰⁵ Selahattin Sert, a Turkish researcher, further claimed in his book that the French created a death camp for the Haçin Armenians by abandoning them while knowing there was no chance for the population to survive without aid.⁶⁰⁶

On 13 March 1920, the Haçin Armenians sent a telegram to the ANU in Adana, including Mihran Damadean, Archbishop Bedros Sarajean, and the Armenian dailies published in Adana such as *Giligia* and *Hay Tsayn*, announcing that they had decided not to transfer the elderly, women, and children to Sis without safe passage and that they would continue to struggle against the Nationalist forces to the end,

Մեջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ., [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] p. 592.

⁶⁰³ Գանձրունի, Կիլիկիոյ Հայութեան Վերջին Գաղթը, [The Last Migration of Cilician Armenians] pp. 140-41; Kütük, 'Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Yukarı Çukurova', [Upper Çukurova During the War of Liberation] p. 97.

⁶⁰⁴ Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ.*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] pp. 188-89.

⁶⁰⁵ Tachjian, *La France En Cilicie et En Haute-Mezopotamie: Aux Confins de La Turquie, de La Syrie et Del l'Iraq, 1919-1933*, pp. 136-37.

⁶⁰⁶ Selahattin Sert, *Fransızların Ermenileri Yok Etme Planı Kilikya 1918-1922: Haçin Ölüm Kampı* [The French Plan for the Destruction of the Armenians in Cilicia in 1918-1922: Haçin Death Camp] (Istanbul: Kum Saati Yayınları, 2005).

requesting additional ammunition and weapons from the Union.⁶⁰⁷ Otherwise, the telegram noted, ‘the blood of Haçin Armenians would be on their [the Armenian community of Adana] necks’.⁶⁰⁸ Upon receiving this telegram from the Haçin community, the Armenians in Adana organised a public gathering at the church, and around four hundred Armenian volunteers of Haçin origin registered to fight with the self-defence units in Haçin.⁶⁰⁹ When the French authorities were asked for help, they responded that they could provide 150 bullets and three days of meal for each soldier, but nothing more to aid Haçin.⁶¹⁰ Even though the French authorities pledged very little ammunition and assistance, the newly established volunteer unit still continued to Sis in order to take control of the road towards Haçin. However, the French authorities, especially Captain Taillardat, did not allow the Armenian volunteer units to pass from Sis to Haçin in order to help the inhabitants. The four hundred Armenian volunteers who came from Adana to Sis, with the final destination of Haçin, were ordered by the French to wait in Sis and were later assigned to help the evacuation of Sis and the transfer of the Armenian population to Adana.⁶¹¹ Furthermore, when a group of Armenians insisted on transferring ammunition to Haçin, the French authorities granted permission and suggested the group take the Harha-Pazar road, where Garabed Lach‘inean, together with his eight Armenian men, was subsequently

⁶⁰⁷ Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] p. 189.

⁶⁰⁸ *Hay Tsayn*, Ուրիշ Հեռագիր Մը ‘Պաշարուած ենք, օգնէ՛ք’ [Another Telegram: We Are Under Siege, Please Help!], 16 March 1920, no. 208.

⁶⁰⁹ Kütük, ‘Kurtuluş Savaşı’nda Yukarı Çukurova’, [Upper Çukurova During the War of Independence] p. 251.

⁶¹⁰ Եսփուճեան, *Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] p. 629.

⁶¹¹ Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] pp. 193-99.

attacked by bands.⁶¹² The suggestion of French authorities was met with suspicion by the Armenian authorities, who believed that they might have informed the Turkish bands of the Armenian group's route.⁶¹³ At the beginning of March, after fully realising that no reinforcements or ammunition would be provided to the Armenian community in Haçin, the Nationalist forces staged a dramatic attack on the Armenian villages neighbouring Haçin and captured Vahgan, a junction between Haçin and Sis, and cut the communication lines both into and out of Haçin.⁶¹⁴ As the events unfolded, Mihran Damadean sent an official letter to Colonel Edouard Bremond on 5 May 1920 stating that the French authorities, who had refused to send military assistance, bore total responsibility for the events in Haçin, where the Armenian community had struggled against the Nationalist forces for months.⁶¹⁵

On 30 April, the *Giligia* daily advocated in an editorial that the Ottoman Armenians abandoned the local Armenian population of Haçin by not sending assistance, leaving them in complete isolation.⁶¹⁶ According to Rup'en Sahagean, the Armenian community in Cilicia lost both its faith in the possibility of Cilicia's independence—particularly after the Treaty of Sèvres, in which the Allied Powers agreed to return the occupied region to the Ottoman government—as well as the motivation to continue fighting.⁶¹⁷ Although prominent figures in the Armenian

⁶¹² Գասպարյան, Հայկական Կոտորածները Կիլիկիայում [The Armenian Massacres in Cilicia], p. 180.

⁶¹³ Գանգրունի, Կիլիկիոյ Հայութեան Վերջին Գաղթը [The Last Migration of Cilician Armenians], p. 77.

⁶¹⁴ Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ* [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920], p. 193.

⁶¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

⁶¹⁶ *Giligia*, Պարզ Խօսինք Այլէս, [From Now on, Let's Be Clear], 30 April 1920, no. 310.

⁶¹⁷ Գանգրունի, Կիլիկիոյ Հայութեան Վերջին Գաղթը [The Last Migration of Cilician Armenians], p. 146; Գասպարյան, Հայկական Կոտորածները Կիլիկիայում [The Armenian Massacres in Cilicia], p. 187. The Treaty of Sèvres was signed on 10 August 1920 by the Allied Powers and the Ottoman Empire. According to the Treaty, Trabzon, Erzurum, Van, and Bitlis regions were given to the Armenian state established in the Caucasus.

community made contact with the French officials in an effort to help the Armenians in Haçin, their efforts were fruitless. The French authorities, with the same pragmatic approach adopted from the beginning of their occupation campaign, saw no benefit in helping Haçin, a distant town of no real importance to them. *Giligia* reported that the external world knew nothing of the true conditions inside Haçin and vice versa.⁶¹⁸ Indeed, it was clear that neither the Armenians outside Haçin nor the French military officers in Adana had reliable information on the conditions in the village. There was no direct line of communication between Haçin and Adana, so the only method to gather intelligence from Haçin was surveillance by reconnaissance aircraft.

The Haçin Armenians, realising that no outside assistance would be coming, organised themselves and stocked food as well as ammunition and weapons for the defence of the town. On 30 March, a committee for aiding Haçin was organised, and on 15 April, a tribunal consisting of four Armenian and three Turkish members was organised.⁶¹⁹ On 17 March, Kozanoğlu Doğan sent an offer to the Haçin Armenians. After reminding them of the Turkish-Armenian brotherhood throughout history, he requested their disarmament and surrender.⁶²⁰ In spite of this, the fight continued, and the intensity of the siege of Haçin by the Nationalist forces increased. The self-defence of Haçin was successful against the Nationalist forces, whose numbers were far greater than those of the Armenians. The Armenian volunteers on the front line

However, the Cilicia region was designated as within the French zone of influence, and this decision affected the motivation of the Cilician Armenians in their quest to gain complete independence in the region. For more information on the Treaty of Sèvres, see A. L. Macfie, *The End of the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1923*, pp. 319-22; Davison, *Essays in Ottoman and Turkish History, 1774-1923: The Impact of the West*, pp. 206-43; Simon Payaslian, 'United States Policy toward the Armenian Question and the Armenian Genocide' (PhD thesis, UCLA, 2003), pp. 743-49.

⁶¹⁸ *Giligia*, Պարզ Իսուհինք Այլէւս, [From Now on, Let's Be Clear], 30 April 1920, no. 310.

⁶¹⁹ Եւփուճեան, *Հայ Ճողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ*: [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921], p. 583.

⁶²⁰ *Ibid.*, 604-5; Kütük, 'Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Yukarı Çukurova', [Upper Cilicia During the War of Independence], p. 239.

and the Armenian women and orphans who remained within the town worked collectively for their self-preservation. The Armenian orphans, who were ten to twelve years old, ‘did their part’ by carrying the guns and bullets from trench to trench and organising the ciphered communication between the units.⁶²¹ However, given the lack of food and ammunition, the population was unable to continue fighting after months of struggle. Until the end, after the combat moved underground to the tunnels of Haçin, the Armenians in the town fought to the death. The majority of them lost their lives during the clashes.

On 2 December 1920, it was reported that out of the ten thousand Armenians who were in Haçin, approximately two hundred survived and managed to arrive in Adana.⁶²² Only Aram Çavuş and his unit, who were successful in breaking the siege and escaping to the hills of Haçin under heavy gunfire, survived. After the Nationalist units had captured the town completely, their commanders ordered the soldiers to burn down the town, destroy every building, and set the tunnels afire as punishment for the ‘uprising of the Armenians’.⁶²³ The insensibility of the French authorities toward the cries for help from the Armenian population of Haçin was a second blow to the French-Armenian relationship, causing a deep and lasting disappointment within Armenian society.

⁶²¹ Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ* [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920], p. 196.

⁶²² *Jagadamard*, Օգնութիւն Հաճընցիւն [Help for Haçin Armenians], 2 December 1920, no. 2442; Osman Tufan, *Kurtuluş Savaşı Hatıraları* [Memoirs of the War of Independence] (Arma Yayınları, 1998), pp. 93-94; Kütük, ‘Kurtuluş Savaşı’nda Yukarı Çukurova’, [Upper Çukurova During the War of Independence] p. 266; Tachjian, ‘The Cilician Armenians and French Policy 1919-1921’, p. 551.

⁶²³ Çiçek, *Milli Mücadelede Adana ve Havalisi 1918-1922*, [Adana and Its Vicinity During the National Struggle 1918-1922] p. 242; Tufan, *Kurtuluş Savaşı Hatıraları*, [Memoirs of the War of Independence] pp. 103-5.

6.4. The Third Blow: The Clashes in Antep

From January 1920, the situation in Antep for Armenians began to descend into chaos. The Armenians were not able to open their shops or go to the market. A chain of events led the Armenian community to remain in their houses. On 29 February, for instance, an Armenian disappeared.⁶²⁴ Then on 1 March, an Armenian man and a woman were killed, while the next day several Islamised Armenians living with Muslims in the Turkish quarter were attacked by Turks, who accused them of being Armenian spies.⁶²⁵ After that, on 6 March, an Armenian man who travelled to the Turkish quarter to buy flour was killed by Turkish bands.⁶²⁶ A report published in the *Hay Tsayn* daily summarised the state of fear in the Armenian community:

From January 23 till this day, we have been living in the Armenian quarters with one family on top of another, one house on top of another. We cannot go out, interact with Turks and do some shopping... The self-defence activities of the Armenians are inadequate and insignificant. In a word, our situation is miserable.⁶²⁷

The tension between the Armenians and the Turks in the city was thick. The Armenian community resolved that they would not accept the re-establishment of Turkish power within the city and would defend themselves against any attack by Nationalist forces. An Armenian observer, K. Ankut, addressed the Turkish public in the *Verchin Lur* daily:

⁶²⁴ *Hay Tsayn*, Կացութիւնը Այնթապի Մէջ [The Situation in Antep], 16 March 1920, no. 208.

⁶²⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶²⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶²⁷ *Ibid.* ‘Յունվար 23էն մինչեւ այս թուականը քանի մը հայ թաղերու մէջ տուն տունի, ընտանիք ընտանիքի վրայ հաւաքուած չենք կարող շուկայ իջնելու թուրքերու հետ յարաբերութեան մտնել:... Հայերուն ինքնապաշտպանութեան միջոցները անարժէք եւ անբաւական են: Մեր կացութիւնը մէկ խօսքով անտանելի է:’

Be sure that no Armenian wants to live under the Turkish rule, and if one day a limited Turkish authority is formed by a sling of a chance, Armenians would be the first to leave those places just to ensure the safety of their lives. We have perfectly analysed your psychology and we would not be fooled by your fake and deceitful flattery anymore. Current and future generations will always live far away from you for at least a century ...⁶²⁸

The clashes in Antep began with an incident in the city's market. When a French soldier, upon being insulted by a group of Turkish youth, killed a Turkish young man, the Turks started to attack the Armenian shops. On the following day, the Armenians started to move to the northern part of town where the Armenian quarter was located. The Turkish authorities made an announcement ensuring the safety of the Armenians and persuaded them to open their shops in the market. On 30 January, the Armenians started to reopen their shops. However, on the same day, a French soldier was killed in the market, and armed Turkish bands attacked the Armenian shops. Following these events, all Armenian families moved to the northern part of town, and all of the Muslim families who were living in the Armenian quarter left and moved to the southern part of the city. With more than five thousand Armenians gathered at the Surp Azdvadzadzin Armenian Cathedral, the French authorities suggested that they open their shops and return to normal life. Soon after, though, shots were heard from the market, whereupon the Armenians who had returned to

⁶²⁸ *Verchin Lur*, Կը Մերժենք [We Refuse], 19 March 1920, no. 1829. ‘Վստահ եղեք թէ հայ մը չկայ որ թրքական իշխանութեան տակ ուզէ ապրիլ, ու եթէ երբեք բախտին մէկ խաղովը վաղը միւս օր թրքական սահմանափակ իշխանութիւն մը կազմուի, առաջին օրէն Հայերը չուեն այդ տեղերէն, միմիայն իրենց կեանքին անապահովութեան համար: Մենք շատ լաւ ուսումնասիրած ենք ձեր հոգեբանութիւնը, ու այլեւս չենք խաբուիր ձեր կեղծ ու պատիւ շողոքորթութիւններէն: Ներկայ եւ յաջորդ սերունդները միշտ ձեզմէ հեռու պիտի ապրին առնուազն մէկ դար:’

close their shops which had not been properly closed the previous day were attacked by Turkish bands.⁶²⁹

On 1 April, a group of French soldiers left the city for Kilis, leaving only eight hundred remaining in the city. The Armenian women and children were then sheltered in the American hospital, believing that the American flag atop the building would protect them. Nonetheless, the bands also shot at the hospital. Following the first clashes in the city and the events which transpired in Maraş, the Armenians of Antep established special military, police, and health bodies to organise the self-defence of the Armenian quarter of the city.⁶³⁰ An Armenian armed unit consisting of eight hundred Armenian volunteers was organised.⁶³¹ The Armenian craftsmen started to produce weapons and bullets to build the arsenal, preparing bombs, cartridges, and even cannons. Armenian women, children, and elderly worked to prepare the trenches.⁶³² Meanwhile, a population exchange took place at the junction of the Armenian quarter and the Turkish quarter, where the few Armenian families who remained in the Turkish quarter passed to the Armenian side and the few Turkish families who remained in the Armenian quarter passed to the Turkish side.⁶³³ In April 1920, in an initiative by Mihran Damadean, an attempt was made to draft an agreement between the Armenians and the Turks. The draft agreement, which included thirteen articles and which was mostly accepted by the Armenian and

⁶²⁹ Ibid.

⁶³⁰ Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] pp. 220-21.

⁶³¹ *Gilgia*, Դեպքերը Այնթապի Մէջ [Events in Antep], 29 April 1920, no. 309.

⁶³² Ibid.

⁶³³ Ibid.

Turkish authorities, was not implemented because of a mutual lack of confidence and chronic conflict.⁶³⁴

The commander of the French forces in the Middle East, Henri Gouraud, made a public announcement in May 1920 that a twenty-day ceasefire had been signed with the Nationalist authorities in order to discuss possible peace terms.⁶³⁵ He underscored that France would continue to be the protector of the Christian minorities in Cilicia, but Armenian public opinion viewed the ceasefire agreement between the French and the Nationalists with suspicion.⁶³⁶ An editorial in *Hay Tsayn* claimed that even though the agreement had been made, the Nationalist group still conducted attacks on the surrounding villages of Adana and Cihan and attempted to cut the Adana-Mersin train line.⁶³⁷ As part of the Franco-Turkish ceasefire agreement, the Armenian population in Antep was to lay down their arms and return to business by re-opening their shops in the market. However, during the four months of warfare in the city, the Armenian community depleted its coffers supporting the defence activities, resulting in a severe financial crisis. This was described by the *Giligia* daily as a ‘white massacre’, as opposed to a ‘red’ one.⁶³⁸ Thirty thousand Ottoman liras were collected as donations for the relief activities of the Antep Armenians. American Armenians sent thirty thousand dollars, while two thousand Ottoman liras came from

⁶³⁴ Եափուճեան, *Հայ ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ.*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] pp. 386-90.

⁶³⁵ Moumdjian, ‘Cilicia Under French Administration: Armenian Aspirations, Turkish Resistance, and French Strategems’, p. 481; Olgay Şen, ‘Milli Mücadele Döneminde Tarsus (1918-1922)’ [Tarsus During the National Struggle (1918-1922)] (MA thesis, Gaziantep Üniversitesi, 2004), p. 75; Bildirici, *The Massacres of the Armenians Committed in Adana Province and the French-Armenian Relations*, p. 149.

⁶³⁶ *Hay Tsayn*, Ջորավար Կուրոյի Յայտարարութեան Առթիւ [Regarding the Statement of General Gouraud], 14 June 1920, no. 351; Sonyel, *Turkish Diplomacy 1918-1923: Mustafa Kemal and the Turkish National Movement*, pp. 76-77.

⁶³⁷ *Hay Tsayn*, Թրքական Դաշնագրի Ստորագրումին Նշանակութիւնը [The Meaning of the Signing of the Turkish Pact], 7 September 1920, no. 427.

⁶³⁸ *Giligia*, Կյանքը Այնթապի Մէջ [Life in Antep], 4 September 1920, no. 418.

various Armenian organisations within the Ottoman state except Antep and Istanbul, one thousand Ottoman liras came from wealthy Antep Armenians, and another thousand Ottoman liras from Istanbul Armenians.⁶³⁹

The Antep Armenians remained neutral when the clashes between the French and Turkish forces commenced within the city after the ceasefire agreement expired. On 16 August 1920, the French commandership called upon the Armenians to join the battle on the French side, but after the ANU in Antep⁶⁴⁰ (which consisted of 28 members from all political factions of Armenian society, as well as the business and intellectual classes) refused, French artillery ‘erroneously’ shot into the Armenian quarter, and French forces began to attack the Armenian trenches.⁶⁴¹ Following the instigation by the French forces, the Armenian community relented and agreed to ally with them, as having one common enemy within the city would be better than two. The Armenian volunteer units entered the fight and soon managed to occupy the Şeyh mosque and its minarets, from where the Nationalist forces were firing on the Armenian quarter.⁶⁴² The Antep Armenians shared the same motivation as all other Cilician Armenians who survived the wartime deportations and massacres—revenge—even naming the cannon that was constructed by Armenian craftsmen ‘*Vrej*’ (Vengeance).⁶⁴³

The clashes between the Armenians and Turks in Antep would continue for more than ten months. The Armenian quarter was defended by Armenian volunteers

⁶³⁹ *Giligia*, Կյանքը Այնթապի Մէջ [Life in Antep], 5 September 1920, no. 419.

⁶⁴⁰ Վաչէ Ա., Ինչպէս Կորսնցուցինք Կիլիկիան [How Did We Lose Cilicia?] (Պէյրուս: Սեւան, 1971), p. 24.

⁶⁴¹ Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] p. 223.

⁶⁴² Գասպարյան, Հայկական Կոտորածները Կիլիկիայում, [The Armenian Massacres in Cilicia] 201; Վաչէ, Ինչպէս Կորսնցուցինք Կիլիկիան, [How Did We Lose Cilicia?] p. 25.

⁶⁴³ Վաչէ, Ինչպէս Կորսնցուցինք Կիլիկիան, [How Did We Lose Cilicia?] p. 25.

until an agreement was made between the French and Ankara governments, which was signed on 20 October 1921.⁶⁴⁴ The French government agreed to withdraw from the Cilicia region, including Nizip. The Ankara government in return guaranteed the rights of the Christian minorities and permission for the French to operate the railway line. The French administration agreed to evacuate the whole Cilicia region, including Adana, Mersin, and Tarsus, by January 1922.⁶⁴⁵ The Armenians of Antep wanted to leave the city but were not allowed to do so. The French authorities authorised only five thousand families in total to depart. During the clashes, the Armenian community spent four million francs and everything they had in their pockets. Two hundred forty-five soldiers died on the French side, only fifty-four of which were of French origin, the rest being Algerians and Tunisians.⁶⁴⁶ The ceasefire agreement was accepted by the Ottoman Turkish press as a victory for the Ankara government. According to the *Vakit* daily, with this agreement, the Ankara government proved that it was possible for them to negotiate a fair agreement with the Western Powers. The daily claimed that Ankara's policy was not completely dependent on the Soviets, and the Ankara government was ready to provide minority rights to Christians, both in Cilicia and in the Izmir region.⁶⁴⁷

⁶⁴⁴ *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանսո-Քէմալական Համաձայնութիւնը [The French-Nationalist Agreement], 9 November 1921, no. 2701.

⁶⁴⁵ Գանգրունի, Կիլիկիոյ Հայութեան Վերջին Գաղթը [The Last Migration of Cilician Armenians], p. 127.

⁶⁴⁶ Եափուճեան, *Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ.*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] pp. 742-43.

⁶⁴⁷ *Vakit*, 'İlk İtilaf' [The First Alliance], 24 October 1921, no. 1391.

6.5. Asking for the Moon: The Declaration of Independence in Cilicia

In general, the relationship between the French authorities and the Armenian community in the Cilicia region was not equal. The leadership of the Armenian community often received orders from the French commanders to organise Armenian volunteers for the operations of the French forces. For instance, Bremond ordered for one thousand five hundred Armenian volunteers to escort the French forces that were deploying to Mersin and to help with the defence of the town of Üreğli.⁶⁴⁸ Upon receiving the order from Bremond on 23 July 1920, prominent Armenian community members took steps to organise these forces, but it was not possible to gather one thousand five hundred volunteers in a very short period. Moreover, it was challenging to mobilise the public, as this request was unrelated to the self-defence of the Armenian quarters or towns; as a result, the French authorities asked the Armenian volunteers to leave their homes to serve where the French authorities deemed they were necessary, and a group of Armenian volunteers were gathered and sent to Üreğli to defend the town. However, the Armenian authorities were not able to gather one thousand five hundred volunteers with two days' notice for Mersin.⁶⁴⁹ Consequently, Armenians in the Cilicia region began to view their independence as vital to breaking free from the French authorities and allowing them to dedicate their armed forces entirely to the defence of the Armenian quarters in cities. The approach of the French government was criticised in the *Hay Tsayn* daily:

⁶⁴⁸ *Hay Tsayn*, Ֆրանսական Իշխանութեանց Վերաբերումը Հայոց Հանդէպ [The French Attitude Toward the Armenians], 9 September 1920, no. 429.

⁶⁴⁹ *Hay Tsayn*, Ֆրանսական Իշխանութեանց Վերաբերումը Հայոց Հանդէպ [The French Attitude Toward the Armenians], 10 September 1920, no. 430.

A nation that already devoted its limited trained forces to ongoing clashes, a nation whose young generation is deprived of weapons and military training, and a nation which is now allowed to mobilise its youth by its own will; how can it prepare more than a thousand men in a couple of days, who are supposed to be able to collaborate with the trained, well-managed, well-armed and equipped French soldiers?⁶⁵⁰

The Supreme National Council, which was established in Adana at the end of May, discussed the economic and political dimensions of declaring independence.

After seven months of struggle, the Armenian community believed that an autonomous Armenian administration should be established in Cilicia.⁶⁵¹ The Armenian political parties agreed to act in cooperation and put aside their ideological differences.⁶⁵² On 31 July 1920, the Supreme National Council decided to declare independence. The members agreed to make the official announcement on 4 August. However, the Ramgavar party opposed this move, arguing that it would not succeed in the French-occupied zones and could harm French-Armenian relations.⁶⁵³ The party argued that the French would react negatively towards the Armenians after this declaration and that the Armenians in Haçin, who were continuing to fight against the Nationalists, would suffer greatly after the French withdrew their support. Thus, the

⁶⁵⁰ *Hay Tsayn*, Ֆրանսական Իշխանութեանց Վերաբերումը Հայոց Հանդէպ [The French Attitude Toward the Armenians], 10 September 1920, no. 430. ‘ժողովուրդ մը որ իր փոքրաթիւ մարզուած ոյժերը արդէն տրամադրած է մղուած կռիւներուն, եւ որուն երիտասարդ ոյժերուն կարելոր մասը զուրկ է զին, մարզանքէ, ժողովուրդ մը որուն իրաւունք եւ իրաւաստութիւն տրուած չէ իր երիտասարդները իր ուզած եղանակով զէնքի տահ առնելու, ի նչպէս կարելի է սպասել որ 2-3 օրուան ընթացքին հազարէ աւելի մարդիկ պատրաստէ, մարզուած, խնամուած, լաւագոյնս զինուած, գրահուած Ֆրանսական զինուորներուն գործակցելու ընդունակ:’

⁶⁵¹ *Giligia*, Կյանքը Այնթապի Մէջ [Life in Antep], 7 September 1920, no. 420; Moumdjian, ‘Cilicia Under French Administration: Armenian Aspirations, Turkish Resistance, and French Strategems’, p. 482.

⁶⁵² Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] p. 240.

⁶⁵³ Եսփուճեան, *Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] pp. 836-37; Moumdjian, ‘Cilicia Under French Administration: Armenian Aspirations, Turkish Resistance, and French Strategems’, p. 482.

Ramgavar party suggested that the declaration of independence should be made only in those regions that had already been evacuated by the French forces.⁶⁵⁴

The chain of events leading to the declaration of independence was initiated with an initiative by Minas Veradzin, central committee member of the ARF. On 2 August 1920, he declared the autonomy of the ‘Rupinean Republic’, land under the French mandate which sat between the Seyhun and Ceyhun rivers.⁶⁵⁵ When Mihran Damadean received the news of Minas Veradzin’s declaration, he protested the endeavour to the ARF. Yet, in response, ARF headquarters made clear that this was not their decision.⁶⁵⁶ This first initiative was not only greeted with suspicion and embarrassment by the French and Ottoman authorities, but also it was not endorsed by the prominent members of the Armenian community in Adana. Apparently, this initiative was not backed by any political parties and attracted no support from the Armenian community.

However, two days later on 4 August 1920, on the invitation of the ANU in Adana, the representatives of the Greek, Assyrian, Syrian, and Chaldean communities together with the representatives of the Armenian Catholic, Protestant, and Apostolic churches, and the Supreme National Council gathered at a meeting and established the Inter-Christian Council of Cilicia, which later made the decision to declare the independence of Cilicia from the oppression of Turkish rule and asked its mandate under French protection.⁶⁵⁷

⁶⁵⁴ Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] pp. 242-43.

⁶⁵⁵ Գասպարյան, Հայկական Կոտորածները Կիլիկիայում, [The Armenian Massacres in Cilicia] pp. 160-61; Moumdjian, ‘Cilicia Under French Administration: Armenian Aspirations, Turkish Resistance, and French Strategems’, p. 483.

⁶⁵⁶ Եսփուճեան, *Հայ Շողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] p. 839.

⁶⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 245; Գասպարյան, Հայկական Կոտորածները Կիլիկիայում, [The Armenian Massacres in Cilicia] pp. 160-61; Ասպետ Արամ, *Կիլիկիան Տարեցոյց 1922* [The Cilician

In their declaration of independence, the Christian communities underscored that even though the Armistice was signed between the Entente and the Ottoman government, a state of fear and warfare continued in the Cilicia region via armed bands and the newly emerged National movement. They argued that two hundred seventy five thousand Christians in the Cilicia region could no longer live under the Turkish yoke, given the massacres that had happened during the wartime and Armistice period.⁶⁵⁸ The declaration concluded with the signatures of prominent figures of the Christian communities in the Cilicia region such as Mihran Damadean, representative of the Delegation of United Armenia; Kevork Aslanean, Armenian bishop of the Diocese of Apostolic Armenians in Adana; Artin K‘ek‘ligean, Armenian Catholic bishop of Adana; Dr. Mnats‘aganean, president of the ANU; Vahan Zhamgoch‘ean, secretary of the ANU; representatives of the Greek community; Aristides Simeonoglu, a notable businessman; Barbur Bey, a notable member of the Arab Orthodox community; Joseph Tüfenkci, Vicar General of the Chaldeans for Cilicia; and Philippos, Patriarchal Vicar of the Assyrian Catholic Community of Adana.⁶⁵⁹ The declaration ended with: ‘Long live independent Cilicia, long live protector France!’⁶⁶⁰

Almanac 1922] (Կ. Պոլիս, 1922), p. 171; *Hay Tsayn*, 11 September 1920, no. 431. Zeidner, *The Tricolor Over the Taurus 1918-1922*, pp. 462-63; Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia, 1914-1923*, p. 129; Bildirici, *The Massacres of the Armenians Committed in Adana Province and the French-Armenian Relations*, pp. 171-72.

⁶⁵⁸ Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] pp. 246-47; Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia, 1914-1923*, p. 130.

⁶⁵⁹ Եսափուճեան, *Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] pp. 846-47.

⁶⁶⁰ Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] p. 249; Գանգրունի, *Կիլիկիոյ Հայութեան Վերջին Գաղթը*, [The Last Migration of Cilician Armenians] pp. 118-19; Moundjian, ‘Cilicia Under French Administration: Armenian Aspirations, Turkish Resistance, and French Strategems’, p. 484. The president of the newly established

On 5 August, when representatives of the newly established government occupied the administrative building and removed the Turkish governor from his post, the French authorities ordered the Armenian staff members to vacate the premises. A few officers were sent by the order of Bremond to empty the building. Mihran Damadean resisted the officers, arguing that the members of the government were elected by the inter-Christian committee and represented the will of more than two hundred seventy five thousand Christian people. Mihran Damadean, Dr. Mnats'aganean, and Vahan Zhamgoch'ean stayed in the room until the last moment.⁶⁶¹ However, Bremond sent armed officers to the building and removed the self-declared government members by force.⁶⁶² Following this incident, the French administration ceased all communication with the ANU representatives. When High Commissioner Henri Gouraud arrived in Adana in September, he ordered the disarmament of the Armenian militias, deported a group of prominent Armenian individuals (including Archbishop Mushegh Seropian, who was sentenced to ten years of forced labour by French court martial), disarmed the volunteers who were prepared to leave for Haçin, and closed all the Armenian dailies.⁶⁶³ Although the

government was Mihran Damadean. Dr. Mnats'aganean (Tashnag) was elected as the foreign minister, Dr. Bezirjjean (Ramgavar) as the minister of internal affairs, Vahan Zhamgoch'ean (Hnch'ak) as the minister of war, Antranik Genjean (Hnch'ak) as the minister of finance, Garabed Nalbandean (Hnch'ak) as the minister of development and agriculture, Assyrian notable Jan as the minister of education, and prominent Greek Nikolaki as the minister of justice. The communication and construction ministers were appointed from the Turkish and Arab communities.

⁶⁶¹ Եսփուճեան, *Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ.*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] pp. 850-51; Tachjian, *La France En Cilicie et En Haute-Mezopotamie: Aux Confins de La Turquie, de La Syrie et Del l'Iraq, 1919-1933*, p. 154; Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia, 1914-1923*, p. 131.

⁶⁶² Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ.*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] p. 251; Գանգրունի, *Կիլիկիոյ Հայութեան Վերջին Գաղթը*, [The Last Migration of Cilician Armenians] pp. 118-19; Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia, 1914-1923*, p. 131.

⁶⁶³ Եսփուճեան, *Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ.*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] p. 853;

French interests were not directed against the Armenians, protection of the investments of French capital within the country was of greater concern than the political interests of the Armenian community.⁶⁶⁴ Ultimately, the actions of the French authorities toward the Armenian interests were so harsh that the Armenian representatives were nicknamed ‘bad shepherds’ by French commander Julien Dufieux.⁶⁶⁵

In his memoirs, Mihran Damadean claimed that they were capable of organising five thousand Armenian volunteers to occupy the administrative building by force but chose not to only in order to avoid harming French-Armenian relations further.⁶⁶⁶ According to Damadean, there were two alternative paths for the Armenian community in Cilicia. The first was to emigrate to Syria, which would mean the destruction of the Armenian economic and social life that would result from the abandonment of Armenian shops, investments, and property. Damadean called this possible emigration another ‘white massacre’. The second alternative for the Armenian community was to remain in their native lands and to continue to struggle against the Turks, a will which was demonstrated by the decision to stay in Cilicia and declare independence.⁶⁶⁷ However, the lack of commitment from all the layers of the community—from the political sphere to the organisation of armed units and the

Գանգրունի, Կիլիկիոյ Հայութեան Վերջին Գաղթը, [The Last Migration of Cilician Armenians] p. 119; Գասպարյան, Հայկական Կոտորածները Կիլիկիայում, [The Armenian Massacres in Cilicia] p. 163.

⁶⁶⁴ *Hay Tsayn*, Ֆրանսական Իշխանութեանց Վերաբերումը Հայոց Հանդէպ [The French Attitude Toward the Armenians], 13 September 1920, no. 432.

⁶⁶⁵ *Hay Tsayn*, Ֆրանսական Իշխանութեանց Վերաբերումը Հայոց Հանդէպ [The French Attitude Toward the Armenians], 14 September 1920, no. 433.

⁶⁶⁶ Եափուճեան, *Հայ Ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ.*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] p. 867; Moundjian, ‘Cilicia Under French Administration: Armenian Aspirations, Turkish Resistance, and French Strategems’, p. 485.

⁶⁶⁷ Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 ԹԹ.*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] p. 237.

political intrigues of the Nationalist authorities, which were effective in deterring the French—resulted in a futile attempt which lasted only a few days.

6.6. The Final Stage of the French Occupation: The Clashes in Adana

With clashes and incidents taking place in various cities in Cilicia including Maraş, Haçin, Antep, and Sis, tensions between the Muslim and Armenian communities in Adana were cresting. While the Nationalist units' attacks on the surrounding villages of Adana were punishing, the control of the city remained in the hands of the French military, together with the Armenian volunteer units. After the Nationalists realised that guerrilla warfare alone would not succeed in breaking the resistance of the French and Armenian units, talk increased of launching artillery strikes against the city.

When rumours of Nationalist shelling emerged—combined with the declaration by Nationalists that those Turkish families who remained in Adana would be considered allies of the French and, thus, enemies of the Turkish nation—in a state of fear, Turkish families began vacating their properties within the city and moving to the surrounding Turkish villages. This flight of forty thousand Muslims from Adana became known as the 'Kaç-Kaç (Run-Run) incident'. In addition to the above reasons, Turkish civilians feared a potential massacre at the hands of the extremely aggressive Armenian volunteer units. With much of the city's properties now abandoned, the Armenian refugees who had not been able to find shelter (a significant number, as there were more than one hundred thousand in Adana) were settled into the vacated properties.⁶⁶⁸

⁶⁶⁸ Եսփուճեան, *Հայ ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ.*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] p. 792.; Zeidner, *The Tricolor Over the Taurus 1918-1922*, p. 250; Çiçek, *Milli Mücadelede*

While the Turkish population was leaving the city, Nationalist agents began to incite the *Fellah* (farmers) population⁶⁶⁹ against the Armenians in order to foment more unrest within the city; additionally, the Nationalists hoped to show that the Armenians created conflicts not only with the Turks but also with other ethnic and religious communities, further dampening French-Armenian relations. The strategy bore fruit, as *Fellahs* began to kidnap Armenian merchants who were travelling in remote parts of the city.⁶⁷⁰ On 10 July, when an Armenian merchant was kidnapped by *Fellahs* in the market, the Armenians randomly arrested a few *Fellahs* to trade for the return of the abducted Armenian merchant.⁶⁷¹

The evacuation of the city by Turkish families led to repercussions from the French authorities, who interpreted this movement as a result of the antagonism and violence of the Armenian volunteer units. Colonel Edouard Bremond, in turn, demanded the disarmament of Armenian volunteers.⁶⁷² After the majority of the Turkish population left Adana, the Nationalist forces embarked upon an offensive in the second half of July.⁶⁷³ The clashes continued until an agreement was made between the French and the Nationalists in October 1921.

Adana ve Havalisi 1918-1922, [Adana and Its Vicinity During the National Struggle 1918-1922] p. 405; Պրէմոն, *Կիլիկիա 1919-1920 թթ.*, [Cilicia in 1919-1920] pp. 112-13; Tachjian, *La France En Cilicie et En Haute-Mezopotamie: Aux Confins de La Turquie, de La Syrie et Del l'Iraq, 1919-1933*, p. 151; Bağcı, 'An Analysis of Inter-Communal Conflicts in Cilicia During the Independence War Years 1918-1922', pp. 114-15; Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia, 1914-1923*, p. 124; Bildirici, *The Massacres of the Armenians Committed in Adana Province and the French-Armenian Relations*, pp. 170-71.

⁶⁶⁹ The Arabs in the Adana and Mersin area were called *Fellahs* by the Ottoman Turkish community.

⁶⁷⁰ *Hay Tsayn*, Ֆրանսական Իշխանութեանց Վերաբերումը Հայոց Հանդէպ [The French Attitude Toward the Armenians], 4 September 1920, no. 425.

⁶⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷² Թորոսյան, *Կիլիկիայի Հայերի Ազատագրական Շարժումները 1919-1920 թթ.*, [Liberation Movements of the Cilician Armenians 1919-1920] p. 230.

⁶⁷³ Եափուճեան, *Հայ ժողովուրդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 թթ.*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] pp. 807-8.

6.7. A Harsh Truth for the Ottoman Armenians in Cilicia: The Franco-Turkish Agreement and the Evacuation of Cilicia

When the French intentions and interests were finally clearly understood by the Armenian community following the clashes between the French-Armenian forces and Nationalists, Armenian intellectuals attempted to persuade the Armenian population not to leave their lands, whatever the result may be in the political arena. An editorial in the *Hay Tsayn* daily urged prominent Armenian figures and wealthy businessmen to not emigrate abroad from Cilicia but to lead their communities by example, remaining in their native lands and protecting the ‘Armenianness’ of the region. According to the daily, those Armenians who left would never return ‘to see Cilicia as part of the Armenian nation’ and that the only means of keeping this hope alive was ‘to stay in the region and continue struggling against the Turks’.⁶⁷⁴ On 28 August 1920, the daily ran Melkon Asadur’s article, entitled ‘I am here, I will stay here’, as its editorial. In this article, Melkon Asadur highlighted the will of the Cilician Armenian community to hold fast in its native land, regardless of the agreement the French authorities had reached with the Nationalists. Asadur concluded, ‘I am now in my ancestors’ land. From now on, no power can expel me. It is my home, my nest’.⁶⁷⁵

Indeed, ten months after the publication of articles intended to influence Armenian intellectuals and the Armenian public opinion not to leave Cilicia, the signing of an agreement between the French and the Nationalists swayed the Armenian viewpoint regarding emigration. On 20 October 1921, negotiations between the Nationalist authorities and Henry Franklin-Bouillon, the representative of the

⁶⁷⁴ *Hay Tsayn*, Արսազադրթի Շարժումիւն Առթիւ [Regarding the Emigration Movement], 16 June 1920, no. 353.

⁶⁷⁵ *Hay Tsayn*, Ես Հնու Եւ Եւ Հնու Կը Մնամ [I Am Here and I Will Stay Here], 28 August 1920, no. 418.

French government, came to an end, arousing anxiety among the non-Muslim community of the Cilicia region.⁶⁷⁶ The agreement between the French and the Nationalists was viewed by the Armenians as a betrayal by the French politicians, who had announced previously that they would pursue the establishment of an independent Armenian state in the Cilicia region, free from Turkish bondage. Even though the French authorities provided assurances that specific articles in the agreement, which had been agreed to by the Nationalists, enshrined the rights of non-Muslim groups, the Armenian community recognised it as a deception to cover future atrocities and oppression of non-Muslim communities.⁶⁷⁷ According to the *Arevelyan Mamul* daily, against the will of two hundred thousand Cilician Armenians, the French authorities bequeathed the region to the Nationalists, abandoning the Armenians in a state of uncertainty and insecurity.⁶⁷⁸

Henry Franklin-Bouillon informed the local Armenian authorities that the French administration would cede control of the region to the Nationalists on 21 November and would leave the region by 4 January. He reiterated that there was no need for the Armenian community to emigrate to another country because the Nationalists had guaranteed that their rights would be protected. He noted that the display of the Armenian flag was prohibited in the region, so as to not provoke the Nationalist authorities.⁶⁷⁹ Vahrich Geok'jean, an Armenian author who was also the editor of the Antep-published *Sharzhoum* (Action) journal, wrote the following in

⁶⁷⁶ Bağcı, 'An Analysis of Inter-Communal Conflicts in Cilicia During the Independence War Years 1918-1922', p. 110; Mim Kemal Öke, *The Armenian Question* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basimevi, 2001), p. 196; Kamuran Gürün, *The Armenian File: The Myth of Innocence Exposed* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1986), pp. 286-87.

⁶⁷⁷ *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանսո-Քէմալական Համաձայնութիւնն Ու Կիլիկեցիք [Franco-Nationalist Agreement and the Cilicians], 11 December 1921, no. 2729.

⁶⁷⁸ *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանսո-Քէմալական Համաձայնութիւնն Ու Կիլիկեցիք [Franco-Nationalist Agreement and the Cilicians], 22 December 1921, no. 2738.

⁶⁷⁹ *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանսո-Քէմալական Համաձայնութիւնն Ու Կիլիկեցիք [Franco-Nationalist Agreement and the Cilicians], 14 December 1921, no. 2731; Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia, 1914-1923*, pp. 146-47.

response to the statements of Henry Franklin-Bouillon regarding the emigration of the Armenians: ‘But which Armenian would not be afraid of the Turkish terror? Who does not have reasons to be afraid if he is an Armenian, a non-Kemalist who fought side by side with the French against Kemalists?’⁶⁸⁰

Vahrich Geok‘jean argued that the French authorities encouraged the return of the Turkish population to the Adana region and forcibly displaced the Armenian refugees who were sheltered in the camps at a time when there was a housing crisis in the cities of the Cilicia region. Homeless, the Armenian refugees who were forced to leave the camps were left with no option but to live on the streets. The Armenian businessmen, who were under strict boycotts by Turkish customers, were not able to earn an income, and those Armenians who wanted to sell their properties could not find any buyers because of the abounding propaganda. Those Muslims who wanted to buy the properties of the Armenians were advised not to do so because they were informed that ‘they would have those properties free of charge soon’.⁶⁸¹

The Ankara government had previously assured they would give concessions and rights to the non-Muslim population.⁶⁸² The Ottoman Turkish dailies propagated that, with the promises of the Ankara government and the friendly approach of the Turkish officials, the Armenians would decide not to emigrate to Aleppo or other Syrian cities; however, according to the Armenian dailies, these reports did not reflect

⁶⁸⁰ *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանսո-Քիւմալական Համաձայնութիւնն Ու Կիլիկեցիք [Franco-Nationalist Agreement and the Cilicians], 17 December 1921, no. 2734. ‘... Բայց ո՞ր մէկ հայը չի պիտի վախնար Թուրք արհաւիրքէն, եւ ո՞վ չունէր վախնալու պատճառներ երբ Հայ էր, երբ Քիւմալական չէր եղած, եւ երբ Ֆրանսացոց կողքին կռուած էր քիւմալականներու դէմ:’

⁶⁸¹ *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանսո-Քիւմալական Համաձայնութիւնն Ու Կիլիկեցիք [Franco-Nationalist Agreement and the Cilicians], 15 December 1921, no. 2732. Indeed, boycotts had been in place starting as early as 1919. See Shaw, ‘The Armenian Legion and Its Destruction of the Armenian Community of Cilicia’, pp. 181-82.

⁶⁸² *Ileri*, ‘Ankara’нын Adana Hristiyanlarına Verdiği İmtiyazlar’ [Rights Given by Ankara to Adana Christians], 1 December 1921, no. 1279.

the truth.⁶⁸³ The editor of *Vakit* noted that these rights that were assured by the Ankara government to the Christian populations were included in the Ottoman government's constitution; thus, the issue at hand was not one of writing new laws but of enforcing those that already existed. The daily wrote that if a non-Muslim 'obeys the law and has the will of living with Turks in prosperity', then there was 'a place for him'.⁶⁸⁴

Commander Muhittin Pasha entered Adana and was welcomed by the prominent Turkish members of the community on 24 November 1921. More than sixty thousand Armenians rushed to the port of Mersin, waiting to be transported by ships to Cyprus, Izmir, or Istanbul.⁶⁸⁵ Reports from Larnaka noted that nine thousand Armenians had arrived at Larnaka and two thousand more were on their way. The Catholicos of Cilicia, Sahag Khabaeian, sent a telegram to Istanbul on 27 November, giving notice that he was moving to Aleppo, leaving Adana.⁶⁸⁶ Non-native Cilician Armenians who had settled in the region during the French occupation were afraid that the Turkish owners of their properties would return to Cilicia and reclaim them. Alarmed, thousands of Armenians left their properties and departed for the port of Mersin.⁶⁸⁷ Even though the Nationalist authorities had announced that the non-Muslim population's rights would be strictly protected under the Nationalist

⁶⁸³ *Vakit*, 'Kililya Hristiyanları Hicret Etmiyor?' [Are Cilicia Christians Not Emigrating?], 21 December 1921, no. 1448; *Vakit*, 'Kilikya'dan Ermeni Muhacereti Tevakkuf Etti' [The Emigration of Armenians from Cilicia Has Paused], 9 December 1921, no. 1436; *Vakit*, 'Adana Ermenileri Hicretten Vazgeçtiler' [Adana Armenians Have Decided Not to Emigrate], 6 December 1921, no. 1433.

⁶⁸⁴ *Vakit*, 'Kilikya'da Ekaliyetler' [Minorities in Cilicia], 3 November 1921, no. 1401.

⁶⁸⁵ Moundjian, 'Cilicia Under French Administration: Armenian Aspirations, Turkish Resistance, and French Strategems', p. 486; Shaw, 'The Armenian Legion and Its Destruction of the Armenian Community of Cilicia', pp. 204-5; Güçlü, *Armenians and the Allies in Cilicia, 1914-1923*, p. 143.

⁶⁸⁶ *Vercin Lur*, Ատանան թուրքերուն ջեռք [Adana in the Hands of Turks], 28 November 1921, no. 2346.

⁶⁸⁷ *Verchin Lur*, Կիլիկիայէն Հայոց Փախուստը [The Flight of Armenians from Cilicia], 9 December 1921, no. 1882.

administration and the Armenians who arrived in Adana from interior parts of Anatolia would be returned to their native cities such as Sivas, Kayseri, and Harput, there was panic among the Cilician Armenian community because no promises had been made to those who chose to remain.⁶⁸⁸ While some groups of wealthy Armenians left their properties and fled from Adana to Izmir, the poor had not the means to desert their houses.⁶⁸⁹ Yet, as far as Armenian public opinion was concerned, there was only one option for the Armenian community: to leave the region as soon as possible before the arrival of the Turks.⁶⁹⁰ An individual who sent an article to the daily under the pseudonym *Pro-French* asked the French authorities, ‘If you were going to leave us, why did you bring us here? We will not forget that our holy cemeteries were trampled on by Mustafa Kemal after your departure’.⁶⁹¹ An editorial in the *Arevelyan Mamul* daily entitled ‘France is Selling the Cilician Armenians to Mustafa Kemal’ conveyed the anger of the Armenian community toward the French authorities in the strongest of terms:

Long live France! Long live France, who played a flawless Judas role for the Cilician Armenians. The names of [Aristide] Briand, lightheaded Franklin-Bouillon and their friends shall be written in the history with red ink as the executioners of Armenians. Perhaps they agree with the policy of Talat, Enver and Nazım and will have the Cilician Armenians massacred as well, so that the Armenian question becomes clearer and buried for good.⁶⁹²

⁶⁸⁸ Zeidner, *The Tricolor Over the Taurus 1918-1922*, p. 291.

⁶⁸⁹ *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանսա Կը Ծախէ Կիլիկիոյ Հայութիւնը Սուրթաֆա Քէմալի [France Sells the Armenians of Cilicia to Mustafa Kemal], 11 November 1921, no. 2703.

⁶⁹⁰ *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանքո-Քէմալական Համաձայնութիւնն Ու Կիլիկեցիք [Franco-Nationalist Agreement and the Cilicians], 18 December 1921, no. 2735.

⁶⁹¹ *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանքո-Քէմալական Հռչակաւոր Համաձայնութիւնը [The Renowned Franco-Nationalist Agreement], 30 December 1921, no. 2746. ‘Եթէ մեզ Թուրքին պիտի ձգէիք, ինչու՞ մեզ բերիք հոս. Պիտի չներենք որ մեր Ս. գերեզմանները, Ձեր լքումով կոխան դառնան Սուրթաֆա Քէմալի..’.

⁶⁹² *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանսա Կը Ծախէ Կիլիկիոյ Հայութիւնը Սուրթաֆա Քէմալի [France Sells the Armenians of Cilicia to Mustafa Kemal], 11 November 1921, no. 2703. ‘Կեցցէ՛ Ֆրանսա, ապրի՛ Ֆրանսա որ կատարեալ Յուդայի դերը կատարեց Կիլիկիոյ հայութեան նկատմամբ: Պրիանի, Ֆրանքլին Պոյեօն ըսուած

At the end of November 1921, there were around fifty thousand Armenians in Mersin who were waiting to board ships bound for an unknown destination.⁶⁹³ Thousands of Armenians who applied for travel documents to emigrate were told they would have to wait at least ten days to receive their documents. The French authorities were reluctant to accelerate the process and continued to encourage the Armenians to stay in their lands and not leave.⁶⁹⁴ It was nearly impossible to obtain a passport without bribing officials in Adana, so those Armenians who could not afford to do so largely had their applications denied.⁶⁹⁵ By 16 January 1922, the French ships transported the last Armenian group, consisting of fifteen thousand eight hundred people, to Beirut; for this trip, the passengers were exploited to each pay 8.5 Ottoman liras per person, which was nearly double the normal cost.⁶⁹⁶ Even though most of the Armenians sought to go to Damascus, the French officials would not organise this transportation.⁶⁹⁷ Reportedly, the Arabic press in Beirut published articles criticising the arrival of the Armenians in Beirut and expressing the Arabic community's unease. The Armenians in Kilis and Antep were allowed to migrate to Aleppo.⁶⁹⁸ During the

թերեւամտին ու իրենց ընկերներուն անունները պատմութեան մէջ կարմիր մելանով պիտի արձանագրուին, իբրեւ Հայոց դահիճները: Կերեւի Թալէաթի, Էնվերի, Նազըմի քաղաքականութիւնը ճիշտ գտած են եւ Կիլիկիոյ Հայութիւնն ալ կոտրել պիտի տան, որպէսզի հայկական խնդիրը աւելի պարզուի, ընդ միշտ թաղուի:՝

⁶⁹³ Գանգրունի, Կիլիկիոյ Հայութեան Վերջին Գաղթը, [The Last Migration of Cilician Armenians] p. 128.

⁶⁹⁴ *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանքո-Քէմալական Համաձայնութիւնն Ու Կիլիկեցիք [Franco-Nationalist Agreement and the Cilicians], 21 December 1921, no. 2737; *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ֆրանքո-Քէմալական Համաձայնութիւնն Ու Կիլիկեցիք [Franco-Nationalist Agreement and the Cilicians], 30 December 1921, No. 2746; Tachjian, 'The Cilician Armenians and French Policy 1919-1921', pp. 552-53.

⁶⁹⁵ Եափուճեան, *Հայ Մողովորդին Անկախութեան Պայքարը Կիլիկիոյ Մէջ 1919-1921 ԹԹ.*, [The Independence Struggle of the Armenian Nation in Cilicia 1919-1921] p. 398.

⁶⁹⁶ *Arevelyan Mamul*, Կիլիկեան Եղեռնը [Cilician Calamity], 25 January 1922, no. 2765.

⁶⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

evacuation of Cilicia, more than fifteen thousand Armenians from Amanos, Ceyhan, Osmaniye, and Dörtyol took shelter in the Iskenderun region, without access to food and with their accommodation scattered throughout the streets.⁶⁹⁹ The *Kaght‘aganats‘ Arak‘man Hantsnakhoump* (Refugee Transportation Committee) was organised by the Armenian leadership to not only assist with the transportation of the Armenian refugees but also to find jobs for them in the new lands to ensure their self-sustainability.⁷⁰⁰

Dikran Kupelean, an Armenian lawyer, highlighted the reasons why the Armenian community in Cilicia chose to migrate from the region:

Had it not been for the so-called defender France’s ban, the Christian population of Cilicia would have already won their case... Yes, remaining [in Cilicia] was an evil, but leaving it was the lesser evil. If we had stayed there, no matter what, our safety would be temporary and most probably we would all have lost our lives. But by leaving we stay alive. Even though poor and miserable, we are still full of hope that one day we will return to our lands.⁷⁰¹

6.8. Conclusion

The episode of the French occupation of Cilicia represents a crucial point in the history of the Armistice period for the Ottoman Armenian community. As demonstrated throughout this chapter, the Armenian community in Cilicia, with the

⁶⁹⁹ *Jagadamard*, Կիլիկեցի Գաղթականներու Վիճակը [The Condition of Cilician Refugees], 15 February 1922, no. 990.

⁷⁰⁰ *Arevelyan Mamul*, Փրկենք Կիլիկիոյ Բեկորները [Let’s Save the Remnants of Cilicia], 9 February 1922, no. ?.

⁷⁰¹ *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ի՞նչու Կիլիկեցիք Գաղթեցին [Why Did the Cilician Armenians Migrate?], 20 December 1921, no. 2736. ‘... Եթէ պաշտպան ըսուած Ֆրանսասն արգելք չըլլար, արդէն կիլիկիոյ քրիստոնէայ ժողովուրդը իր դատը շահած էր... Այո՛, մնալը չարիք էր, սակայն վերջինը փոքրագոյն չարիք: Հոն մնայինք, մեր ապահովութիւնը ինչ որ ալ ըլլար՝ առժամանակէյ պիտի ըլլար, եւ մեծ հաւանակութիւն կար այլեւս բոլորովին մեր կեանքն ալ կորսնցնելու: Սակայն, ելնելով ողջ կը մնանք: Թէեւ աղքատ, թշուառ, սակայն միշտ հաւատքով լեցուն թէ օր մը դարձեալ մեր օճախները կը վերառարնանք:’

support of all of the Armenian political parties and layers of society, backed the French occupation by providing volunteers for the struggle against the Nationalists. However, after a short period of occupation, the actions of the French authorities made it clear that the French administration's intention was not to occupy the entire region permanently, but that they hoped to use the occupation as leverage when negotiating with the Turks.

At the beginning of the occupation, given the insufficient numbers of soldiers in the French military, the French authorities wisely benefited from the Armenian legionnaires' manpower.⁷⁰² Whenever an attack was organised by the Nationalist forces, the French ordered the Armenian legionnaires to the front lines to avoid losing their own soldiers. This pragmatic approach on the part of the French authorities changed when the French and Nationalists made first contact in the diplomatic field. Following the concessions the French representatives received from the Ankara government—such as securing rights in the railway companies, the guarantee of payment of debts, and the protection of the economic interests of France—the approach of the French authorities toward the Armenian legionnaires changed. The Armenian legionnaires, who had been organised by the French government in an attempt to make them the core of an Armenian military which would be organised in the region, were dissolved by the French authorities, with most of the legionnaires being sent to Port Said. The French forces failed to provide any assistance in either Maraş or Haçin to the local Armenian population. In Maraş, while the Armenian women, children, and elderly attempted to shelter in the monastery where the Algerian soldiers were keeping guard, the Algerian soldiers opened fire on the Armenian population. The French forces, a few days later, initiated a midnight

⁷⁰² Moumdjian, 'Cilicia Under French Administration: Armenian Aspirations, Turkish Resistance, and French Strategems', p. 459.

evacuation of the city without giving any notice to the Armenians. When the Armenian women, children, and elderly attempted to follow the French forces, some soldiers fired upon them and insisted that they could only follow them from a one-kilometre distance. In Haçin, similarly, the French governor Taillard refused to send ammunition and reinforcements from Sis to Haçin, arguing that not even one French soldier would be assigned to help Haçin. Furthermore, the French authorities blocked the Armenian volunteer unit consisting of four hundred Armenians who were ready and willing to go to Haçin. On 5 August 1920, when the Armenian delegation, together with the other Christian minorities of the Cilicia region, announced the independence of the Christian state of Cilicia, the French authorities stated that they strongly opposed an independence movement; however, previously, when the French occupation began in 1919, the French authorities had shown no reluctance in stating their support for the Armenians' political aspirations.

The Ottoman Armenians of Cilicia, similar to the other Armenian communities of the Ottoman Empire, were strongly pro-Entente. The shared aspiration of the establishment of an Armenian state in Cilicia united all the Armenian political parties in the region to support the French government in its occupation endeavour. Furthermore, the great majority of Cilician Armenians were survivors of the genocide who, with the help of the French authorities, found the means to return to their native lands. This fact made the Cilician Armenians pro-French, and so they presumed that their salvation would come in working together with the French. Nevertheless, as the *Arevelyan Mamul* daily stated in an editorial on 11 November 1921, the Armenian community in Cilicia acknowledged that the French government 'flawlessly played the role of Judas' and 'betrayed the Armenian nation'.

This chapter has put forward the idea that the political position of the Armenian community in Cilicia was pro-Allied; thus, their political position was the same as that of the Armenian communities in Izmir and Istanbul. In this way, while this chapter supports the narrative of the Armenian political position outlined in the previous chapters, it also highlights the beginning of a shift in this position. As argued above, the Armenians in Cilicia acknowledged that the French authorities betrayed them and left the region to the Turks. This increasing anger toward the French government affected the level of support the Armenians demonstrated toward the Entente, and it inaugurated a change in the Ottoman Armenians' political position.

The Cilician Armenians who managed to survive the wartime massacres and return to their native lands saw an opportunity to restore security in their towns. They believed a semblance of their former lives could be restored through independence, thus assuming a pro-Allied stance. As scholars of other minorities in such circumstances suggest, the Ottoman Armenians too were engaged in what is known as the theory of ethnic bargaining.

The next chapter shall discuss how the pro-Entente approach of the Ottoman Armenians transformed into a pro-Turkish one following the abandonment of Cilicia and the victories of the Turkish National movement in Anatolia.

CHAPTER VII

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE ARMENIAN POLITICAL POSITION: THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TURKISH-ARMENIAN ASCENT ASSOCIATION AND THE SUPPORT OF OTTOMAN ARMENIANS FOR THE NATIONALIST GOVERNMENT (OCTOBER 1922-JULY 1923)

7.1. Introduction

As it has been analysed in chapter two, following the signing of the Armistice of Mudros, the Ottoman Armenian community supported the Allied Powers and the Armenian state established in the Caucasus. As news of the signing of the Armistice of Mudros spread through the capital, Armenians rushed to the streets to celebrate the surrender of the Ottoman Empire. Christian minorities of the Ottoman Empire greeted each other in Pera with the phrase, ‘Christ is risen [from the dead]!’ to celebrate the signing of the Armistice.⁷⁰³ For the Ottoman Armenians, the signing of the Armistice of Mudros was a sign of salvation after the wartime massacres. Many Armenians believed that after the sacrifices their nation had made for the Allies, they would be permitted to establish an independent Armenian state in Anatolia and hold accountable the Ottoman officials who engineered and orchestrated the Armenian deportations, which resulted in the annihilation of nearly half of the world’s Armenian population. To this end, as it has been demonstrated in chapter three, the Ottoman Armenians established an alliance with the Greeks, who were motivated to establish Greek rule in Istanbul, Izmir, and western Anatolia, together with an independent

⁷⁰³ *Verchin Lur*, Այսօրուան խանդավառութիւնը [Today’s Enthusiasm], 1 November 1918, no. 1407.

state in the Pontus area. Furthermore, as we have seen in chapter five, the Ottoman Armenians supported the Armenian state in their fight against the Turkish Nationalists by sending volunteers to the Caucasus and organising donation campaigns to finance and provide material aid to the Armenian army. When the French forces occupied the Cilicia region, as it has been analysed in chapter six, the Ottoman Armenian refugees—those who had been forcefully deported from their native villages in various regions of Anatolia and had survived the massacres—were able to return home. The French occupation received broad support from both Armenians from the region as well as those from Istanbul and Izmir, as all shared the hope that the French would allow the establishment of an Armenian state in the Cilicia region. However, neither the French nor the British supported the Armenians in Cilicia or the Caucasus in their struggle against the Nationalists. When the Allied Powers were asked to send military aid to the Armenian government in the Caucasus, they replied that the Caucasus was located far from the Mediterranean and that it would not be feasible to organise the transportation of military aid.⁷⁰⁴ Furthermore, when the French came to an agreement with the Ankara government, the Armenians they transported to the region from northern Syria at the beginning of the occupation were no longer of any political value to them. Following these developments, the Ottoman Armenians were left with two choices: they could either leave the country, or stay and change their political position from pro-Armenian/pro-Entente to pro-Turkish. It was not only the Armenian state in the Caucasus and the French that lost the war against the Nationalists, but the Greek army in western Anatolia had also been defeated. The Greco-Turkish war, beginning in 1919 with the Greek landing in Izmir and subsequent occupation of cities in western Anatolia, resulted in Turkish victory,

⁷⁰⁴ *Vakit*, 'Ermeni Meselesinin Tasfiye-i Hesabı' [Winding up of the Armenian Question], 27 June 1918, no. 249.

following the offensive of the Nationalist army in 1922.⁷⁰⁵ The Greek defeat in Anatolia by the Nationalist army resulted in another wave of immigration. Many Armenians in Izmir and western Anatolia left their homes after the Greek defeat, in fear of retribution at the hands of Turkish Nationalists.⁷⁰⁶ It is at this juncture that the Ottoman Armenians who remained in Istanbul and Anatolia formed a new pro-Turkish political position.

This chapter will detail the transformation of the political position of the Ottoman Armenians between 1922 and 1923. Given the atmosphere of insecurity, the Ottoman Armenians were left with no choice but to cultivate friendship with the Turkish society. In light of ethnic bargaining theory, I argue that the Ottoman Armenians as a minority group had to accommodate the repressive state since there was no external support. In 1922, there was no state to speak on behalf of the rights of the Ottoman Armenians. Many Ottoman Armenians, fearing that they would face violence, economic boycott, or forced deportation, significantly altered their political position and openly declared their support for the Turkish National movement by establishing the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association and publishing articles promoting a return to friendly Turkish-Armenian relations.

⁷⁰⁵ For the history of the Greco-Turkish War, see G. F. Abbott, *Greece and the Allies, 1914-1922* (London: Methuen & Co., 1922); Michael Smith, *Ionian Vision: Greece in Asia Minor, 1919-1922* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999); Erik Goldstein, 'Great Britain and Greater Greece 1917-1920', *The Historical Journal* 32, no. 2 (1989): pp. 339-56; Eleftheria Daleziou, 'Britain and the Greek-Turkish War and Settlement of 1919-1923: The Pursuit of Security By "Proxy" in Western Asia Minor' (PhD thesis, University of Glasgow, 2002).

⁷⁰⁶ *Arevelyan Mamul*, Ուր Պիտի Երթան Իզմիրի Հայ Գաղթականները [Where Will the Armenian Refugees of Izmir Go?] 10 May 1922, no. 2851; *Arevelyan Mamul*, Իզմիրի Քրիստոնեաներուն Գոյութիւնը Ապահով Հիմերու Վրայ Դրէք Եւ Ամէն Հաշիւ Կը Փակուի [All Accounts Will Be Closed After You Secure the Existence of Izmir Christians] 16 May 1922; *Ararōd*, 170000 Հոգի Մեկնած են Երէք Ամսուան Մէջ [170,000 People Left in Three Months] 27 November 1922, no. 229.

7.2. The Emergence of a Pro-Turkish Camp Within the Armenian Community

Following the defeat of the Greek army in Anatolia in September 1922, Turkish public perception dramatically turned against the Armenians and Greeks. To the Turkish public, the Armenians and Greeks supported the Allied occupation during the Armistice years by participating in the operations of the Allied forces. Despite the massacres and atrocities suffered by the Armenian community, after the Greco-Turkish War, they found themselves in a position where they were expected to forget the wartime events, find a way of reconciliation with the Turks, and prove their loyalty to the Turkish fatherland if they wished to continue to live within the borders of 'new Turkey'. The view of Turkish intellectuals at the time was that the Armenians had been loyal subjects of the Ottoman state before WWI, but they were persuaded by the Allied Powers to pursue an anti-Turkish campaign by conducting both armed and political struggle against the Turkish nation. The Turkish intellectuals suggested that the Armenians 'lost the game' and that it was time for them to become 'loyal citizens' or to leave the country.⁷⁰⁷ To be clear, loyalty to the Turkish nation meant acknowledging Turkish supremacy, serving the interests of the new Turkish nation by joining the movement of Mustafa Kemal.

Following the retreat of the French forces in Cilicia and the Greek forces in Western Anatolia, the Armenians of Cilicia and Western Anatolia left the country with the French and the Greeks by September 1922. Only the Armenians in Istanbul and those Armenians who were residing in the central Anatolian towns such as Kayseri, Sivas, Yozgat and Konya chose to stay. Rather than expect Ottoman Turkish society to acknowledge the Armenian massacres, the Ottoman Armenians, now most

⁷⁰⁷ *İkdam*, 'Türkler-Ermeniler' [Turks and Armenians] 9 May 1921, no. 8676; *Alemdar*, 'Türk ve Ermeni Münasebeti' [Turkish-Armenian Relations] 24 May 1921, no. 58.

of whom were centred in Istanbul, preferred to forget—or at least not prioritise seeking justice for—the massacres that happened during the war, in order to re-establish Turkish-Armenian relations. In this chapter, we shall see in detail how the majority of the Armenian community who remained in Istanbul and Anatolia in 1922 adopted this attitude at three different points: first, when the Armenian Patriarch Zaven left his post; second, with the establishment of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association; and third, in the responses of the Ottoman Armenians to the efforts to establish an Armenian National Home for the Armenian refugees scattered throughout Syria, Lebanon, and Anatolia.⁷⁰⁸

Following the Greeks' loss on the battlefield against the Nationalist forces, the Armenian community was divided. One group—those who once vigorously defended independence and supported the occupation by Allied forces with the hope of a new independent Armenian state in Anatolia—became disheartened and mostly fled the country. Another group of Armenians within the community—those who opined that supporting the anti-National movement had not brought any good to the Ottoman Armenians—began to lay the groundwork for Turkish-Armenian reconciliation in order to continue living within the borders of Turkey. The prominent Armenian politicians Kapriel Noradunkean and Boghos Nubar, together with the Armenian Patriarch Zaven, were in the first camp. The members of the Turkish-Armenian

⁷⁰⁸ The establishment of an Armenian National Home was proposed by the Armenian delegation during the Lausanne Conference and was supported by the British and Americans as a plan to gather the Ottoman Armenians in an autonomous land within the borders of Turkey. Even though the British and Americans were supportive in the initial stages, neither of them exerted pressure on the Turkish delegation to accept the offer. The Turkish delegation was opposed to the idea and insisted that the Armenians would have equal rights as citizens of the country but that the establishment of a national home was not acceptable. See Lerna Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*, pp. 109-17; Marashlian, 'The Armenian Question from Sèvres to Lausanne: Economics and Morality in American and British Policies, 1920-1923', pp. 711-62; Esat Uras, *The Armenians in History and the Armenian Question* (Ankara: Documentary Publications, 1988), pp. 13-27; Cafer Ulu, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Ermeniler* [Armenians in the Republic of Turkey] (Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi, 2012), pp. 55-84.

Ascent Association and the intellectuals who wrote in dailies such as *Verchin Lur*, *Aṙawōd*, and *Zhoghovurti Tsaynē* belonged to the second camp. On the one hand, the first camp supported the establishment of an Armenian National Home for the Ottoman Armenians in order to secure the continued existence of the cultural, social, and physical life of the community. On the other hand, the second camp, which was formed by the individuals who supported the establishment of Turkish-Armenian friendship, contended that there was no good to be found in the Ottoman Armenians maintaining a pro-Entente position, as allying with them had brought no benefits for the Armenians. Therefore, they proposed that the Ottoman Armenians should ‘become loyal to the Turkish state as they were throughout history’. This camp strongly opposed to the establishment of a national home for the Armenians, and they tried to distance themselves from the first camp by declaring that the first camp did not represent the Ottoman Armenians and was actually influenced by the ‘Western intrigues’. These divisions within the Ottoman Armenian community are reflected in the letters sent to the newspapers by the Armenian religious leaders from central Anatolia. For instance, the Armenian bishop of Mamuretülaziz granted an interview with the *Vakit* daily, in which he strongly protested the political stance of Patriarch Zaven. According to the bishop, the Armenians in Anatolia lived in peace and prosperity under the Nationalist administration and had never established alliances with the Greeks in the manner the Patriarch had claimed. He highlighted, ‘We, the Anatolian Armenians, want to let Zaven Efendi know that we found great happiness under the protection of the Nationalist governance and we are sure that it will last for good’.⁷⁰⁹

⁷⁰⁹ *Vakit*, ‘Anadolu Ermenilerinden Zaven Efendi’ye Cevap’ [Answer of Anatolian Armenians to Zaven Efendi] 1 June 1922, no. 1606. ‘... Biz Zaven Efendiye diyoruz ki Anadolu

In addition to his statements to the press, the bishop of Mamuretülaziz published an article in which he claimed that the Armenian community in the region lived in prosperity under the Nationalist administration and that the foreign states should stop intervening in the internal affairs of Turkey. Similarly, prominent members of the Armenian community in Malatya, such as Bishop Sdepan Azarean, Hacı Agop Gēōziwbekean, Krikor Matakean, and Sarkis Kurkushean, signed a declaration which stated that ‘the truehearted and great Turkish nation’ provided protection for the native Armenians and the reports that the Christians were oppressed under the Nationalist administration were false.⁷¹⁰

Importantly, the rhetoric of the political position of the Ottoman Armenians living in Anatolia and Istanbul overlapped with that of a group of pro-Nationalist Romioi. Pavlos Karahisarithis—a Greek Orthodox bishop from Akdağmağden, Yozgat—led the pro-Turkish movement among the Romioi community in Anatolia. Pavlos Karahisarithis, who later took the name Papa Eftim, revealed that the Romioi community in Anatolia was living on welfare under the administration of Mustafa Kemal. He claimed that those Greeks who occupied Izmir and western Anatolia were traitors influenced by the ‘foreign intrigues’. The movement of Papa Eftim resonated among the Romioi community, with more than seventy other Orthodox clerics declaring their support for him.⁷¹¹ During the Greco-Turkish War, he founded the Turkish Orthodox Church and soon gained considerable support from the Romioi in Anatolia. For instance, in a telegram written by Papa Atanas on behalf of the Romioi

Ermenileri bugün en büyük saadetlerini hükümet-i milliyenin aguş-u himaye ve sahabetinde buluyorlar ve ebediyen bulacaklarına emindirler’.

⁷¹⁰ *İleri*, ‘Anadolu Rum ve Ermeni Cemaatlerinin Protestosu’ [The Protests of Armenian and Greek Communities of Anatolia] 4 June 1922, no. 1556.

⁷¹¹ Alexis Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations, 1918-1974* (Athens: Centre for Asia Minor Studies, 1992), p. 151; Foti Benlisoy, ‘Papa Eftim and the Foundation of the Turkish Orthodox Church’ (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2002), pp. 5-6.

community in Samsun, it was underlined that they should accept the authority of the Turkish Orthodox Church but not the Greek Patriarchate in Istanbul. Orthodox Christians of Maçka, Trabzon further wrote in a telegram sent to *Yeni Şark* (New East) that there was no Greek nation in Maçka, that they were all Turkish Orthodox who denounced the Greek Patriarchate.⁷¹² Foti Benlisoy argues that the Romioi communities in Anatolia, scared of forced deportation and conscription, adopted such tactics in order to survive the political turmoil.⁷¹³ Thus, like the Romioi communities in Anatolia, the Armenian communities also adopted such tactics out of fear and anxiety.

In the same interview as quoted above, the Armenian bishop of Mamuretülaziz claimed in an interview with *Vakit* that for more than two years he had not been in communication with the Armenian Patriarchate and that the Patriarchate did not have accurate information about the current situation of Armenians in Anatolia.⁷¹⁴ In a similar manner, the Armenian Catholic bishop of Ankara, Nerses Baghdikian, said that the Ankara government approached all citizens equally and the rights of non-Muslims were protected by the government. He affirmed that the Armenians would not forget ‘the mercy and complaisance’ shown by the Ankara government towards them.⁷¹⁵

Berch Kerestejjean, a prominent member of the Armenian community and the director of the *Osmanlı Bankası* (Ottoman Bank), sent an opinion letter to the American-published *Morning Post* daily, stressing in his arguments that the Armenian

⁷¹² Benlisoy, ‘Papa Eftim and the Foundation of the Turkish Orthodox Church’, p. 28.

⁷¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁷¹⁴ *Vakit*, ‘Anadolu Ermenilerinden Zaven Efendi’ye Cevap’ [Response From The Anatolian Armenians to Zaven Efendi] 1 June 1922, no. 1606.

⁷¹⁵ *Vakit*, ‘Hristiyanların Mezalim İstinadlarını Reddi’ [The Refusal of Christians Regarding the Atrocity Allegations] 5 June 1922, no. 1610.

politicians were influenced by the Western Powers into pursuing ‘wrong politics’.⁷¹⁶

He underlined:

The Armenians have become the victims of the European diplomacy for the last forty years. After the Russo-Turkish War, Russians instigated Armenians against Turks, which brought about a disastrous consequence for them. During the Great War and its aftermath, the British and American politicians tried hard to use Armenians as a vehicle in causing troubles to Turks. Dissecting here how the destitute Armenian nation, who for centuries had managed to get along with Turks, suffered grand agony and shattered in great numbers because of some political extremists who had attached needless importance to political discourses and become tools for politicians, would take extremely long.⁷¹⁷

⁷¹⁶ Berch Kerestejjean (Türker) was born in 1870 in Istanbul. He first attended Galatasaray Lycee, a French-language public school and later transferred to Robert College, an American private school. After graduation, he served for two years at the Ministry of Finance and was later employed by the Ottoman Bank. He was the co-founder of the Ottoman Red Crescent, which was established in 1911. During WWI, he became the general manager of the Ottoman Bank. During the Armistice years, he actively participated in the National movement by organising aid campaigns through the Ottoman Red Crescent and by providing loans to the Nationalists through his position at the bank. Following the surname reform, Mustafa Kemal gave the family name Türker (Turk man) for his patriotism and support to the Nationalist case. For further information on his biography, see Semi Ertan, ‘An Armenian at the Turkish Parliament in the Early Republican Period: Berç Türker-Keresteciyan (1870-1949)’ (MA thesis, Sabancı University, 2005).

⁷¹⁷ As reported in *İkdam*, ‘Türkler ve Ermeniler’ [Turks and Armenians] 17 December 1922, no. 9250. ‘Ermeniler son kırk sene zarfında Avrupa diplomasisinin kurbanı olmuşlardır. Rus-Türk Harbi’nden sonra Rusya Ermenileri Türklerin aleyhine tahrik etmiş ve neticesi Ermeniler için gayet felaketli olmuştur. Harb-ı Umumi esnasında ve badelharb İngiliz ve Amerika politikacıları Ermeniler vasıtasıyla Türklere gaile çıkarmak için ellerinden geleni yapmışlardır. Asırlardan beri Türklerle iyi geçinmiş olan biçare Ermeni milletinin kendi aralarında yetişen bir takım avareser müfritlerin siyasi nutuklara fazla ehemmiyet vermeleri ve politikacıların ellerinde alet olmaları yüzünden ne müdhiş ızdırabata duçar olduğunu ve nasıl yarı yarıya kırıldığını burada teşrih etmek pek uzun olur’.

7.3. The Beginning of the Lausanne Conference



Figure 12. The Participants of the Lausanne Conference (*Ararōd*, 24 April 1922)

The Lausanne Conference opened in November 1922 with the participation of British, French, Italian, and Turkish representatives. In what amounted to a blow from the Entente, Armenian politicians were not invited to participate in the Conference. Beforehand, the Turkish delegation had protested the attendance of the Armenian delegation, submitting that if the Armenians were permitted to express their ambitions, then the Turks would seek the participation of delegations from the Muslim communities in Bulgaria, Greece, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Iraq, India, Tunisia, Libya, Serbia, and Romania. Participation of the Armenian delegation would

be considered by the Turkish state as interference with its own internal affairs.⁷¹⁸ The discussions were held under three sub-commissions: territorial and military questions, financial and economic questions, and the legal status of foreigners in Turkey.

Even though the Armenians were officially denied participation in the discussions, two Armenian committees were present at Lausanne, one representing the Armenian government established in the Caucasus and the other representing the Ottoman Armenians.⁷¹⁹ However, it should be noted here that the members of the Ottoman Armenian Delegation were those who fled the country following the victory of the Turkish National movement and the Armenians who stayed in Turkey urged them not to speak on behalf of the Ottoman Armenians. At Lausanne, the Ottoman Armenian delegation set out with four primary aims: firstly, to receive the right of exemption from military service for the Armenians in Turkey; secondly, a general pardon for Armenians; thirdly, an exchange of populations; and finally, the establishment of an Armenian National Home.⁷²⁰ While the Armenian delegations were not granted permission to attend the discussions, a very brief opportunity was presented to them to express their requests at a minorities sub-committee meeting, which lasted for one hour and ten minutes.⁷²¹ The Armenian committee, representing the Ottoman Armenians at Lausanne, proposed the establishment of an Armenian National Home for the Armenians in an area totalling 17,000 km² in the regions of

⁷¹⁸ *Tanin*, ‘İsmet Paşa Hazretlerinin Baş Muharririmize Beyanatı’ [Statement of İsmet Pasha to Our Editor in Chief] 28 December 1922, no. 76; *Tevhid-i Efkar*, ‘Ermeni Heyetinin İstimai Meselesinde’ [Regarding Hearing the Armenian Delegation] 31 December 1922, no. 3590.

⁷¹⁹ *Jagadamard*, Հայկական Զոյգ Պատուիրակութիւններու Գործունէութիւնը Լօզանի Մէջ [The Activities of the Two Armenian Delegations in Lausanne] 21 December 1922, no. 1251; Ulu, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’nde Ermeniler*, [Armenians in the Republic of Turkey] p. 58.

⁷²⁰ *Jagadamard*, Հայ Պատուիրակներու Պահանջները [Demands of the Armenian Delegations] 29 December 1922, no. 1258.

⁷²¹ Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*, p. 90. Marashlian, ‘The Armenian Question from Sèvres to Lausanne: Economics and Morality in American and British Policies, 1920-1923’, pp. 708-12.

Dörtyol, Payas, and Cebel-i Bereket.⁷²² Initially, the Armenian representatives argued that the Armenian National Home could be established in two alternative areas which the Muslim population had deserted during the war: the southern region of Cilicia and the border between Turkey and Armenia, an area comprised of the cities of Kars, Ardahan, and Iğdır.⁷²³

While the discussion on the establishment of an Armenian National Home gained interest in Western circles, the Turkish representatives strongly opposed the idea and registered their diplomatic protest. Rıza Nur, one of the representatives of the Turkish delegation at Lausanne, declared that it was impossible to create ‘an artificial Armenian state’ within the borders of Turkey, seeing as how the Armenians did not have a majority in any area of the country. Thus, the discussions revolving around the National Home were nothing but ‘the intrigues of the Western Powers’.⁷²⁴ It is noteworthy that following the statements of Rıza Nur, the Armenians in Istanbul and Anatolia also issued statements, which were published in the Turkish and Armenian press, supporting the position of the Ankara government and refuting the need to establish a National Home. For instance, in an article published in *Verchin Lur*, Piwzant K‘ech‘ean, an Armenian intellectual and the publisher of the *Piwzantion* daily in Istanbul for twenty-two years, insisted that the Armenians in Istanbul and Anatolia had no intention to support the efforts of the Armenian delegation in Lausanne in establishing an Armenian state, as they were eager to live under the

⁷²² *Jagadamard*, Հայ Պատուիրակութիւնները Կը Խորհրդակցին [Armenian Delegations Hold Meetings] 5 January 1923, no. 1264.

⁷²³ *Tanin*, ‘Ermeni Murahhaslarının Beyanati’ [The Statements of Armenian Delegates] 31 December 1922, no. 79; Marashlian, ‘The Armenian Question from Sèvres to Lausanne: Economics and Morality in American and British Policies, 1920-1923’, p. 713.

⁷²⁴ *Tevhid-i Efkar*, ‘Ermeni Yurdu Hikayesini Ağızlarına Tıktı!’ [(He) Put the Armenian National Home Story Into Their Mouths!] 8 January 1923, no. 3598; Marashlian, ‘The Armenian Question from Sèvres to Lausanne: Economics and Morality in American and British Policies, 1920-1923’, p. 709.

administration of the Ankara government.⁷²⁵ Similarly, the bishop of Sivas, S. Ajemian, emphasised that the Armenians in Anatolia rejected the idea of an Armenian National Home and the time and energy spent trying to create one was ‘the result of Western intrigues’.⁷²⁶ In addition to the statements of Armenians in Istanbul and Anatolia, the Armenians in the Armenian state in the Caucasus argued that theirs was the only ‘home’ for Armenians.⁷²⁷ It is worth mentioning here that the Armenians in Istanbul and Anatolia published statements against the establishment of the Armenian Home, particularly in the Turkish dailies, to convince the new Turkish government of their positive intentions.



Figure 13. The Armenian Delegation at Lausanne (*Aṙawōd*, 18 April 1923)

⁷²⁵ *Tevhid-i Efkar*, ‘Hala mı Ermeni Yurdu Hikayesi?’ [Still the Armenian National Home Story?] 9 January 1923, no. 3599; *Akşam*, ‘Istanbul Ermenileri Yurt İstemiyorlar’ [Armenians of Istanbul Do Not Want a Home] 9 January 1923, no. 1544.

⁷²⁶ *İkdam*, ‘Ermeni Meselesi’ [The Armenian Question] 3 March 1923, no. 9326.

⁷²⁷ *Akşam*, ‘Hakiki Ermeni Yurduunun Yükselen Sesleri’ [The Rising Sounds of the Real Armenian Home] 18 January 1923, no. 1553.

7.4. The Establishment of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association

While the Ottoman Armenian delegation led by Kapriel Noradunkean worked towards the establishment of a National Home for the Ottoman Armenians, the community centred in Istanbul embarked upon a campaign to build friendship between Turks and Armenians. The Garabetean Society, founded by graduates of the Garabetean School in 1919 following the Erzurum and Sivas congresses, called a general meeting on 24 December 1919. The members decided to change the name of the Society to *Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti* (Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association), with the aim of re-establishing friendship between the ‘two brother nations’.⁷²⁸ As its first order of business, the Association sent a telegram to the Turkish delegation at Lausanne, stating that the Ottoman Armenians were eager to find prosperity and the continued protection of their minority rights under the administration of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey.⁷²⁹ Mustafa Kemal, the leader of the Turkish National movement, upon receiving the news regarding the establishment of the Association, stated in a telegram:

⁷²⁸ Malhasyan, ‘Istanbul’da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri’ [The Activities of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association: Istanbul, 1922] pp. 14-20; Ulu, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’nde Ermeniler*, [Armenians in Republic of Turkey] pp. 82-83; Ertan, ‘An Armenian at the Turkish Parliament in the Early Republican Period: Berç Türker-Keresteciyan (1870-1949)’, pp. 58-61; Ar, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri Çerçevesinde Ermeni Meselesi (1918-1923)*, [The Armenian Question Within the Framework of Turkish-American Relations] pp. 361-62; Mim Kemal Öke, *The Armenian Question* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2001), pp. 210-11.

⁷²⁹ Ekmekçiöglü, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*, p. 110; Ertan, ‘An Armenian at the Turkish Parliament in the Early Republican Period: Berç Türker-Keresteciyan (1870-1949)’, pp. 59-60; Ar, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri Çerçevesinde Ermeni Meselesi (1918-1923)*, [The Armenian Question Within the Framework of Turkish-American Relations] pp. 361-62; Öke, *The Armenian Question*, pp. 210-11. *Tevhid-i Efkar*, ‘Türkiye Ermenilerinin İsmet Paşaya Telgrafı’ [A Telegram of Turkish-Armenians to İsmet Pasha] 29 December 1922, no. 3588.

By wishing success and especially addressing those young friends, I suggest to them to give up investing much hope in the centuries-long ideas of foreign intervention under the pretext of the Eastern Question, and become sincere, patriotic citizens of Turkey.⁷³⁰

After the establishment of the Association, the Turkish press did not seem to welcome the efforts of Turkish Armenians in developing friendship between the two nations. *Tevhid-i Efkar* titled its editorial ‘They Are Late’, writing, ‘Where were the minds of Armenians for the last three years? Do they think that we forgot what they have done?’⁷³¹ Furthermore, *İkdam* urged the Armenians in Istanbul and Anatolia to cut their ties with the Armenians in the diaspora.⁷³²

While, on the one hand they try to establish a friendship, receiving a letter of guaranty from Mustafa Kemal Pasha, on the other hand, they create such controversies. It is a possibility that there is no correlation between the Armenians in Istanbul, who wish to recreate their former relations, and Armenians in Europe, working against Turks. However, having two parties, two venues like this is an evil situation. This would increase nothing but the suspicion towards the Armenians.⁷³³

The Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association published a booklet titled ‘Armenians of Turkey’ during the beginning of the Lausanne Conference in order to show that the Turkish Armenians supported the Ankara government and that their aim

⁷³⁰ Sirvart Malhasyan, ‘İstanbul’da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri’, [The Activities of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association: Istanbul, 1922] pp. 41-42. *Akşam*, ‘Türkler ve Ermeniler’ [Turks and Armenians] 1 January 1923, no. 1526. *İkdam*, ‘Türklerle Ermeniler’ [Turks and Armenians] 1 January 1923, no. 9235. ‘... Muvaffakiyetlerini temenni eyler ve bilhassa hitab ettiğim genç arkadaşların Şark meselesi namı altında asırlardan beri vukubulmuş olan her nevi müdahalat-ı hariciye fikirlerinden mücanib samimi Türkiye vatanperverleri olmalarını tavsiye ederim efendim’.

⁷³¹ Malhasyan, ‘İstanbul’da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri’, [The Activities of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association: Istanbul, 1922], p. 62.

⁷³² *İkdam*, ‘Ekaliyetler, Ermeniler’ [Minorities, Armenians] 30 December 1922, no. 9263.

⁷³³ *İkdam*, ‘Ermenilere Nasihat’ [Advices to Armenians] 12 January 1923, no. 9676. ‘Halbuki bir taraftan dostluklara teşebbüs ediyorlar, Mustafa Kemal Paşa’dan bir teminatname alıyorlar, diğer taraftan da böyle ihtilaflar tevellüd ediyorlar. İhtimal ki İstanbul’da eski rabıtayı korumak isteyen Ermeniler ile Avrupa’da teşebbüste bulunan Ermeniler arasında münasebet yoktur. Ancak böyle iki fırka, iki teşebbüs gayet fena bir vaziyettir. Bu hal Ermeniler hakkında şüpheyi tezyid etmekten başka bir şeye yaramaz’.

was to promote the Turkish-Armenian relationship.⁷³⁴ However, the reluctance of the Turkish press and public opinion to accept the sincerity of the Turkish Armenians continued.⁷³⁵



Figure 14. Reception of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association (*Verchin Lur*, 21 July 1923)

⁷³⁴ Lerna Ekmekçioğlu, ‘Kalanlar: Savaş Sonrasında ve Tek Parti Döneminde İstanbul Ermeni Cemaati’, [Remnants: The Armenian Community of Istanbul in the Post-War and One-Party Period] in *1915: Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım*, ed. Fikret Adanır and Oktay Özel (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2015), p. 556.

⁷³⁵ *Tevhid-i Efkar*, ‘Ermenilerin Vaziyeti’ [The Situation of Armenians] 2 January 1923, no. 3592. ‘... İstanbul Ermenilerinin büyük bir kısmı Mütareke esnasında haysiyet-i milliyemizi rencide edecek teşebbüsattan geri durmamışlardı. Rumlar kadar değilse de onlar da çok şeyler yaptılar. Küçük bir kısmı da terbiyelerini muhafaza ettiler... Fakat bir Ermeni-Türk teali cemiyeti teşkili ve Lozan Konferansı’na bu cemiyet tarafından bir telgraf keşidesi, Ermenilerin artık Türklerle hakikaten dost geçinmeğe karar verdiklerini isbata kafi midir? Bütün İstanbul Ermenileri Türklerle iyi geçinmek istiyorlar mı?’

7.5. The Removal of the Patriarch Zaven From His Post

While the Armenian community in Istanbul embarked upon a series of attempts to rebuild the Turkish-Armenian friendship, the pressure on the Armenian Patriarch Zaven was greatest in the capital. Notably, the members of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association strongly opposed the political approach of the Patriarch and demanded his resignation on the grounds that he sided with the Ottoman Armenian delegation at Lausanne. The members thought that if he continued to serve as Patriarch, the efforts of the Armenian community in reaching out to the Turkish society to establish friendly relations would be wasted. They argued that the Patriarch had been actively involved in politics during the Armistice years, during which time he acted against the Turkish interests.

When Refet Pasha came to Istanbul in November 1922, Patriarch Zaven paid a visit to personally welcome him. Nonetheless, it was reported that Refet Pasha requested the Patriarch's resignation from Berch Kerestejjean in order to normalise the Turkish-Armenian relationship.⁷³⁶ Tensions against the Patriarch peaked when on 29 November the Turkish dailies reported that Armenian revolutionaries had arrived in Istanbul to covertly assassinate Nationalist leaders. Following this news, a group of Armenians, led by Harutyun Mosdijean, visited the Patriarch and demanded his resignation.⁷³⁷ This group wanted Patriarch Zaven to leave his post because his political activities during the Armistice period had harmed Turkish-Armenian relations. Yet, Patriarch Zaven responded that he had devoted himself to rebuilding

⁷³⁶ Sirvart Malhasyan, 'İstanbul'da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri', [The Activities of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association: Istanbul, 1922] p. 15. Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*, p. 87.

⁷³⁷ Sirvart Malhasyan, 'İstanbul'da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri', [The Activities of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association: Istanbul, 1922] p. 16.

the Turkish-Armenian friendship and had served the Ankara government loyally.⁷³⁸ He refused to resign, insisting he would do so only following an official decision from the Armenian National Assembly. The Armenian National Assembly gathered to discuss the issue, but with only twenty-eight members present, there was no quorum, and thus conducting a vote was impossible. However, the majority of those present supported a call for the Patriarch's resignation.⁷³⁹ Patriarch Zaven left Istanbul on 9 December 1922 without having tendered his resignation.⁷⁴⁰ The strongest candidates for the patriarchal *locum tenens* position were thought to be Hovhannes Arsharuni, the previous patriarch; Eskpean, the bishop of Izmit; Karekin Khachadurean, the bishop of Trabzon; and Gabriel Jevahirjjean, the previous patriarch's deputy. Surprisingly, though, Bishop Kevork Arslanean was elected on 20 December as patriarchal locum tenens. He was aided by members who supported the establishment of friendly relations with the Turks and the Ankara government.⁷⁴¹

⁷³⁸ *Akşam*, 'Ermeni Patrikhanesinde' [At the Armenian Patriarchate] 6 December 1922, no. 1510; *İkdam*, 'Ermeni Patriğinin İstifa Niyeti' [The Resignation Intent of the Armenian Patriarch] 7 December 1922, no. 9240.

⁷³⁹ *Akşam*, 'Ermeni Patrikhanesinde' [At the Armenian Patriarchate] 10 December 1922, no. 1514.

⁷⁴⁰ *Akşam*, 'Ermeni Patriği Zaven de İstanbul'dan Kaçtı' [The Armenian Patriarch Zaven Also Fled From Istanbul] 13 December 1922, no. 1517; *Akşam*, 'Zaven Çekildi' [Zaven Stood Back] 11 December 1922, no. 1515; *İkdam*, 'Ermeni Patriği Zaven Kaçtı Gitti' [The Armenian Patriarch Zaven Ran Away] 13 December 1922, no. 9246; *Tevhid-i Efkar*, 'Patrik de Kaçtı!' [The Patriarch Also Fled!] 13 December 1922, no. 3572; 75. *Yılda Türkiye Ermenileri* (Istanbul: Türkiye Ermenileri Cemaati 75.Yıl Tertip Heyeti, 1998), p. 3.

⁷⁴¹ *Tevhid-i Efkar*, 'Zaven Efendi İstifa Etti' [Zaven Efendi Resigned] 11 December 1922, no. 3570; Sirvart Malhasyan, 'İstanbul'da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri', [The Activities of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association: Istanbul, 1922] p. 17; Tuğlacı, *Tarih Boyunca Batı Ermenileri 1891-1922* [The Western Armenians Throughout History 1891-1922], p. 856; *Tevhid-i Efkar*, 'Ermeni Patrikliği: Arslanyan Efendi Patrik Kaymakamı Oldu' [The Armenian Patriarchate: Arslanyan Efendi Elected as Locum Tenens] 21 December 1922, no. 3580; *Jağadamard*, 21 December 1922, no. 1251.



Figure 15. Bishop Kevork Arslanean (*Aṙawōd*, 1 January 1923)

7.6. The Activities of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association

Following the departure of Patriarch Zaven from Istanbul, the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association increased its activities in promoting Turkish-Armenian friendship. Besides political activities, the Association engaged in numerous charity works, such as providing scholarships for both Turkish and Armenian high school and university students, opening a clinic to provide treatment for Turkish and Armenian patients, and

publishing works detailing the shared history and culture of Turks and Armenians.⁷⁴² Furthermore, they offered all levels of Turkish lessons for any Armenian men and women who were interested.⁷⁴³ The Association even planned to construct an accommodation centre for university students at Darülfünun (later to be renamed Istanbul University), which was to include conference halls, sport fields, and libraries, but the project never came to fruition due to lack of funds.⁷⁴⁴

At the Association's inaugural meeting, the members, especially the Armenians, enthusiastically voiced their genuine sentiments on the beginning of a new friendship.⁷⁴⁵ Berch Kerestejjean, taking the floor in the meeting, said:

God loves the people living in this country so much that he granted this country to us. Since the constitution of the state, there has been an indestructible friendship between our ancestors. However, within the last 40 years, European politicians have used Armenians as a tool and sown seeds of intrigue between these two elements.

He then concluded his words with the following sentence, stuttering and with tears in his eyes:

Armenians, taking courage from the letter of Commander-in-chief Mustafa Kemal Pasha, plead to the Grand National Assembly of Turkey to show grace in taking the Armenians under its protection!⁷⁴⁶

⁷⁴² Sirvart Malhasyan, 'İstanbul'da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri', [The Activities of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association: Istanbul, 1922] p. 42.

⁷⁴³ Ibid., p. 61; *Aṙawōd*, Թուրք Եւ Հայ Բարձրագոյն Միութիւնը [Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association] 11 June 1923, no. 90.

⁷⁴⁴ *İkdam*, 'Türk Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti' [The Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association] 9 November 1923, no. 9556; Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*, p. 110.

⁷⁴⁵ *Tanin*, 'Türk Ermeni Muhadenet Cemiyeti' [The Turkish-Armenian Friendship Association] 10 January 1923, no. 94.

⁷⁴⁶ *İkdam*, 'Türklerle Ermeniler Arasında Muhadenet Yolunda' [Between Turks and Armenians on the Road for Friendship] 15 January 1923, no. 9279. 'Allah bu memlekette yaşayan halkı o kadar sever ki bize burasını bahşetti. Ta hükümetimizin bidayet-i tesisinden beri iki anasır ecdadı arasında kırılmaz bir samimiyet vardır. Fakat son kırk sene zarfında

On 30 March 1923, the Association organised a tea social in honour of the representatives of the Turkish press and prominent members of the Turkish community, such as Ziya Bey, mayor of Istanbul; Asım Bey, kaymakam of Pera; Celal Bey, former governor of Konya; Necmeddin Sadık Bey, director of *Akşam*; Ahmed Emin Bey, editor-in-chief of *Vatan*; Şükrü Bey, director of *Tercüman*; and Mehmet Asım (Us), director of *Vakit*.⁷⁴⁷ In addition, many prominent members of the Armenian community, such as Kevork Arslanean, the patriarchal locum tenens; Harutyun Mosdijean, president of the *Cismani Meclis* (Civil Council); Berch Kerestejjean, director of the Ottoman Bank; Sdepan Gurdikean, scholar of Turkish, Persian, and Arabic; Sdepan Karaean, professor at Darülfunun; Kevork Torkomean, principal and faculty head of the technical school focused on silk production in Bursa; and Levon Topalean and Simon Kayserlean, businessmen, attended the event. The event opened with remarks by Berch Kerestejjean:

I am sure that you will all appreciate the endeavours of our Association in removing the coldness and misunderstandings that occurred lately between the two brother nations living in Turkey for centuries. Indeed, one of the brothers took the wrong path and followed political aspirations which had upset the big brother, the protector, causing great difficulties. Therefore, by understanding his complete mistake, he now wishes to embrace his big brothers.⁷⁴⁸

Avrupa politikacıları Ermenileri kendilerine bir alet ittihaz ettiler ve bu iki unsurun arasına fesat tohumları ektiler. Ermeniler, kumandan-ı müfahhim Mustafa Kemal Paşa Hazretleri'nin iltifatname-i samilerinden de cesaretyab olarak istirham ediyorlar ki, Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi Ermeni cemaatini de taht-ı himayesine alma lütfunu gösterebilirsin!

⁷⁴⁷ *İkdam*, 'Türk Ermeni Cemiyeti' [The Turkish-Armenian Association] 31 March 1923, no. 9354.

⁷⁴⁸ *Jagadamard*, Թուրքեւիայ Բարձրացման Միութեան Թեյասեղանը [The Tea Event of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association] 31 March 1923, no: 1336. 'Վստահ եմ թէ ամէնքդ ալ պիտի գնահատէք այն ջանքերը, զորս կը թափէ մեր միութիւնը փարատելու համար դարերէ ի վեր Թուրքիոյ մէջ ապրող երկու եղբայր ազգերու միջեւ վերջերս յառաջ եկած թիրիմացութիւնն ու ցրտութիւնը: Արդարեւ, երկու եղբայրներէն մէկը ձեռով մը սխալ ճամբու մը մէջ դրուելով քաղաքականութենէ տարուեցաւ եւ իր մեծ եղբայրն ու պաշտպանը նեղացնելով մեծ դժուարութիւնները

For Kerestejjean, the Armenians, being the ‘little brothers’ of the Turks, had lost their way and had upset their ‘big brother’ and ‘protector’. This framing is important in understanding the reconciliation approach of the Association. Following Kerestejjean, Harutyun Mosdijean took the floor and delivered an impromptu speech:

Turks and Armenians were two nations like flesh and nail, but unfortunately some agonising events created coldness between them. All Armenians wish to help that coldness evaporate, and we hope that the Turks also wish the same, because they are our big brothers. However, the efforts of this Association alone are not enough. The press should also bring its contribution too. Long live Turkey! Long live the noble Turkish nation! Long live the Fatherland! Long live the blood-brothers of this fatherland!⁷⁴⁹

Mosdijean’s proclamations mark the turning point in the political position of the Turkish Armenians. Two primary factors were responsible for this collective change. First, after the disappointments of the Allied Powers during the Turkish-Armenian War in the Caucasus and the French occupation in Cilicia, the Armenians living in Istanbul and Anatolia began to think that there was no advantage in taking a pro-Entente position, but that they would find only pain, economic breakdown, and political turmoil in which many more Armenians could lose their lives. Therefore, the sole viable solution appeared to be becoming friends with the Turks and expressing their loyalty to the Turkish nation. The second reason was economic interest: many

ենթարկուեցաւ: Ասոր համար ան ամբողջովին հասկնալով իր սխալը կը փափաքի գրկախառնուիլ իր մեծ եղբորը հետ:’

⁷⁴⁹ *Jagadamard*, Թուրքեւիայ Բարձրացման Միութեան Թեյասեղանը [The Tea Event of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association], 31 March 1923, no. 1336. ‘... Թուրքերն ու Հայերը միս եւ եղունգի նման երկու ազգեր էին, սակայն կարգ մը ցաւալի դէպքեր անոնց միջեւ ցրտութիւն առաջ բերին: Բոլոր Հայերը կը փափաքին անհետացնել այս ցրտութիւնը, կը հուսանք թէ Թուրքերն ալ նոյն փափաքը ունին, որովհետեւ անոնք մեր մեծ եղբայրներն են: Միայն թէ միմիայն այս Միութեան ջանքերը բաւական չեն: Մամուլն ալ պէտք է օժանդակէ այս գործին: Կեցցէ՛ Թուրքիա, կեցցէ՛ Թուրք ազնիւ ազգը, կեցցէ՛ Հայրենիքը՝, կեցցէ՛ն այս հայրենիքի հարազատ զաւակները:’

Armenians living in Istanbul were not deported during the wartime and were able to keep their businesses open through the Armistice years. Although the Armenian community in Anatolia suffered during the wartime, most of the Armenians in Istanbul were less affected. The bulk of Armenian businessmen and intellectuals were aware of the fact that the Armenian refugees in Greece, Syria, Armenia, and other countries did not live in prosperity; therefore, they decided in self-interest to not disturb the peace. These two reasons motivated the remaining Armenian population in Istanbul to join the activities of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association, and the Association quickly swelled to more than three hundred members.⁷⁵⁰

Besides the representatives of the Ankara government, the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association also established contacts with Caliph Abdülmecid in Istanbul. At a gathering on 18 May 1923 at Tepebaşı Theatre, Caliph Abdülmecid Efendi assigned the West and East Orchestras of the palace to perform at the event alongside the Association's band. A play was also performed during the gathering.⁷⁵¹ On 24 July 1923, the president of the Association, Ömer Aziz Bey, together with the members of the committee—Dikran Der Nersesean, Khachig Svajjean, and Mihran Boyajejan, the former governor of Rodosto—visited Caliph Abdülmecid at Dolmabahçe Palace. Abdülmecid guaranteed the members of the Association that he would provide financial support for their activities. After expressing his support, he stated that the events happening between the two nations were caused by the 'intrigues of the

⁷⁵⁰ Lerna Ekmekçioğlu also highlights that some Armenians lost faith in any European power's sincerity in helping them. They tried to distance themselves from diaspora Armenians and to show themselves as pro-Turkish in order to protect their physical existence. See Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*, pp. 91-110.

⁷⁵¹ Sirvart Malhasyan, 'İstanbul'da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri', [The Activities of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association: Istanbul, 1922] p. 44.

Western Powers' and that the two brother nations would find a way to live in peace again.⁷⁵²

The Association elected a new committee at a meeting in July at the *Sinema Palas* (Cinema Palace) in Pera. During the meeting, it was stated that the Association had three hundred forty four members, who each paid monthly membership fees. The Association was able to collect nine hundred eighteen liras from its members, one thousand one hundred ninety seven liras from monthly gifts, and three hundred ninety four liras from other sources. Expenses of the Association included propaganda (three hundred ninety six liras), payment for pro-Association articles in various newspapers (sixty nine liras), rent for the central office (seven hundred seventy three liras), monthly salaries of the staff (five hundred eight seven liras), as well as assorted expenses related to the opening of new branches.⁷⁵³ Branches of the Association were opened in various districts of Istanbul, including Yenikapı, Kumkapı, Gedikpaşa, Samatya, and Aksaray.⁷⁵⁴ *Verchin Lur* wrote:

We are sure that the members of this newly established committee, who are all well-known and capable individuals, shall serve to promote the Turkish-Armenian relationship and to put an end to some misunderstandings between the two nations.⁷⁵⁵

⁷⁵² *Verchin Lur*, Թուրքեւհայ Բարձրացման Միութիւնը Վեհափառ Խալիֆային Մօտ [The Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association With the Caliphate] 25 July 1923, no. 2859.

⁷⁵³ *Verchin Lur*, Թուրքեւհայ Բարձրացման Միութեան Ընդհանուր Ժողովը [The General Meeting of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association] 7 July 1923, no. 2844.

⁷⁵⁴ *Verchin Lur*, Թուրքեւհայ Բարձրացման Միութեան Ենիքաքու Մասնաճիւղին Ընդհանուր Ժողովը [The General Meeting of the Yenikapı Branch of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association] 1 September 1923, no. 2892.

⁷⁵⁵ *Verchin Lur*, Թուրքեւհայ Բարձրացման Միութեան Ընդհանուր Ժողովը [The General Meeting of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association] 7 July 1923, no. 2844. ‘... Վստահ ենք որ նորընտիր վարչական ժողովը որ կազմուած է ծանօթ ձեռնհաս անձերէ, մեծապէս պիտի սատարէ հայեւթուրք յարաբերութեանց մերձեցման եւ կարգ մը թիրիմացութեանց բարձման:’

‘Promoting the Turkish-Armenian relationship’ and ‘putting an end to the misunderstanding between two nations’ were crucial points for those who supported the position of the Association. Vahram Burmaean, a teacher deported to the Syrian desert, survived the massacres and returned to Istanbul in 1922. In his discussion with the daily, he described the efforts to improve Turkish-Armenian relations as crucial and applaudable, for these two nations had lived together for centuries under mostly friendly terms. He suggested that rather than being an association which placed emphasis on economic relations, the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association should be a bridge between the two nations, addressing their social and political dimensions. He also emphasised that he did not approve the activities of Armenians who were influenced by ‘foreign intrigues, revolutionaries and misunderstandings’.⁷⁵⁶

One of the Association’s significant events was the tea reception for the Istanbul deputies of the Ankara government, as had previously been offered to representatives of the Turkish press.⁷⁵⁷ The deputies who joined the meeting were Reşid Pasha, Hamdullah Suphi, and Ruşen Eşref Bey. The entire committees of the *Türk Ocakları* (Turkish Hearths) and the Association were also present.⁷⁵⁸ Sdepan

⁷⁵⁶ *Verchin Lur*, Թուրքեւհայ Բարձրացման Միութիւնը Եւ Հոգեբանական Թերիւները [The Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association and Its Psychological Defectives], 17 July 1923, no. 2852. ‘... Այն ատեն ոչ արտաքին ազդեցութիւններ, ոչ յեղափոխութիւններ, ոչ թիրիմացութիւններ, ոչ հալածանքներ պիտի կրնային քիմ բռնել: Հրաշքներ պիտի կատարէին այն ատեն Թուրքեւհայ Բարձրացման միութիւններ:... Նախ պէտք է իրարու մօտենալ, յետոյ զիրար բարձրացնել:’

⁷⁵⁷ Sirvart Malhasyan, ‘Istanbul’da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri’, [The Activities of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association: Istanbul, 1922] p. 45.

⁷⁵⁸ *Türk Ocakları* (Turkish Hearths) was established by a group of Nationalist Turkish intellectuals who were mostly attached to the CUP in 1912. Following the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkan Wars and the rise of Turkish nationalism within the political agenda of the CUP, the activities of the *Türk Ocakları* gained momentum across the Empire. Many branches were opened in various cities, and publications such as *Halka Doğru*, *Türk Sözü*, *Yeni Mecmua*, and *Büyük Mecmua* were published by the *Türk Ocakları*. Turkish nationalism was propagated in these publications, and the non-Muslim communities were labelled enemies of the state. For detailed information on the *Türk Ocakları*, see Üngör, *The Making of Modern Turkey: Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia (1913-1950)*, pp. 180-217.

Karaean took the floor during the event and made a speech emphasising the brotherhood between the two nations. He asserted that the events of the last thirty years were products of ‘intrigues of the Armenian revolutionaries who represented only a small portion of the whole nation’. He expressed his gratitude to ‘the victorious Turkish army’ that liberated the country and requested that the Turkish deputies distinguish between the activities of the revolutionaries and ‘the good Armenians’.⁷⁵⁹ Following the remarks of Sdepan Karaean, Hamdullah Suphi responded in his speech that Karaean could speak only for himself and not on behalf of the whole Armenian nation, arguing that the Armenians living abroad were of a different mindset than those living in Istanbul. However, Hamdullah Suphi argued that Armenians and Turks had no other chance than reuniting and coexisting, even though the past could not be forgotten entirely. Along similar lines, Ruşen Eşref insisted that the Armenians outside Turkey thought and acted differently from the Turkish Armenians. He stated that while it was not possible to forget ‘the misdeeds of the Armenians’, the Association would enhance reconciliation. It is evident in the statements of Ruşen Eşref and Hamdullah Suphi that, from the Turkish perspective, the Armenians were responsible for several ‘*fenalıklar*’ (disservices) against the Turkish nation, which the Turks could not easily forgive; therefore, the Armenians should make efforts to ‘win their hearts’. At this point, it is crucial to emphasise the remarks of Mosdijean Efendi, who took the floor following the remarks of Ruşen Eşref. He passionately expounded how the majority of the Armenians in Istanbul and Anatolia did not participate in ‘the destructive activities against the Turkish nation’ but in fact shared the same destiny with their Turkish neighbours:

⁷⁵⁹ *Verchin Lur*, Թուրքեւիայ Բարձրացման Միութեան Երէկի Հաւաքոյթը [Yesterday’s Meeting of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association] 21 July 1923, no. 2856.

It is impossible to separate Armenians from Turks. The coldness between us is a reality, but this shall not stay too long. The Armenians demand nothing but justice and equality. Sure, some Armenians wish to be independent, but the voice of the majority want to attach their fortune and misfortune to the fate of the Turks. Therefore, I kindly ask the dear deputies to spread this idea among their friends during their meetings.⁷⁶⁰

In his concluding remarks, Spedan Karaeian thanked the Turkish deputies for joining the event and sharing their honest remarks. He stressed that the Turkish deputies had shown generosity with their statements, which—while not intended to comfort or persuade the Armenians—were expressed sincerely. Many of the members in the hall shed tears and cried together: ‘Long live the Turkish nation, long live Mustafa Kemal Pasha!’⁷⁶¹

As it is demonstrated in this section, the community leadership, intellectuals and the Armenian press were supporting the establishment of the Turkish-Armenian friendship. It should be noted here that many of them were supporting the Allies before 1922. For instance, as it has been demonstrated in the previous chapters, the Armenian dailies such as *Verchin Lur* and *Piwzantion* published articles supporting the Armenian State in the Caucasus and the Allies. Even the *Jagadamard* daily, an organ of the ARF, published activities of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association. As the theory of ethnic bargaining highlights, when there is no external support, minorities moderate their demands and accommodate the host state. The Ottoman

⁷⁶⁰ *Verchin Lur*, Թուրքեւիայ Բարձրացման Միութեան Երէկի Հաւաքոյթը [Yesterday’s Meeting of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association] 21 July 1923, no. 2856. ‘... Հայը Թուրքէն գատել անկարելի է: Իրաւ է թէ ցրտութիւն մը կայ մէջերնիս, բայց ատիկա երկար չի կրնար տեւել: Հայերու փափաքը արդարութեան եւ հաւասարութեան արժանանալէ տարբեր բան մը չէ: Անշատման փափաքող Հայեր կրնան ըլլալ, բայց մեծամասնութեան ձայնը թուրք ճակատագրին կցել կուզէ թէ իր դժբախտութիւնը եւ թէ իր բախտութիւնը: Հետեւաբար յարգելի երեսփոխաններէն պիտի խնդրէի որ այս մտքով տոգորուին եւ բարեհաճին այս միտքը ներշնչել մեզ չճանչցող իրենց ընկերներուն, երբ անոնց միանան:’

⁷⁶¹ *Verchin Lur*, Թուրքեւիայ Բարձրացման Միութեան Երէկի Հաւաքոյթը [Yesterday’s Meeting of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association] 21 July 1923, no. 2856; Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*, p. 112.

Armenians, similarly to the other minority groups in other states, changed their political position following the disappearance of external support and started to accommodate the newly established Turkish state.

7.7. The End of the Lausanne Conference

While the Armenian community in Istanbul organised activities to promote Turkish-Armenian friendship, the discussions at Lausanne between the delegations were coming to an end. The outcome of the first round of discussions, which took place from November to January, was fruitless, as the Turkish delegation, under the leadership of İsmet Pasha, refused to accept the judicial, financial, and economic terms. Although the Turkish delegation expressed willingness to accept the Straits Convention, the Maritza River frontier in Thrace, the future negotiation regarding Mosul, and the clauses regarding minorities, they would not accept the financial and judicial clauses.⁷⁶² The Lausanne Conference entered a hiatus in January 1923. Even after the Conference paused in January, the Turkish Armenian community continued to pledge its loyalty to the Turkish National movement. Bishop Kevork Arslanean met with Adnan Bey and informed him that ‘the Armenian community wants to live in Turkey with the Turkish brothers by blocking the influence of the foreign intrigues’.⁷⁶³

When Vatslav Vorovsky, a diplomat from the Soviet delegation, was assassinated in May 1923 in Lausanne, the Swiss officials warned the Turkish authorities that, as the head of the delegation, İsmet Pasha could also be a target for

⁷⁶² Suzanne Elizabeth Moranian, ‘The American Missionaries and the Armenian Question’ (The University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1994), pp. 351-52.

⁷⁶³ *İkdam*, ‘Ermeni Patrik Vekili Yeni Konferansta Hiçbir Teşebbüslerinin Olmadığını Söylüyor’ [The Patriarchal Locum Tenens Says They Do Not Have Any Initiatives at the New Conference] 26 April 1923, no. 9379.

assassination by those wishing to disrupt the peace talks.⁷⁶⁴ The Turkish press immediately accused the Armenian revolutionaries of plotting assassinations when rumours of threats against the Turkish delegation spread. The subsequent wave of anger and loathing from the press is illustrated in the Turkish satirical magazine, *Akbaba* (Vulture), which published the following poem:

One eyebrow of İsmet Pasha / Worth one hundred thousand Armenian heads /
You should consider that / All those tears will go to waste / İsmet Pasha is the
moon in the sky / Pull yourself together Baron Hay! / If any of you look at him
disdainfully / My wrath may reserve a share for all of you / . . . / Now I fly
away / By golly, behave well! / Or I would shred your carcasses.⁷⁶⁵

These sentiments published in *Akbaba* reflected the increasing antipathy and hatred towards the Armenians within the Turkish public. Nevertheless, the Conference recommenced in April after three months of uncertainty.⁷⁶⁶ No assassination attempts or plots were reported by the officials. The Turkish delegation managed to convince the Allied Powers to agree to their terms. Regarding minority rights, the Turkish delegation agreed to guarantee the rights to be educated in their native language, to practice their religion freely, and to maintain patriarchates, schools, and charitable organisations for non-Muslim minorities.⁷⁶⁷ However, the request to allow the return of the Armenian refugees to Turkey was not accepted. İsmet Pasha emphatically stated that the Turkish government was ready to welcome

⁷⁶⁴ *Tevhid-i Ekfar*, 'Ermenilerin de İsmet Paşa'ya Bir Suikast Hazırladıkları Tahakkuk Etti' [It Is Proven that the Armenians Prepared an Assassination Plan for İsmet Pasha] 12 May 1923, no. 3760.

⁷⁶⁵ *Akbaba*, 'Akbaba'nın Notası' [Akbaba's Note] 17 May 1923, no. 47; *Arawöd*, 11 June 1923, no. 90. 'İsmet Paşa'nın kaşı, yüz bin Ermeni başı, sonra şunu bilin ki, para etmez göz yaşı. İsmet Paşa gökte ay, kendine gel baron Hay!, biriniz yan bakarsa, topunuza çıkar pay. Size ihtar ederim, şimdi uçar giderim, uslu durun vallahi, leşinizi diderim!'

⁷⁶⁶ Kaye Suzanne Pasley, 'The Collapse of British Imperialism in Turkey 1919 to 1923' (PhD thesis, Mississippi State University, 1998), p. 358.

⁷⁶⁷ Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*, p. 94; Öke, *The Armenian Question*, pp. 204-5.

the ‘innocent’ Armenians who had not been involved in political activities, but the Armenians who acted against the Turkish National movement during the war and Armistice period would not be permitted to return.⁷⁶⁸

Indeed, both the Allied Powers and Turkey protected their economic and territorial self-interests. The Armenian question had produced neither practical nor economic gains for the Entente. Dismayed with the outcome of the discussion on the Armenian National Home, Curzon grabbed İsmet Pasha’s hand while the latter was leaving the meeting hall, asking, ‘My General, do you find this little funeral ceremony for the Armenian question to be excessive?’⁷⁶⁹ The British delegation was well informed by British intelligence regarding the clandestine instructions that the Turkish delegation was receiving from Ankara.⁷⁷⁰ Thus, they were aware of the position of the Turkish delegation on the issues, including the establishment of an Armenian National Home. Ultimately, the Turkish delegation’s strategy for the Armenian topic succeeded, and the word ‘Armenian’ did not appear in the Treaty of Lausanne. After the Treaty was signed, the delegation of the ‘small ally’ of the Entente, the Armenians, conveyed its disappointment to the Allied Powers by sending a protest letter in which they declared the Treaty as fiction.⁷⁷¹ Noradunkean explained:

⁷⁶⁸ *Tanin*, ‘Ermenileri Avdeti Meselesi’ [The Issue of Armenian Repatriation] 9 June 1923, no. 236.

⁷⁶⁹ Marashlian, ‘The Armenian Question from Sèvres to Lausanne: Economics and Morality in American and British Policies, 1920-1923’, p. 742; Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, *Tek Adam: Mustafa Kemal (1922-1938)*, vol. 3 (Istanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2010), p. 109.

⁷⁷⁰ Pasley, ‘The Collapse of British Imperialism in Turkey 1919 to 1923’, p. 359.

⁷⁷¹ Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*, p. 97; Ar, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri Çerçevesinde Ermeni Meselesi (1918-1923)*, [The Armenian Question Within the Framework of Turkish-American Relations] p. 352; Uras, *The Armenians in History and the Armenian Question*, pp. 996-97; Uysal, *The Displacement: Turkish-Armenian Relations Since 1915*, p. 196.

Of course, how could I have known then that from one moment to the next such political conditions would develop, and would cause the Allied governments to forget the lavish promises they had made to the Armenian people during the War.⁷⁷²

When İsmet Pasha and the delegates who attended the Lausanne Conference on behalf of the Turkish government returned to Turkey, prominent members of the Armenian community in Istanbul—including Kevork Arslanean, the patriarchal locum tenens; Harutyun Mosdijean, president of the Civil Council; Sdepan Gurdikean; and Dr. Andre Vahram—welcomed the Turkish delegation in Çatalca and congratulated them for their ‘victorious agreement’ in Lausanne.⁷⁷³ In his speech before İsmet Pasha, Mosdijean underlined:

As stated before on different occasions, the Armenians of Turkey linked their fate to the fate of the Turks. They do not expect anything from anyone. They want to stay with the Turks by preserving the centuries old friendship and advance this precious country by working together with their Turkish compatriots.

Mosdijean awarded a gold medal to İsmet Pasha for his efforts. *Tevhid-i Efkar* noted in an article that during the speech of the Armenian delegation, the Turkish members in the hall ridiculed and laughed at the presentation of the Armenian members.⁷⁷⁴

The pro-Turkish approach of the Turkish Armenian community reached its peak in the early years of the Republic of Turkey. As that period is beyond the scope

⁷⁷² Marashlian, ‘The Armenian Question from Sèvres to Lausanne: Economics and Morality in American and British Policies, 1920-1923’, p. 754.

⁷⁷³ Ulu, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’nde Ermeniler*, [Armenians in the Republic of Turkey] p. 84; 75. *Yıldı Türkiye Ermenileri*, p. 3.

⁷⁷⁴ *Tevhid-i Efkar*, ‘Murahaslarımıza Huduttan İstanbul’a Kadar Fevkalade Samimi ve Coşkun Tezahürat Yapıldı’ [Our Delegates Were Welcomed with Enthusiastic Demonstrations] 11 August 1923, no. 3806. ‘... Başka vesilelerle de arz ve izah edilmiş olduğu üzere Türkiye Ermenileri kendi mukadderatlarını Türk mukadderatına rabt etmişlerdir. Hiçbir taraftan hiçbir şey beklemezler. Daima Türklerle muhadenet-i kadime dairesinde yaşamak ve Türk vatandaşlarıyla birlikte bu vatan-ı azizin tealisine çalışmak arzusundadırlar’.

of this study, I will use a few select examples to illustrate how the collective position of the Armenians further developed towards this political position. In August 1924, the Association submitted a petition to İsmet Pasha that the Armenian community wished to waive its minority rights, designated by the Treaty of Lausanne. The public announcement of the Association read:

We are proud of living in Turkey and under the glorious flag of the Turkish Republic. The Turkish Republic will not treat us as foster children, like the Ottoman government did. Showing exemplary behaviour, it treats us as its own children. Our government will not allow the foreigners to intervene in our internal affairs. Turkish Armenians have no complaints about the Turkish Republic, which treats all its subjects equally. We kindly ask you [foreign powers] to leave us in peace. Turkish Armenians have no longer need for your protection and intervention. If you want to serve humanity, we suggest you serve the refugees you have.⁷⁷⁵

Following the declaration of the Republic, in parallel with the political developments within Turkey, Turkish Armenians also became ardent supporters of the Turkish National movement.⁷⁷⁶ For instance, *Aṙawōd* published a portrait of Mustafa Kemal on its first page, with a caption reading, ‘The respectable president of the Republic of Turkey: Gazi Mustafa Kemal Pasha, for whom each Armenian has unalterable respect and on whom an unlimited reliance’.⁷⁷⁷ On 26 December 1924, the opening ceremony of the Pera branch of the Association started with the ‘March of

⁷⁷⁵ Sirvart Malhasyan, ‘İstanbul’da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri’, [The Activities of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association: Istanbul, 1922] p. 52. ‘... Biz Türkiye’de ve Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’nin görkemli bayrağı altında yaşamaktan gurur duyuyoruz. Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Osmanlı İdaresi gibi Ermenileri üvey evlat saymayacaktır. Dünyaya örnek olacak bir adaletle bize gerçek evlatları gibi muamele etmektedir. Cumhuriyet hükümetimiz bundan sonra yabancıların işlerimize müdahale etmesine izin vermeyecektir. Türkiye Ermenilerinin, bütün tebaalarına eşit haklar bahşeden Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’nden hiçbir şikayeti yoktur. Bizi rahat bırakmanızı rica ediyoruz. Türkiye Ermenilerinin artık sizin korumanıza ve müdahalenize ihtiyacı yoktur. Eğer insanlığa hizmet etmek istiyorsanız, kendi göçmenlerinize hizmet etmenizi tavsiye ediyoruz’.

⁷⁷⁶ Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*, pp. 106-17.

⁷⁷⁷ *Aṙawōd*, Կազմի Մուրաբաֆա Քէմալ Փաշա [Veteran Mustafa Kemal Pasha] 26 October 1924, no. 166.

Sakarya’, the lyrics of which praised the victory of the Turkish army against the Greeks, as well as the leader of the movement, Mustafa Kemal.⁷⁷⁸ The growing support for the pro-Turkish position of the Turkish Armenians could perhaps be best illustrated by the example of Dr. Yaghubean, who, in an interview with *Akşam*, stressed that the Turkish Armenians wanted to be ‘pure Turks’ and to continue living with Turks fraternally.⁷⁷⁹



Figure 16. The portrait of Mustafa Kemal (*Aravōd*, 26 October 1924)

⁷⁷⁸ Sirvart Malhasyan, ‘Istanbul’da 1922 Yılında Kurulan Türk-Ermeni Teali Cemiyeti ve Faaliyetleri’, [The Activities of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association: Istanbul, 1922] p. 52.

⁷⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

7.8. Conclusion

When we consider the characteristics of the Armenian political position during the Armistice period, especially before 1922, we see that the Ottoman Armenians were pro-Allied and pro-Armenian independence. However, as detailed in this chapter, the Ottoman Armenians began to change their viewpoint towards one of reconciliation and friendship with the newly formed Turkish government, especially after experiencing disappointments caused by the Allied Powers in Cilicia and in the Caucasus, as well as the defeat of the Greek army in Anatolia, which signalled the Turkish National movement's complete control of the country. Armenian dailies—such as *Verchin Lur*, *Zhoghovurti Tsaynē*, and *Aṛawōd*—published articles promoting the importance of Turkish-Armenian friendship. A new Armenian intellectual/bourgeoisie group who believed that the salvation of the Armenians was closely linked to the fate of Turkey emerged within the community. This school of thought, together with the help of the Armenian dailies, created a new discourse in the Ottoman Armenians' position. The Ottoman Armenians started to identify themselves as *Türk Ermenisi* (Turkish Armenians). They blamed the Armenian diaspora, claiming that it 'worked with the Western Powers' to 'harm the Turkish state'. They created a new rhetoric in which they labelled the Armenians who lived outside of Turkey as being 'a vehicle serving the Western intrigues'. It is clear from the sources employed in this chapter that the Ottoman Armenians pursued a different set of politics after the defeats of the Greek army and the Armenian state. At this moment, the Ottoman Armenians changed their political position and agreed to accommodate the ruling Nationalist government, a strategic move to protect the existence of the community at a time of political uncertainty and insecurity. The members of the

Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association and the Armenian Patriarchate referenced ‘the perceived past friendship’ between Turks and Armenians when approaching Turkish politicians, intellectuals, and society. Nonetheless, the Turkish authorities demanded that the Armenian community prove its loyalty toward the Turkish people; otherwise, as Rıza Nur and İsmet Pasha underscored in their statements, there was ‘no room’ for Armenians in new Republic of Turkey. In turn, the Armenians who remained in Istanbul embarked upon a vigorous campaign to indeed prove their loyalty to the Turkish National movement and the principles of the Republic.

This chapter demonstrated how the political position of the Ottoman Armenians changed in 1922-1923 when there was no state, thus no ‘external support’ left in the political field to defend the rights of the Ottoman Armenians. The Armenian state in the Caucasus was defeated and forced to sign agreements with the Ankara government and the Soviets. The French and the British ended the occupation and retreated, and the Greek army in Anatolia was defeated by the Nationalist forces. In such an atmosphere, the Ottoman Armenian community changed its political position and became pro-Turkish to protect its physical, cultural, and social existence within the new borders of Turkey. It is important for our discussion that when ‘the external support’ disappeared, the Ottoman Armenians chose to accommodate the host state, even though it was oppressive. Thus, the reactions of the Ottoman Armenians as a minority group is another example of the ethnic bargaining theory suggested by scholars. Similar reactions can be seen in the example of Hungarians in Slovakia, Romania, and Vojvodian (Yugoslavia) in the 1990s. During the Mečiar period from 1995-1998, while the Hungarian minority was under pressure from the government policies, the minority leaders responded by organising protests but still accommodated the repressive regime without further radicalisation. Hungarians in

Romania, similarly, sought to establish coalitions with Romanian moderates in 1990 when ultra-nationalist policies were being implemented by the government.⁷⁸⁰ In both cases, the lobbying state for the Hungarian minorities, Hungary, was reluctant to play a part in the conflicts and showed no signals of support. In the case of Ottoman Armenians, by 1922 no supporting state remained. There was no ‘external support’; therefore, the Ottoman Armenians started to pursue a moderate position *vis-à-vis* the Turkish state.

There is virtually no discussion in the recent historiography about the pro-Turkish position of the Armenian community during the last years of the Ottoman Empire. As such, this chapter makes a new contribution on the subject. Lerna Ekmekcioglu, in her article entitled ‘Mecbur: Mıgırđıç Agob'un Türkiye Ermenileri Risalesi (1922)’ analyses the establishment of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association and the emergence of a pro-Turkish approach within the Armenian community.⁷⁸¹ This chapter discussed the extent of the pro-Turkish approach within the Armenian community by utilising unexplored material from several Armenian dailies with various political affiliations.

⁷⁸⁰ Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining*, p. 121.

⁷⁸¹ Lerna Ekmekçiođlu, ‘Mecbur: Mıgırđıç Agob’un Türkiye Ermenileri Risalesi (1922)’, in *1915: Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım*, ed. Fikret Adanır and Oktay Özel (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2015).

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

At the beginning of the thesis, I contended that this thesis makes two major contributions to the body of academic literature. First, it challenges the recent historiography by taking an approach that no other scholarly written work has used to analyse the Ottoman Armenian community during the Armistice years. Furthermore, in the recent historiography, none of the academic works has examined the Ottoman Armenians during the Armistice years by analysing the Ottoman Turkish and Armenian press together. Second, this thesis contributes to security and minority claim-making theories by demonstrating how the Ottoman Armenians' political position changed during the Armistice years and the reasons behind this change. I shall highlight first the importance of this thesis in terms of its contribution to the recent historiography.

When we consider the recent historiography on the late Ottoman Empire in general, and the Ottoman Armenians in particular, there is a dearth of academic literature on the Armistice period. While there is extensive literature on the pre-war and wartime period regarding the Ottoman Armenians, there is no analysis of the Armenian community in the Ottoman Empire during the Armistice years. Thanks to the research of scholars in the field, we can trace the historical developments in the late Ottoman Empire regarding the Armenian community from the reformation period in the nineteenth century until 1918, the end of WWI. However, the narrative in the recent historiography ends in 1918. The Armistice years only occupy a few pages in the recent Armenian or Late Ottoman history books. While I was reading the secondary sources included in the reading list of the syllabuses for graduate courses,

some questions came to mind: What was the condition of the Ottoman Armenian community during the Armistice years? How did the Armenian community reorganise itself after WWI? What was the socio-political picture of the community? This study aimed to answer these questions and, in doing so, fills a gap in historiography.

The characteristics of the current historiography and the primary sources of the thesis have been discussed in the first chapter. As has been demonstrated, the Ottoman Turkish historiography on the Armistice years focussed mainly on the War of Independence and the Turkish National movement. No other topic had been addressed by historians until the works of Erik Jan Zürcher and later Ryan Scott Gingeras. Zürcher revealed the connection between the Turkish National movement and the CUP, which was mostly ignored in the official writing of Turkish history. Gingeras' book further discovered the unknown characteristics of the Turkish National movement and the ethnic conflict in Anatolia during the Armistice years. The Armenian historiography, on the other hand, mostly focussed on the history of the wartime massacres, with the Armistice years only occupying a few pages in the books, primarily when the authors touched upon the court-martials opened by the Ottoman government to try the CUP leaders and members for their participation in the destruction process of the Ottoman Armenian community. However, no academic study placed the analysis of the Armenian community during the Armistice years at the heart of its interest. As such, this research may be considered pioneering.

Another important contribution of the thesis is that it employs an extensive archive of Ottoman Turkish and Armenian press of the Armistice years, which has not been comprehensively used by historians while analysing the subject matter. The second part of the first chapter provided information about the Armenian and Ottoman Turkish press of the particular period. It should be noted here that there is

also a gap in the history of Ottoman Turkish and Armenian press. Besides a few bibliographical works, there is no published scholarly analysis on the Ottoman Turkish or Armenian press of the Armistice years. In order to understand the period with a more comprehensive lens, I analysed both Ottoman Turkish and Armenian dailies, which have thus far been another gap in the current historiography.

In understanding and conceptualising what the Ottoman Armenian community experienced during the Armistice years, I utilised the theories of security and minority claim-making. The Ottoman Armenians who survived the wartime massacres and stayed alive in the Ottoman Empire had existential concerns. The insecure environment that prevailed from the beginning of the war affected the political position of Armenians, leading them to establish close ties with other communities, such as the Romioi or states such as the Allied Powers, to protect their very existence. The second chapter laid out how following the signing of Armistice of Mudros and the beginning of the Allied occupation, the Armenian community changed its political position with the appearance of an ‘external support’. When the Armistice of Mudros was signed in October 1918, the Armenians in the capital were celebrating the Armistice, thinking that it signaled the end of their wartime calamity. These celebrations were followed by a new political reconfiguration within the community. Perhaps for the first time in the history of Armenian political movement, all the political parties—be they Tashnag, Hnchak, or Ramgavar—declared their support for the establishment of ‘United Armenia’. Furthermore, the Armenian Patriarchate also defended this idea and became actively involved in establishing contacts with the representatives of the Allied Powers to discuss the establishment of an Armenian state in the Vilayât-ı Sitte. These are crucial indicators for our conceptual framework, as

they demonstrate how the Armenian community was mobilised following the appearance of support from the Allied Powers.

In the third chapter, it was demonstrated that the Armenian community aimed to establish friendship with the Roimoi community, which also further supports the main argument of the thesis, being that before 1922 the collective political position of the Ottoman Armenian community was pro-Entente and pro-Armenian state. As has been argued in the third chapter, the Armistice period was an exception in the Armenian-Roimoi and Armenian-Greek relations, in the sense that during this five-year period, these two communities developed a close, mutually beneficial friendship to aid each other in achieving their respective political aspirations.

Security concerns played a vital role in the formation of the political position of the Armenian community. There were three layers of security concerns for the Armenian community. First was the security concern created in the post-genocide habitus. Many Armenians lost their families, abandoned their properties during the wartime, and at the beginning of Armistice years, many of them were fearful of becoming victims of a second wave of massacres. Second was the security concerns created by the Allied occupation and the emergence of conflict between the Loyalists and the National movement. These two security concerns are studied in chapter four, which discusses the insecure environment that prevailed during the Armistice years. Additionally, chapter four details how the Turkish National movement asked for the support of non-Muslim communities in Anatolia and forced them to pay taxes or to serve in the military. However, those Armenians who wanted to stay on the side of the Allied Powers were under pressure. The inter-communal conflict in Anatolia, the clashes between the Loyalist forces and the Nationalists as well as between the Greek

forces and the Nationalists created an atmosphere of insecurity and an ensuing power vacuum.

A third security concern was the existential concern of the Ottoman Armenian community. As discussed in chapters five and six, the Armenian community supported the Armenian government and the French forces in their fight against the Turkish National movement in the Caucasus and Cilicia. The motivation behind this support was to protect the very existence of the community by creating an autonomous state in Cilicia and the Vilayât-ı Sitte to protect the physical existence of the remaining Armenian population in Anatolia. These chapters also analysed the extent of the support of the Ottoman Armenians for the Armenian state in the Caucasus and the French occupying forces in Cilicia. The Ottoman Armenians, including both those in Anatolian cities and towns and those in Istanbul, organised and participated in the donation campaigns which were organised to send material aid to the Armenian military in the Caucasus. The fifth chapter explored how the Ottoman Armenians closely followed the clashes between the Turkish Nationalist forces and the Armenian military in the Caucasus and how the community in Istanbul demonstrated its support to the Armenian state. The sixth chapter, on the other hand, explored the ways in which the local Armenian community in the Cilicia region supported the French forces in their occupation endeavours. These two chapters further support the main argument, revealing that the political position of the Ottoman Armenians was pro-Entente before 1922. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated in these chapters that the Armenian community was mobilised when there was an external support—in this case, the French occupational forces and the Armenian state in the Caucasus.

Yet, how and why, beginning in 1922, did the political position of the Armenians living in Istanbul and Anatolia change? When there was no ‘external support’ such as the Allied Powers or the existence of an Armenian state in the Caucasus, the Ottoman Armenians strategically changed their political position to protect their physical existence. Thus, security concerns again played a vital role in the formation of their political choices. The seventh chapter aimed at answering this question by demonstrating that those Armenians who did not flee the country after the defeat of Greek and French forces by the Nationalist forces significantly changed their political position and became pro-Turkish. The establishment of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association and the efforts of prominent Armenians to re-establish the Turkish-Armenian friendship were the two reflections of this political change.

In understanding the reasons behind this sharp change in the political position of the Armenian community, I derive my argument from minority claim-making studies. As has been argued in the recent literature, minority groups tend to seek separatist ideas when there is an external support. As Erin K. Jenne clearly states, ‘if a minority believes its leverage against the majority to be sufficiently high (such as when a powerful external patron sends credible signals of interventionist intent), minority elites are likely to radicalise against the majority...’⁷⁸² When there is no outside supporter, the minority groups often accommodate the ruling state even if the state is repressive. From 1918 to 1921, the establishment of a ‘United Armenia’ was promised to the Armenian community, backed by the Allied Powers. Having lost the hope of living under the Ottoman authority harmoniously after the genocide experienced from 1915 to 1918, the Ottoman Armenian community naturally supported the Allied Powers, with the hope that they would live in peace in their

⁷⁸² Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining*, p. 195.

native land. However, when the French and Greek forces retreated from Anatolia, no state was willing to advocate on behalf of the Armenian community. While thousands of Armenians fled the country with the retreating French forces, a considerable number of Armenians stayed, in Anatolia and primarily Istanbul. These Armenians declared their loyalty to the Turkish National movement, thinking that they would live within the borders of ‘new Turkey’ without getting themselves into ‘trouble’. Lerna Ekmekçioğlu and Talin Suciyan have explored how this remaining Armenian community in the ‘new Turkey’ continued to live under and face pressure by the state during the early Republican years.⁷⁸³

Even as the primary argument of the thesis is the change in the political position of the Ottoman Armenian community during the Armistice years, this research attempted to write the socio-political history of a non-Muslim community in the final years of the Ottoman Empire. The Armenian press of the period is an invaluable source to discover the inner dynamics of the community. As can be seen throughout the thesis, Armenian individuals, intellectuals, and journalists contributed to the discussion in the dailies. In some cases, an ordinary Armenian individual sent a report regarding the Armenian community in his/her town. The Ottoman Turkish dailies closely followed the discussions published in the Armenian dailies, and in most cases, the Turkish intellectuals engaged with the discussion and often criticised the Armenian dailies. The analysis of the Ottoman press—including Turkish, Armenian, Greek, and Arab dailies during the Armistice years—can be considered an interesting subject matter for scholars to better understand the historic period and the intercommunal relations during the final years of the Ottoman Empire. This thesis

⁷⁸³ Lerna Ekmekçioğlu, *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey*; Talin Suciyan, *The Armenians in Modern Turkey: Post-Genocide Society, Politics and History*.

establishes a new perspective for writing the historiography of the late Ottoman Empire by bringing the Ottoman press, both in Armenian and in Turkish, into the discussion.

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