

**THE FIRST ARMENIAN REPUBLIC AND
ITS TERRITORIAL CONFLICTS WITH AZERBAIJAN**

by

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Abstract

The thesis, which is based on extensive archival materials, explores the origins of the on-going conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan by focusing on the emergence of the first Armenian Republic in 1918 and its territorial issues with Azerbaijan, in order to understand the factors which led to this conflict. It examines the background to the creation of the first Armenian Republic by researching the location of the 'historical Armenian homeland', the construction and reconstruction of the notion of the 'Armenian homeland', the aspects facilitating the way in which the ideology and strategy of the Armenian national movement developed, and the factors instrumental in the construction of the Armenian identity. The work provides a historical background to the Armenian claims to Garabagh and Nakhchyvan and analyses the ethnic, historical, economic, geographical and security arguments used by the first Armenian Republic to substantiate its vision of the territorial delimitation between Armenia and Azerbaijan with regard to these regions at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. The thesis also considers the positions of the external powers involved in the South Caucasus vis-à-vis the Garabagh and Nakhchyvan issues and assesses the impact of their stance on the settlement of these conflicts.

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¹ Diakonoff I, *The pre-history of the Armenian people*, Delmar, N.Y.: Caravan books, 1984, Map 3 (Copyright: Igor Diakonoff)

² Kapantsian G, *Khayasa – kolybel' armyan: Etnogenez armyan i ikh nachalnaya istoriya*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, 1947 (Copyright: Grigoriy Kapantsian)

³ Eremian S, *Atlas k knige 'Istoriya armyanskogo naroda, chast' I, Erevan: Aypetrat, 1951'*, Erevan: Aypetrat, 1952 (Copyright: Suren Eremian)

⁴ Ch'amch'yants' M, *History of Armenia: From B.C. 2247 to the Year of Christ 1780 or 1229 of the Armenian Era* (translated from the original Armenian text by Johannes Avdall), Volume I, Calcutta: Bishop's College Press, 1827 (Copyright: Durham University, UK)

⁵ Note: The sources which were used to prepare Map 5: Map 'Armeniya i sopredel'niye strany v kontse XIX i nachale XX vv.' by Armenak Voskanian in *Istoriya armyanskogo naroda*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Yerevanskogo Universiteta, 1980 (Copyright: Izdatel'stvo Yerevanskogo Universiteta); Sezen T, *Osmanlı yer adları (alfabetik sırayla)*, Ankara: T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, yayın no 21, 2006; *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians. Volume II (1880-1890)*, Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu Basimevi, 1983, no 105, pp 298-299

⁶ *Karta Kavkazskago kraya s oboznacheniem granits'' 1801-1813 g*, Tiflis: Tipografiya shtaba Kavkazskago Voennago Okruga, 1901

⁷ *Karta Kavkazskago kraya k pervomu tomu 'Istoriya voyny i vladychestva russkikh na Kavkaze'*, Tiflis: Voenno-topograficheskiy otdel Kavkazskago Voennago Okruga, 1870

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⁹ Note: The sources which were used to prepare Map 9: Map 'Armeniya i sopredel'niye strany v kontse XIX i nachale XX vv.' by Armenak Voskanian in *Istoriya armyanskogo naroda*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Yerevanskogo Universiteta, 1980 (Copyright: Izdatel'stvo Yerevanskogo Universiteta); Sezen T, *Osmanlı yer adları (alfabetik sırayla)*, Ankara: T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, yayın no 21, 2006; *STsLA*, fn 2080, l 1, fl 707; Pollard A, *A Short History of the Great War*, London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1920, Map VIII (Caucasus front in 1916); *Karta Armenii, Zakavkaz'ya i Severnogo Azerbaydzhana (k knige Lincha i Osval'da 'Armeniya', tom 2, 1898)*, Tiflis: lit.Kavkazskago Voenno-Topogr. Otdela; *Karta Kavkazskago kraya*, Tiflis: sost. i lit. v Voenno-topograficheskoy otdele Kavkazskago voennago okruga, 1903

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¹¹ Note: The source which was used to prepare Map 11: Şahin E, *Trabzon ve Batum konferansları ve antlaşmaları (1917-1918)*, Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2002, p 818 (Copyright: Enis Şahin)

¹² Note: The source which was used to prepare Map 12: *Le Carte De La Republique d'Azerbaidjan*, Copie De La Karte Ethnographique Du Caucase, Edition De La Section De Topographie Militaire De Department Militaire Du Caucase; The referred map, which was prepared by the Azerbaijan Republic in 1919, indicated the Udis, one of the Caucasian Albanian peoples, living in the Nukha *uezd* with the colour of the Armenians. The Udis, who still live in the Gabala and Oghuz districts of Azerbaijan, were mentioned as Udis (ethnic identity) and/or Armenians (church identity) in the documents of the first Azerbaijan Republic, whereas in this map they were coloured as Armenians. This can be explained by the fact that the number of Udis was small, and since they were subordinate to the Armenian Echmiadzin Church, the map coloured them as Armenians. This means that not all of the brown-coloured area in the Nukha *uezd* was populated by Armenians (for the discussion on the Christian Caucasian Albanians and their Armenianisation see Chapter 4).

¹³ FO 371/4156 (Copyright: UK National Archives)

¹⁴ Galichian R, *Historic Maps of Armenia: The Cartographic Heritage*, London: I.B.Taurus, 2004, p 222 (Copyright: Rouben Galichian)

¹⁵ Note: The sources which were used to prepare Map 15: *Atlas Azerbaydzhanskoy SSR*, Moscow: Glavnoe Upravlenie Geodezii i Kartografii pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR, 1979, p 39; *Atlas Armyanskoy SSR*, Erevan-Moscow: Akademiya Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, Glavnoe Upravlenie Geodezii i Kartografii MGION SSSR, 1961, p 108

Transliteration

Azerbaijani, Turkish and Russian personal names will be transliterated in accordance with their spelling in the respective languages unless they are different in directly quoted sources or widely accepted in the English-language scholarly literature. For example: the Azerbaijani personal name *Məhəmməd* will be transliterated as Mahammad and Turkish *Gürün* as Gurun. Irrespective of the language of the sources used, the Russian names *Лев*, *Павел* and *Петр* will be transliterated respectively as Leon, Paul and Peter. The names *Георгий* or *Григорий* will be transliterated respectively as Georgiy or Grigoriy unless they are referred to as George or Gregory in a quoted source. The transliteration of Armenian and Georgian personal names will change in accordance with the sources referred to.

Historical and geographical place names which are still in use will be transliterated in accordance with their spelling in an official language of the country to which they belong; for example: Garabagh instead of Karabakh or Karabagh; Nakhchyvan instead of Nakhichevan or Nakhitchevan; Erzurum instead of Erzerum; Batumi instead of Batoum and so on, unless they are different in directly quoted sources or widely accepted in the English-language scholarly literature. Although Baku, capital of Azerbaijan, should be transliterated as Baky, since it is *Bakı* in Azerbaijani, it will be left as Baku because that is its widely accepted form in English. Historical place names which are not in use at present will be transliterated in accordance with their spelling by the majority of the population under the discussed period unless they have different widely accepted forms in English; for example: Zangazur instead of Zangezur or Zangezour. Iravan (Erevan) will be used until the occupation of the Iravan (Erevan) khanate in 1828 by Russia, and Erevan after 1828, since the latter is widely accepted in the English-language scholarly literature unlike its Iravan (*İrəvan*) form, which was used by the Muslim population of Erevan *uezd* (district), who constituted a majority in the latter until 1914: 73,731 Armenians and 96,658 Muslims.¹⁶

The names of sources in Azerbaijani and Turkish will be presented in their original languages, since they use the Latin alphabet, whereas the names of sources in Russian will be

¹⁶ *Kavkazskiy kalendar' na 1915 god*, Tiflis: Tipografiya Kantselyarii Namestnika Y.I.V. na Kavkaze, 1914, pp 255-257

transliterated in accordance with the modified Library of Congress system in the CREES Style Sheet with the following modifications: Russian ‘й’ will be transliterated as ‘y’; ‘ы’ will also be transliterated as ‘y’ when it is between two consonants and ‘i’ when it is a part of an ‘ый’ ending; for example: *предыстория* – *predystoriya*, but *культурный* – *kul’turniy*; ‘ё’ will be transliterated as ‘yo’; for example: *чёрная* – *chyornaya*; the ‘ые’ ending will be transliterated as ‘iye’; for example: *собранные* – *sobranniye*; ‘е’ after ‘ь’ will be transliterated as ‘ye’; for example: *Закавказье* – *Zakavkaz’ye*.

Transliteration table for Azerbaijani (also used for Turkish)

a - a	g - g	q - g	s - s
b - b	ğ - gh	l - l	ş - sh
c - j	h - h	m - m	t - t
ç - ch	x - kh	n - n	u - u
d - d	ı - y	o - o	ü - u
e - e	i - i	ö - o	v - v
ə - a	j - zh	p - p	y - y
f - f	k - k	r - r	z - z

Abbreviations and Key Terms

AKAK – *Akty sobranniye Kavkazskoy Arkheograficheskoy Komissiey* (Acts collected by the Caucasian Archeographic Commission)

ARDA – *Azərbaycan Respublikası Dövlət Arxivi* (State Archive of the Republic of Azerbaijan)

ARSPIHDA – *Azərbaycan Respublikası Siyasi Partiyalar və İctimai Hərəkətlər Dövlət Arxivi* (State Archive of Political Parties and Social Movements of the Republic of Azerbaijan)

CAB – Cabinet Office

CUP – Committee of Unity and Progress (*İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti*)

FO – Foreign Office

Kadets – members of the Party of People's Freedom (*Partiya narodnoy svobody (Konstitutsionno-demokraticeskaya)*)

guberniya – province

malikates or *melikates* – counties

maliks or *meliks* – counts

MGAO – Mountainous Garabagh Autonomous *Oblast*

oblast – province

okrug – district

OZAKOM - *Osobiy Zakavkazskiy Komitet* (Special Transcaucasian Committee)

RF – Russian Federation

RSFSR – Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic

sanjak – county

Sovnarkom – *Sovet Narodnykh Komissarov* (Soviet of People's Commissars)

STsIA – *Sakartvelos Tsentraluri Istoriuli Arkivi* (Central Historical Archive of Georgia)

uchastok – circuit

uezd – district

vilayet – province

Introduction

The South Caucasus, which includes Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, is one of the most challenging regions in the world, owing to its long lasting and on-going conflicts. One of these conflicts is between Armenia and Azerbaijan. It has continued over twenty years without any prospect of a settlement in the near future.

The aim of the thesis is to shed light on the origins of the problem by focusing on the emergence of the first Armenian Republic and its territorial conflicts with Azerbaijan in 1918-1921 in order to understand the factors which led to its rise and continuation up to the present day. The need for this research comes from considerable gaps in comprehensive and balanced study on the subject. The perceptions and policies of the international community have largely been shaped by works of Armenian scholars from the strong Armenian diaspora in different parts of the world, including the Western countries. This process has been further influenced by the on-going territorial claims of Armenia to Garabagh in Azerbaijan and the involvement of the Armenian lobby in different countries in justification of these claims through different means, including history and the absence of works by Azerbaijani scholars on the topic in the West.

The subject of the current thesis is a constituent part of the whole issue of the ‘Armenian question’, which emerged after the Berlin Congress in 1878. Existing studies deal with different aspects of this question and offer general information on the first Armenian Republic. Most of these works highlight the issue within either the history of the Armenian people or the South Caucasus in general terms. Western historiography, with its leading representative on the subject, Richard Hovannisian has dedicated more research to the topic than the Soviet historiography, which either passed it by or examined it through the prism of Soviet ideology. Azerbaijani historians did not study the emergence of the first Armenian Republic in the Soviet period, whereas the territorial problems between Armenia and Azerbaijan started being studied after the open stage of the territorial claims of Soviet Armenia to Soviet Azerbaijan in 1987. The same cannot be said about the Armenian historians, whose works in the Soviet times on any period of the history of the Armenians revealed that they considered the territory between the Kur and Araz Rivers in the Azerbaijan

SSR as part of ‘historical’ Armenia and considered the territorial issues from this point of view.

Unlike the Soviet period, when there were many academic publications by Armenian historians in Russian on different aspects of Armenian history, after 1991, when the Soviet Union collapsed and Armenia regained its independence, the number of scholarly works by such historians on Armenian history in Russian decreased. After the restoration of Azerbaijan’s independence in 1991, the number of works by Azerbaijani scholars on the historical aspects of the territorial problems between the two countries, including in 1918-1921, has increased. They can be characterised as responses to the Armenian publications on the history of the South Caucasus, including Garabagh and Nakhchyvan.

Research questions

The thesis examines the development of the Armenian national movement in terms of the factors that facilitated its development, and the way its ideology and strategy developed over time. It explores the background to the creation of the first Armenian Republic, the processes of state formation and the way in which the boundaries of the state were determined. The thesis also addresses a number of very specific research questions:

1. Where was the ‘Armenian homeland’ historically?
2. Why was the location of the ‘Armenian homeland’ moved from Eastern Anatolia to the South Caucasus?
3. What were the factors that facilitated the creation of the Armenian republic?
4. How were the borders of the Armenian republic set?
5. What are the causes of the long lasting and on-going conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Garabagh?

Structure of the thesis

The thesis is divided into three parts. In Part 1, Chapter 1 reviews the scholarly works on the subject, to identify their limitations, whereas Chapter 2 examines the literature on nations,

nationalism, state formation and territorial delimitation of the state and comes up with theoretical arguments on the Armenian case, setting it in a comparative perspective.

Part 2 includes five chapters. Chapter 3 explores the initiation of an ‘Armenian homeland’ project in the Ottoman Empire in the last decades of the nineteenth century and its results. Chapter 4 discusses the factors instrumental in the construction of the Armenian identity and compares it with the Azerbaijani and Georgian cases. Chapter 5 examines the developments related to the ‘Armenian homeland’ project during the First World War in 1914-1916 and their consequences. Chapters 6 and 7 analyse the impact of the war, the February and October Revolutions of 1917 and the political situation afterwards on the ‘Armenian homeland’ project. Part 2 demonstrates the change in the initial direction of the Armenian nationalist movement and the original idea of where the ‘Armenian homeland’ was to be located.

Part 3 includes two case study chapters, which provide historical background to the Armenian aspirations with regard to Garabagh and Nakhchivan, analyse the Armenian ethnic, historical, economic, geographical and security arguments about these regions and illustrate how the question of the delimitation of the territory of the first Armenian Republic was decided in practice, with the consideration of the part played by external powers.

Methodology

The first step in writing the current thesis was to outline the existing gaps in scholarly treatment of the subject. Having done this, a research agenda and strategy were prepared with the formulation of the research questions to be addressed in the dissertation. Since the central issues are state-formation and territorial problems, theoretical literature on nations, nationalism, state-building and border/territorial questions were examined and the peculiarities and significance of the Armenian case defined.

After identifying the research questions, the next priority was the research methods to be applied to the sources, as they constitute the basis of any unbiased and scholarly work. Thus, writing about historical events involves three major procedures: the collection of data, its

critical evaluation and then presentation.¹⁷ A sound piece of history is a logically consistent picture of a subject supported by all available data.¹⁸ Relevant information for the topic was collected and the available materials, which can be divided into primary and secondary sources, categorised. The primary sources included archival documents and official publications, whereas the secondary ones included books, journal and newspaper articles, memoirs, eyewitness accounts and maps.

In order to avoid superficial and distorted accounts of the subject and present an impartial and systematic view of the problem, it is first necessary to collect all the required and available data on the research questions and then assess and evaluate the evidence to deal with 'fraud and forgery, interpolation and distortion'.¹⁹ This is achieved by the application of external and internal criticism methods, which in their turn include comparative²⁰ and content analysis.²¹ External criticism involves authenticating evidence or documents to establish their authenticity, while the internal criticism deals with the statements contained in documents to establish credibility.²²

When dealing with primary sources like archival documents in Russian, Azerbaijani and English, the researcher tried to find the available originals of these sources, compare them with their archival and published copies and define any differences. After the process of verification, the date of the documents was dealt with, i.e. whether they were written 'at the time specific events occurred'²³; as well as the state/s 'behind' these documents; its/their interests; and the political situation during that period. This process was followed by analysis of the content of the documents. The researcher compared the use of the primary sources by different historians in different languages to check for differences. It was also important to check whether these documents were used with a selective approach out of context, and if so,

¹⁷ Bajaj S, *Research Methodology in History*, New Delhi, 2000, p 231

¹⁸ Harvey Ch and Press J, *Databases in Historical Research: Theory, Methods and Applications*, London: Macmillan, 1996, p 2

¹⁹ Bajaj S, *op cit.*, p 223

²⁰ Dawson C, *Introduction to Research Methods: A Practical Guide for Anyone Undertaking a Research Project*, Oxford: How To Books Ltd, 2009, pp 120-121; Ragin Ch, *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, California; London: University of California Press, 1987, pp 13-18

²¹ Neuendorf K, *The Content Analysis Guidebook*, London: Sage, 2002, pp 1-25

²² *Ibid.*, p 231

²³ McDowell W, *Historical Research: A Guide*, London: Longman, 2002, p 55

why, and whether historians used all the necessary and available archival documents, and if not, why not.

While dealing with sources like memoirs and eyewitness accounts, after establishing their authenticity as in the case of archival sources, the researcher tried to answer similar questions: when they were written, who wrote them, and how they were written. The same approach was applied when dealing with newspaper materials and maps and their usage by historians. Concerning secondary sources like books, and journal and newspaper articles, notes of useful ideas were made and the opinions of any single author tested against the evidence supplied by other authors and, if possible, primary sources.²⁴

The research for this thesis was conducted in the UK National Archives, State Archive of the Republic of Azerbaijan, State Archive of Political Parties and Social Movements of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and Central Historical Archive of Georgia. Owing to the impossibility of conducting research in the Armenian archives because of the ethnic origin of the author of this thesis, all available documents relating to the position of the Armenians on the subject were obtained from the above-mentioned archives. Many secondary sources by authors of Armenian origin were consulted during the course of this research, both in Russian and in English. Since the author of this thesis does not know Armenian, some of the Armenian nationalist publications in Armenian were read in translation into Russian and English, and also numerous scholarly works which discuss these sources at length were consulted in Russian and English before being critically assessed. Moreover, the author of the current thesis arranged for two historical books and one historical document to be translated from Armenian into Azerbaijani in 2011.

Contribution of the thesis

Based on historical evidence gathered in different archives, from published archival documents, and through the analysis of testimonies of eyewitnesses and direct participants, and owing to the knowledge obtained from a great range of literature on the various aspects of

²⁴ Ibid., p 122

the ‘Armenian question’, the thesis will fill the existing gaps in the study of the establishment of the first Armenian Republic and its territorial conflicts with Azerbaijan.

The academic novelty of this thesis lies in its complex empirical analysis of Armenian, Azerbaijani, Georgian, Turkish, Russian, Soviet and Western sources by applying external and internal criticism and comparative and content analysis methods and theorisation of the formation of the new Armenian identity, emergence of the first Armenian Republic, delimitation of its borders and settlement of territorial conflicts with Azerbaijan for the first time in the scholarly literature. The thesis, with its empirical and theoretical findings, will make a contribution to the study of nations, nationalism and state-building, as well as the delimitation of the borders of newly established states and settlement of territorial problems.

Part 1

Chapter 1: Overview of the Historiography

In order to achieve its aim, the thesis will, first of all, critically analyse the academic discourse on the Armenian ‘ethnic homeland’, the Armenian national movement, the emergence of the first Armenian Republic, and its conflicts with Azerbaijan over Garabagh and Nakhchyvan, to identify the limitations of the existing historiography on the subject.

1.1 The Armenian ‘ethnic homeland’

The scholarly works on the formation of the Armenian people or its ‘ethnic homeland’ are usually divided into ‘classical’ and ‘revisionist’ conceptions. Among the famous representatives of the former are Nicolas Adontz and Igor Diakonoff. According to them, the Armenian people was formed by the second century BC in Eastern Anatolia from a mixture of Indo-European tribes originally from the Balkans and the local peoples of Eastern Anatolia.²⁵ The leading supporters of the ‘revisionist’ conception are Boris Piotrovskiy, Grigoriy Kapantsian and Suren Eremian. They had a similar view to the ‘classical’ conception representatives with regard to the final period (by the second century BC) and the area of formation of the Armenian people (Eastern Anatolia), but expressed differences over the question of the nucleus of the Armenian people, whom they considered to be local tribes of Hayasa-Azzi in north-eastern Anatolia.²⁶

Different historians tend to draw an unbreakable line between past and present, arguing about the ancient political, geographical and ethnic links between the Armenians of Eastern Anatolia and the South Caucasus. Thus, Louise Nalbandian wrote that the Armenian king

²⁵Adontz N, *Armenia in the Period of Justinian: The Political Conditions based on the Naxarar System*, Lisbon: Galouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1970, pp 306-310; D'yakonov I, *Predystoriya armyanskogo naroda: Istoriya Armyanskogo nagor'ya s 1500 po 500 g. do n.e. Khurrity, Luvitysy, protoarmyane*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, 1968; Diakonoff I, *The Pre-history of the Armenian People*, Delmar, N.Y.: Caravan books, 1984

²⁶Piotrovskiy B, *O proiskhozhdenii armyanskogo naroda*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, 1946, pp 31-36; Kapantsian G, *Khayasa – kolybel' arman: Etnogenez arman i ikh nachalnaya istoriya*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, 1947; Eremian S, ‘Protseess formirovaniya armyanskogo naroda’, *Istoriko-filologicheskij zhurnal*, Izdanie Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, no 2, 1970, pp 54-56

Artaxias I in the first half of the second century BC ‘achieved Armenian independence, which lasted for nearly two centuries. Not only did he unite the country by military efforts, but he developed in his people a sense of unity and nationalism. He made the universal use of the Armenian language compulsory and strove to assimilate foreign elements in order to make a strong, homogenous nation.’²⁷ The territory of the country, she went on, was expanded by Tigranes II in the first half of the first century, who ‘extended his domains from the Kur River in the north [according to the ‘Historical Map of Armenia’ by Nalbandian, the northern border of Armenia extended as far as the juncture of the Kur and Araz Rivers²⁸ – I.K.] to Egypt in the south [...] For the first and only time in history, the Armenians saw the whole geographic area of their country united under one ruler.’ However, Nalbandian continued, ‘the empire of Tigranes the Great was short-lived’ and ‘disintegrated in 69-66 BC under the stress of military defeats’.²⁹

Nalbandian used the term ‘nationalism’ for the second century BC, which is an anachronism. She did not cite any evidence for her argument, which declared the area from the ‘Kur River in the north to Egypt in the south’ ‘the whole geographic area’ of Armenia.

Richard Hovannisian,³⁰ Hagop Manandian,³¹ Simon Payaslian,³² Robert Hewsen,³³ Bagrat Ulubabian,³⁴ Gagik Sarkisian,³⁵ Suren Eremian,³⁶ Genrik Svazian³⁷ and Vardges Mikaelian³⁸

²⁷ Nalbandian L, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement: The Development of Armenian Political Parties through the Nineteenth Century*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1963, p 6

²⁸ Ibid., p 2

²⁹ Ibid., pp 7-8

³⁰ Note: On the one hand, Richard Hovannisian, specialist on the first Armenian Republic, referred to the ‘great Armenian Plateau in eastern Anatolia,’ where the ‘Armenian nation had taken form in the first millennium before the Christian era’; on the other hand while giving the description of this ‘plateau’ he included in its area the territories beyond Eastern Anatolia, up to Garabagh in the South Caucasus, calling it the ‘north-eastern reaches of the Plateau’ (Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967, p 1). He did not provide any evidence to substantiate his opinion. He contradicted himself further, writing that ‘the land on which they [Armenians of the South Caucasus – I.K.] lived often seemed much less significant to them and warranted less attention than the “real homeland”, Turkish Armenia’ (Ibid., p 23). This meant that for the Armenians of the South Caucasus, the territories where they lived were not considered a ‘real homeland’.

³¹ Manandian H, *A Brief Survey of the History of Ancient Armenia*, New York: Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, 1975, pp 7, 9-10

³² Note: Simon Payaslian considered the greater part of the South Caucasus to be historically Armenian. But the historian’s reference and lack of objection to the words of Bogos Nubar Pasha, Head of the Armenian National Delegation, representing Ottoman Armenians, at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, that the ‘existing small republic [the first Armenian Republic – I.K.] [...] was not established in the historic lands of Armenia,’ revealed a contradiction (Payaslian S, *The History of Armenia*, New York; Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p 153).

also extended the area of ancient Armenia up to the juncture of the Kur and Araz Rivers in the South Caucasus.

Unlike many scholars dealing with the history of the Armenians, Ronald Suny considered nationality formation ‘an open-ended process, never fully complete, moving back and forth between consolidation and consciousness, assimilation and loss of cohesion.’³⁹ According to him, ‘though political solidarity was weak among Armenians, there was a commonality of language, an attachment to territory, and fierce devotion to the national religion, first pagan, later Armenian Christian.’⁴⁰ Religion, he wrote, was the ‘primary identification of this people, coinciding roughly with the linguistic and territorial community.’⁴¹ As for the area under which Suny assumed ‘geographical Armenia’, he was not unequivocal. Thus, he considered Garabagh to be the ‘easternmost edge of the great Armenian-mountain-plateau’.⁴² In the same book he also wrote that ‘proto-Armenians migrated into eastern Anatolia, the Armenian Plateau, in the mid-sixth century BC’.⁴³ He apparently localised this ‘plateau’ in Eastern Anatolia, but while talking about Garabagh, extended its area to include the latter. Suny further argued that the modern period of Armenian history, from the eighteenth century up to the present, was separated from the earlier periods of Armenian history ‘not only by time but also by place [...] for a geographical shift in the centres of Armenian life from Eastern Anatolia to dispersed colonies occurred during the long hiatus of early modern times’. It was ‘away from the “fatherland”,’ he noted, that ‘the first generation of patriotic intellectuals

³³ Hewsen R, ‘The Geography of Armenia’ in Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Volume I, pp 1-17

³⁴ Ulubabian B, ‘Toponimy ‘Albaniya’, ‘Agvank’ i ‘Aran’’, *Istoriko-filologicheskii zhurnal*, Izdanie Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, no 3, 1971, p 126

³⁵ *Istoriya armyanskogo naroda*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Yerevanskogo Universiteta, 1980, pp 36-45

³⁶ *Istoriya armyanskogo naroda*, chast' I, Erevan: Aypetrat, 1951, pp 32-35, 44; Note: Suren Eremian, himself a representative of the ‘revisionist’ conception, in his map of the ‘Armenian plateau’ drawn in 1952 localised the ‘plateau’ in Eastern Anatolia (see Map 3). However, in *Istoriya armyanskogo naroda* (History of the Armenian people), published in 1980, he wrote that ‘historically the Armenian people lived in the territory which in the geographical science is known as the Armenian plateau. Soviet Armenia occupies the north-eastern part of this territory’ (*Istoriya armyanskogo naroda*, 1980, p 7).

³⁷ Svazian G, *Istoriya strany Aluank (s drevneyshikh vremyon po VIII vek)*, Erevan: Institut Istorii Natsional'noy Akademii Nauk Respubliki Armeniya, 2008, pp 52-279

³⁸ Mikaelian V, ‘Eshche raz o yuridicheskikh i istoricheskikh osnovakh prava karabakhskikh armyan na samoopredelenie’, *Istoriko-filologicheskii zhurnal*, Izdanie Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, no 3, 2001, p 60

³⁹ Suny R, *Looking toward Ararat: Armenia in Modern History*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993, p 11

⁴⁰ Ibid., p 8

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid., p 193

⁴³ Ibid., p 7

emerged and provided a new definition for a vision of Armenian nationhood'.⁴⁴ It appears, according to Suny, that the 'fatherland' of the Armenians was in Eastern Anatolia, which means that he did not consider Garabagh in the South Caucasus as part of this 'fatherland'. However, he regarded Garabagh as the 'easternmost edge of the great Armenian-mountain-plateau', which he also localised in Eastern Anatolia.

James Russell defined the 'Armenian plateau' in the following way: 'In the mid-second millennium BC, "Western" Indo-European Luwians and Hittites lived in western and central Asia Minor. As one moved eastward onto what later came to be called the Armenian plateau, the Hurrian and Urartian languages predominated.'⁴⁵ The main mass of the Urartian-speaking people, according to Igor Diakonoff, lived inside the territory of the formation of the Armenian people (see Map 1), i.e. in Eastern Anatolia, and merged with it. A considerable part of the Hurrians lived outside of this territory, and did not merge with the Armenians.⁴⁶ In this case, the 'Armenian plateau' should have occupied part of Eastern Anatolia. If by 'under the Hurrian and Urartian languages' Russell meant the area of all the languages close to them, then his 'Armenian plateau' should have been extended up to Chechnya.⁴⁷ This definition of the 'Armenian plateau' was vague and controversial, which would not have happened if Russell had given its geographical description, since under this notion he meant geographical area.

Salahi Sonyel identified the 'homeland' of the Armenians in the 'Armenian plateau' and, without reference to primary sources, called it a 'very old geographical term' occupying a large area from Eastern Anatolia to Central Transcaucasia.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp 54-55

⁴⁵ Russell J, 'Formation of the Armenian Nation' in Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Volume I, p 25

⁴⁶ Diakonoff I, *The Pre-history of the Armenian People*, p 128

⁴⁷ Note: According to Diakonoff, 'linguistic ties can be traced between the Hurro-Urartian languages and the north-eastern Caucasian (Nakh-Dagestan) group, particularly, in vocabulary, with their Nakhian subgroup, whose representatives live today in the central regions of the Greater Caucasus, principally on its northern slopes (the Chechens, the Ingush, and on the southern slopes, the Batsbians), as well as with their Lezghian sub-group in its southeast; and in grammar, with the Ando-Avarian subgroup in the northeast of the Caucasus.' (Ibid., p 8)

⁴⁸ Sonyel S, *The Ottoman Armenians: Victims of Great Power Diplomacy*, London: K.Rustem & Brother, 1987, p 3

The review of the works of the above-mentioned historians showed that, although they presented a whole range of views, they did not offer a clear picture of 1) what areas they meant when they discussed the ‘Armenian plateau’ and ‘Armenian state’ and/or the differences between them; 2) which territories Artaxias I and Tigran II had to return back after their defeats and which areas remained under Armenian rule; and 3) which areas constituted geographical Armenia and which were ethnically Armenian, i.e. the Armenian ‘ethnic homeland’.

During her study of the academic works on Armenian history, the researcher could not find clear answers to these questions in the works of the above-mentioned historians. They used vague notions while describing the area of the formation of the Armenian people. The same can be said about the ‘Armenian plateau’, with its different sizes depending on the historian writing about it. Igor Diakonoff and Suren Eremian localised it in Eastern Anatolia in their maps, although Eremian changed his mind later.

The issue is further complicated when different historians discuss the non-Armenian peoples in the area between the Kur and Araz Rivers. Thus, in 1908, Nicolas Adontz, while touching upon the population of Sunik, the area of which corresponded to that of the present-day Nakhchivan part of Azerbaijan Republic and a considerable part of the Armenian Republic, wrote that in the 5th-6th centuries AD, its population was non-Armenian.⁴⁹ In 1915, Nikolay Marr wrote that some of the Christian Albanians were assimilated by the Armenians and some by the Georgians by the eleventh century.⁵⁰ Iosif Orbeli called Garabagh a ‘part of ancient Albania’⁵¹ in 1963. Ronald Suny, in 1993, wrote that in ancient and medieval times, the Garabagh region had been part of the kingdom of the Caucasian Albanians, whose upper classes were Armenianised over time.⁵² In 1958, Suren Eremian wrote about the Armenianisation of some of the Christian Albanians living between the Kur and Araz Rivers by the eighth century AD.⁵³

⁴⁹ Adontz N, *op cit.*, pp 324, 325, 172

⁵⁰ Marr N, *Kavkazskiy kul'turniy mir i Armeniya*, Petrograd: Senatskaya Tipografiya, 1915, pp 20-21

⁵¹ Orbeli I, *Izbranniye trudy*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, 1963, p 146

⁵² Suny R, *op cit.*, p 193

⁵³ Eremian S, ‘Ideologiya i kul'tura Albanii III-VII vv.’ in *Ocherki istorii SSSR*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1958, pp 328, 330

Ziya Bunyadov noted in 1965 that the Gregorianisation of the Christian Albanians in the mountainous places of Caucasian Albania started after its fall in the early eighth century AD.⁵⁴ Farida Mammadova refuting the Armenian arguments on the borders of ancient Armenia reaching the juncture of the Kur and Araz Rivers, in 2005 argued that the Armenianisation of the Garabagh Albanians took place in the early nineteenth century.⁵⁵ Concerning the Armenians in the South Caucasus, she wrote that in the fifteenth century the ‘seat of the [Armenian] Catholicos was transferred from Cilicia to Echmiadzin near Erevan’, and since then Echmiadzin has become a centre of all spheres of the Armenian life as a consolidating and organisational power. Armenian historians, she continued, introduced into academic circulation a new notion of ‘Eastern Armenia’, under which, in the 16th-20th centuries, they indicated the territories of Garabagh, Zangazur, Iravan (Erevan) and Ganja. This meant that the ‘notion of “Eastern Armenia” shifted both in time and in area from the east of the Euphrates River to Caucasus.’⁵⁶ After the occupation of the South Caucasus by Russia in the early nineteenth century, the first compact Armenian settlers from the Ottoman Empire and Persia appeared in the South Caucasus, including in the Iravan (Erevan), Nakhchyvan and Garabagh khanates. Russia established the first Armenian unit in the Caucasus with the title ‘Armenian *oblast*’ (province) on the basis of the khanates of Iravan (Erevan) and Nakhchyvan.⁵⁷

The settlement of the Armenians in the South Caucasus, including in the territory of present-day Armenia, has also been examined by George Bournoutian, who wrote that ‘the Armenian population at no time prior to the Russian takeover formed a majority in Eastern Armenia [the author meant the territory of present-day Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia between the Kur and Araz Rivers⁵⁸ – I.K.].’⁵⁹ He explained the hitherto minority situation of the Armenians in the area by the ‘centuries of warfare between the Ottomans and the Persians and the despotic

⁵⁴ Bunyadov Z, *Azerbaydzhan v VII-IX vekakh*, Baku: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Azerbaydzhanskoy SSR, 1965, p 97

⁵⁵ Mamedova (Mammadova) F, *Kavkazskaya Albaniya i albany*, Baku: Tsentr Issledovaniy Kavkazskoy Albanii, 2005, pp 118-122, 591-615

⁵⁶ Ibid., pp 650-652

⁵⁷ Ibid., p 655

⁵⁸ Bournoutian G, ‘The Ethnic Composition and the Socio-Economic Condition of Eastern Armenia in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century’ in Suny (ed.), *Transcaucasia: Nationalism and Social Change*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983, p 69

⁵⁹ Ibid., p 78

rule of local khans'.⁶⁰ In 1983, he argued that 'until the mid-fourteenth century, Eastern Armenia had an Armenian majority [...] By the nineteenth century the Armenian population of Eastern Armenia had shrunk considerably.'⁶¹ In 1997, he came to a somewhat different conclusion and wrote that 'it is probably that until the seventeenth century, the Armenians still maintained a majority in Eastern Armenia, but the forced relocation of some 250,000 Armenians by Shah Abbas and the numerous exoduses [...] had reduced the Armenian population considerably [...] Only in the mountain regions of Karabagh and Zangezur did the Armenians manage to maintain a solid majority.' The Armenian population, he wrote, was generally concentrated in the fortress cities of Erevan, Nakhchyvan, Ganja, Shusha, Sardarabad, and in the villages surrounding the town of Vagarshabad, which contained Echmiadzin.⁶²

Bournoutian did not explain why the centuries of warfare only decreased the number of Armenians, which implied that all the wars in the region were directed against the Armenians. If the wars decreased the number of the Armenians, they should have decreased the number of the 'Armenians' in the 'mountain regions of Karabagh and Zangezur' as well, not maintained their majority there. Bournoutian listed only the names of the towns as the locations of general concentrations of Armenians without explaining the reasons for this situation.

Vardan Parsamian citing facts on the settlement of the Armenians from the Ottoman Empire and Persia in the nineteenth century, wrote that 'taking into account the fact that throughout the centuries the Ararat valley [?- I.K.], historical cradle of the Armenian people, was almost deprived of its Armenian element by alien occupants [...] a great importance of the concentration of the Armenian population in Eastern Armenia becomes clear.' The Armenian *oblast* created by Russia in 1828, he noted, became a 'more stable and secure centre of the Armenian people'.⁶³ The historian did not cite any evidence or discuss his argument with regard to the 'deprivation' of the area of its 'Armenian element by alien occupants'.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p 77

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Bournoutian G, 'Eastern Armenia from the Seventeenth Century to the Russian Annexation' in Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Volume II, New York: St.Martin Press, 2004, p 96

⁶³ Parsamian V, *Istoriya armyanskogo naroda (1801-1900 gg.). Kniga pervaya*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo 'Hayastan', 1972, p 68

1.2 The Armenian national movement

The first academic work dealing with the Armenian national movement with more emphasis on the activities of the Armenian revolutionary organisations in the nineteenth century in English belongs to Louise Nalbandian. Her book's introduction presented the movement as a 'struggle for freedom' of a people with more than twenty-five centuries of 'national consciousness' living in the area from the Mediterranean to Garabagh, who 'awoke from years of lethargy' through the stirring message of a few patriotic individuals.⁶⁴ The historian's argument that the Armenian people struggled for independence against their Muslim leaders in the 15th-19th centuries contradicted her view that 'they [Armenians – I.K.] lived in relative peace during nearly four centuries of corrupt Ottoman rule and did not rise in insurrection against their overlords until the later half of the nineteenth century'.⁶⁵

Nalbandian's work demonstrated that despite her statement on the historical Armenian presence in the area from the Mediterranean to Garabagh, all of the activities of the Armenian revolutionaries in the nineteenth century aimed to 'liberate' the 'homeland', by which they meant Eastern Anatolia. This in turn revealed a paradox showing the preference of the Armenians for Eastern Anatolia over the South Caucasus, despite the fact that the Armenian revolutionaries who were setting Armenians against Muslims in Eastern Anatolia were from the South Caucasus.⁶⁶

Ronald Suny's approach to the question was somewhat different. Throughout his work he used 'Turkey' instead of the Ottoman Empire and explained the nationalism of Armenians by their increasing interactions with other peoples in the cities of Caucasus and the western part of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century, where they felt the impact of Western concepts of nationality and nationhood. This influenced their own self-concept, which shifted from that of a religious community to that of a nationality with a 'common history and cultural consonants'.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Nalbandian L, *op cit.*, pp 1-8

⁶⁵ Ibid., pp 18-24, 26

⁶⁶ Ibid., pp 90-178

⁶⁷ Suny R, *op cit.*, p 23

Suny, like Nalbandian, emphasised the role of Catholic Armenian monks of the eighteenth century as forerunners of the process, and attributed a major role in this nineteenth-century change to the Armenian intellectuals who articulated a secular Armenianness, which was influenced by two principal factors: internal and external. The former, in his opinion, was related to Armenian intellectual activities within the Russian and Ottoman Empires, manifested in the emergence of nationalist literature and periodicals in the vernacular Armenian and the political expression of Armenian aspirations. The external source of Armenian consciousness came from the Russian and Ottoman imperial authorities, which considered the Armenians to be most loyal subjects, but ‘in the last quarter of the nineteenth century forced all Armenians, even those most desirous of assimilation, to recognise themselves as a separate people by discriminating against Armenians and persecuting them.’⁶⁸

Razmik Panossian dedicated a book to Armenian nation-building, which was a ‘slightly shorter version’⁶⁹ of his PhD dissertation at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Unlike the majority of authors dealing with the issue, Panossian raised theoretical questions and applied theories on nations and nation-building to the Armenian case. He wrote that ‘being autochthonous to the land is one of the most important themes in nationalist discourse. In this respect Armenians do indeed go very far back [...] The historic territory on which the Armenian people lived stretched between the Kur River to the east, the Pontic mountain range to the north, the Euphrates river to the west and the Taurus Mountains to the south.’⁷⁰ As a result of the Armenian national movement, no new Armenian ethnic identity was created. Rather, an old one, i.e. the people ‘with roots stretching well into the first millennium BC’ in the above-mentioned area, was ‘reinterpreted, reinvigorated, modernised and eventually politicised’; ‘new ethnic boundaries were not created, but existing ones redefined and strengthened’.⁷¹ Panossian applied existing theories on nations and nationalism to the Armenian case without first conducting deep empirical research into the formation of the Armenian people. Instead he relied on Armenian histories by Armenian authors, a great part of which were secondary sources. The author’s bibliography highlighted methodological and empirical gaps.

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp 22-23

⁶⁹ Panossian R, *The Armenians: From Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars*, London: Hurst and Company, 2006, p XV

⁷⁰ Ibid., pp 33-34

⁷¹ Ibid., pp 183-184

Different aspects of the Armenian national movement have been considered by various scholars. Thus, Simon Payaslian briefly examined the path of Armenian nationalism from cultural 'reawakening' to 'armed revolutionary movement', including the policies of the Ottoman and Russian authorities vis-à-vis Armenians in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.⁷² Vahe Oshagan explored literary and intellectual aspects of the Armenian national movement from the eighteenth to the early twentieth century.⁷³ Hagop Barsoumian's paper shed some light on the situation of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, Ottoman reforms and their impact on the Armenians.⁷⁴ Richard Hovannisian researched the Armenian question in the Ottoman Empire in 1876-1914, including the Berlin Treaty, its methods of implementation and results, the policy of Great Powers and the emergence of the Armenian revolutionary organisations and their activities.⁷⁵ Gerard Libaridian analysed the 1892 and 1907 programmes of *Dashnaktsutiun*, the main Armenian political party. He argued that miscalculated party strategy was the reason that the aims of the first programme failed, compelling the organisation to revise it and include socialist as well as nationalist aims in the second programme, thus creating a 'curious blend of nationalism and socialism' as a way of achieving its nationalist goals, although the idea of independence was rejected in the second programme.⁷⁶

Firuz Kazemzadeh examined the situation of the Armenians under Ottoman rule briefly and considered them 'by no means an oppressed and miserable people'.⁷⁷ Touching upon the activities of *Dashnaktsutiun*, he only treated the party's second programme, in which the South Caucasus was added in 1907. He explained the inclusion of the economic demands in the second programme by the influence of socialism and 'the desire of Dashnak leaders to affiliate with the Second International'. Kazemzadeh also analysed the armed uprisings prepared by the Dashnaks to attract the attention of the European Powers, which enraged the Muslims. The 'Turks' replied with Armenian massacres and in revenge *Dashnaktsutiun*

⁷² Payaslian S, *The History of Armenia*, pp 117-123

⁷³ Oshagan V, 'Modern Armenian Literature and Intellectual History' in Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Volume II, pp 140-174

⁷⁴ Barsoumian H, 'The Eastern Question and the Tanzimat Era' in Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Volume II, pp 175-201

⁷⁵ Hovannisian R, 'The Armenian Question in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1914' in Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Volume II, 2004, pp 203-238

⁷⁶ Libaridian G, 'Revolution and Liberation in the 1892 and 1907 Programs of the Dashnaktsutiun' in Suny (ed.), *Transcaucasia: Nationalism and Social Change*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983, pp 185-196

⁷⁷ Kazemzadeh F, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia (1917-1921)*, New York: Philosophical Library, 1951, p 8

perpetrated more murders. As for its activities in Russia, he argued that the oppressive policies adopted by Russia against the Armenians in the South Caucasus directed the party's attention against Russia as well. Writing that a terrorist faction in the party had gained domination of the whole and 'terrorised not only the Turks but often also their own people', he argued that the Armenian masses of the South Caucasus, and especially the wealthier classes, were inclined to be on the side of the Russians and 'let the Dashnaktsutjun return to its original task, the liberation of the Turkish Armenia'.⁷⁸

Vardan Parsamian took a different view of the formation of the Armenian nation. He considered this nation a 'bourgeois' one shaped mainly in the second half of the nineteenth century, with the common features characteristic of nations: language, territory, socio-economic life and culture. This was related to the development of capitalism, and the way it shaped the economic, political and cultural life of the Armenian people. The bourgeois nation, in his opinion, could not build its own state, which meant that he disregarded the first Armenian Republic. According to him, the process stimulated the development of the Armenian national consciousness and national-liberation struggle, and the revival of national culture. The Armenian people, he concluded, 'achieved its national statehood only due to the victory of the Soviet regime'.⁷⁹

Salahi Sonyel also examined the situation of the Armenians under Ottoman rule, their organisation into the Armenian *millet*, and their economic and social life. He studied the genesis of the 'Armenian question', the Armenian attempts to establish an autonomous Armenian province in Eastern Anatolia, the reform projects related to the Berlin Treaty, the analysis of their essence and the Great Power politics behind them, the establishment of the Armenian revolutionary organisations and their activities before and during the First World War and their results.⁸⁰ Mim Kemal Oke studied the 'Armenian question', including the historical relations between the Armenians and the Ottoman Government, their place within the Ottoman *millet* system and their situation in the Empire. He also analysed the factors instrumental in the rise of Armenian nationalism, considering the Armenian Church as its starting point, as well as the Russian factor, which opened the 'Armenian file' in the area of

⁷⁸ Ibid., pp 9-11, 18

⁷⁹ Parsamian V, *Istoriya armyanskogo naroda (1801-1900 gg.)*. *Kniga pervaya*, pp 177-179

⁸⁰ Sonyel S, *op cit.*, pp 9-312

diplomacy, and the aims of the British in supporting the Christian missionaries as a way of obtaining the right for a protectorate over the Ottoman Empire. He explored the emergence of the Armenian revolutionary organisations and their methods of struggle, the internationalisation of the Armenian issue through the Berlin Treaty, and the politics of the Great Powers evolved around this treaty, which was never implemented.⁸¹

1.3 Emergence of the Armenian Republic

The pioneer of scholarly works on the first Armenian Republic, to our knowledge, is Bagrat Borian.⁸² Other Soviet historians who dealt with the issue were Georgiy Karadzhan (nicknamed Arkomed),⁸³ Tsatur Agaian,⁸⁴ Galust Galoian,⁸⁵ Ashot Sarkisian⁸⁶ and A.Galoian.⁸⁷ Apart from Bagrat Borian and Galust Galoian, who examined the first Armenian Republic very briefly as well, the others dealt with aspects of the subject, focusing especially on the events leading to the separation of the South Caucasus from Russia in April 1918. They considered the developments taking place in the region after the October Revolution of 1917, including the establishment of a *de facto* regional government, namely the *Zakavkazskiy Komissariat* (Transcaucasian Commissariat), a regional parliament, i.e. the *Zakavkazskiy Seym* (Transcaucasian Diet) and the *Zakavkazskaya Federativnaya Demokraticheskaya Respublika* (Transcaucasian Federative Democratic Republic). In their opinion, all of these were the endeavours of nationalist counter-revolutionaries, who were dictated by the imperialist powers of Germany and the Ottoman Empire and did not have the mandate of their peoples. According to them, the principal parties of the region were bourgeois-nationalist, and separated the region from Soviet Russia, so they were enemies of their peoples, workers and

⁸¹ Oke M, *The Armenian Question: 1914-1923*, Nicosia: K.Rustem&Brothers, 1988, pp 77-94

⁸² Borian B, *Armeniya, mezhdunarodnaya diplomatiya i SSSR*, chast' I, Moscow-Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1928, pp 397-406; Borian B, *Armeniya, mezhdunarodnaya diplomatiya i SSSR*, chast' II, Moscow-Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1929, pp 29-60, 295

⁸³ Arkomed S, *Materialy po istorii otpadeniya Zakavkaz'ya ot Rossii*, Tiflis: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Gruzii, 1931

⁸⁴ Agaian Ts, *Velikiy Oktyabr' i bor'ba trudyashchikhsya Armenii za pobedu sovetskoy vlasti*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, 1962, pp 167-177

⁸⁵ *Istoriya armyanskogo naroda*, 1980, pp 281-284

⁸⁶ Sarkisian A, 'K voprosu o pravitel'stve Zakavkazskogo seyma 1918 g.', *Istoriko-filologicheskii zhurnal*, Izdanie Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, no 3, 1988, pp 226-231

⁸⁷ Galoian A, 'Sozdanie i krakh Zakavkazskogo seyma (fevral'-may 1918 g.)', *Istoriko-filologicheskii zhurnal*, Izdanie Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, no 1, 1986, pp 157-168

peasants. The three republics were referred to as so-called independent and democratic republics in the works of the above-mentioned historians.

Firuz Kazemzadeh was the first Western historian to dedicate an academic work to the political history of the first South Caucasian republics – Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia – from the February Revolution in 1917 to their Sovietisation in 1920-1921. In his opinion, the collapse of the Transcaucasian Federative Democratic Republic occurred because of the divergent interests of the three peoples composing it, and the independence of Armenia had to be proclaimed because of the absence of any other alternative.⁸⁸

Richard Hovannisian was the first and only historian to write a thorough (four volume) work on the first Republic of Armenia. In addition, he dedicated his book, ‘Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918’, to the emergence of the republic and its immediate aftermath.⁸⁹ He considered the Russian expansion into the South Caucasus as an important step toward Armenian independence and ‘Russian Armenia’. According to him, the latter was geographically applied to a portion of the ‘Armenian plateau’ within the Russian Empire. After the conclusion of the Treaty of Turkmanchay between Russia and Persia in 1828, Tsar Nicholas issued a decree on the creation of an Armenian *oblast*, which consisted of the former khanates of Iravan (Erevan) and Nakhchyvan (see Map 7), and adopted for the *oblast* an official emblem reminiscent of the royal standards of the Armenian kings. The Armenians, Hovannisian went on, were satisfied, although it did not include several eastern districts of the ‘plateau’, such as Akhalkalaki, Lori, Gazakh, and Mountainous Garabagh.⁹⁰

As noted, Hovannisian placed the ‘Armenian plateau’ in Eastern Anatolia, so it again caused confusion as to how any portion of the ‘plateau’, which was in Eastern Anatolia, belonging to the Ottoman Empire, could be found in the South Caucasus, within the Russian Empire and called ‘Russian Armenia’. He explained the minority situation of the Armenians in the Armenian *oblast* by ‘Moslem penetration onto the rich land along the rivers’ in the preceding centuries.⁹¹ He did not support his opinion with concrete facts, and the figures cited by him on

⁸⁸ Kazemzadeh F, *op cit.*, p 124

⁸⁹ Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp 9-10

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p 10

the exodus of Armenians from the Ottoman Empire and Persia to the South Caucasus, including the Armenian *oblast* after 1828, demonstrated the opposite.

According to Hovannisian, it was on the territory of the Armenian *oblast* that the Republic of Armenia was to emerge in 1918.⁹² The growth of Armenian political awareness, he argued, led to increased dissatisfaction with the administrative subdivisions of the South Caucasus. The Armenian politicians advocated the introduction of the *zemstvo* system (agrarian districts with assemblies with limited economic, cultural and educational initiative) to the region, under which the Armenians would have three ethnically homogeneous *zemstvo* provinces encompassing the entire Erevan *guberniya*, two southern *okrugs* (district) of the Kars *oblast*,⁹³ Akhalkalaki *uezd* and Lori *uchastok* (circuit) of the Tiflis *guberniya*, and the mountainous regions of Elizavetpol *guberniya*⁹⁴ (see Map 8). Hovannisian did not express his own view about this project, apart from pointing to its rejection by the Georgians and Muslims⁹⁵ and the fact that the territorial problems passed into the period when the South Caucasus was divided into three separate states, which in the Armenian case arose out of the absence of any alternative.⁹⁶

Tadeusz Swietochowski studied the emergence of the first Azerbaijan Republic, and within its context highlighted some points related to the Armenians and their republic.⁹⁷ The question was touched upon within the context of Armenian history by Simon Payaslian⁹⁸ and Ronald Suny⁹⁹ as well. Razmik Panossian theorised the issue, analysing the effects of the first Armenian Republic on Armenian identity.¹⁰⁰

⁹² Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, p 243

⁹³ Note: Kars *oblast* was established after the annexation of the area by Russia in 1878 and consisted of four *okrugs*: Kars, Kaghyzman, Ardahan and Oltu.

⁹⁴ Note: Elizavetpol *guberniya* was established in 1868 and consisted of Gazakh, Nukha, Elizavetpol, Shusha, and Zangazur *uezds*. In 1873, the borders of these *uezds* were readjusted. Nukha *uezd* was divided into two: Nukha and Arash *uezds*, and on the basis of Elizavetpol, Shusha and Zangazur *uezds*, two more *uezds* were established: Jabrayil and Javanshir. Thus, Elizavetpol *guberniya* had eight *uezds*: Nukha, Arash, Gazakh, Elizavetpol, Javanshir, Shusha, Jabrayil and Zangazur (Mil'man A, *op cit.*, pp 156-157).

⁹⁵ Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, p 15

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp 186-191

⁹⁷ Swietochowski T, *Russian Azerbaijan, 1905-1920: The Shaping of National Identity in a Muslim Community*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985

⁹⁸ Payaslian S, *op cit.*, pp 145-151

⁹⁹ Suny R, *op cit.*, pp 120-126

¹⁰⁰ Panossian R, *op cit.*, pp 242-244, 250-259

The emergence of the first Armenian Republic was also examined by Enis Şahin, as part of his work on Armenian-Ottoman relations in the period from the February Revolution of 1917 to the Mudros Armistice of 30 October 1918. Although the book was dedicated to the Gumru negotiations between the first Armenian Republic and the Ottoman Empire after the signing of the Batumi Treaty on 4 June 1918, the work focused in detail on Ottoman–Transcaucasian relations, especially the Batumi negotiations on 11 May–4 June 1918, which ended in the signing of the peace treaties between the Ottoman Empire and three South Caucasian republics, including the Armenian Republic, in Batumi.¹⁰¹ The emergence of the first Armenian Republic was considered in general terms by Kamuran Gurun.¹⁰² Mim Kemal Oke examined the topic briefly as part of the ‘Armenian Question.’¹⁰³ After the Soviet period, the subject was also examined as part of the background history of the emergence of the first Azerbaijan Republic by Jamil Hasanov¹⁰⁴ and Aydyn Balayev.¹⁰⁵

As for the area of the first Armenian Republic, historians offer different interpretations based on the Batumi Treaty of 4 June 1918 between the Ottoman Empire and the first Armenian Republic, such as 4,400 square miles (11,395 square kilometres),¹⁰⁶ 11,000 square kilometres (4,247 square miles),¹⁰⁷ and 10,000 square kilometres (3,860 square miles).¹⁰⁸ The descriptions of the territorial components of the Armenian Republic change depending on the historian, and reveal gaps, since the Batumi treaties defined the borders of the Ottoman Empire with the three South Caucasian republics, not only with Armenia. Moreover, they did not define the borders between Armenia and the other two republics of the region. This means that the description and interpretation of the territorial components of the first Armenian Republic and subsequent calculation of its area could have been possible only after the definition of its borders with all of its neighbours.

¹⁰¹ Şahin E, *Diplomasi ve sınır: Gümri görüşmeleri ve protokolleri – 1918*, İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2005, pp 19-99

¹⁰² Gürün K, *Ermeni dosyası*, Ankara: ‘Rüstem’ Yayın Evi, 2001, pp 301-306

¹⁰³ Oke M, *op cit.*, pp 136-146

¹⁰⁴ Həsənov C, *Azərbaycan beynəlxalq münasibətlər sistemində (1918-1920)*, Bakı: Azər nəşr, 1993

¹⁰⁵ Balaev A, *Azerbaydzhanskoe natsional'noe dvizhenie v 1917-1918 gg.*, Bakı: Elm, 1998

¹⁰⁶ Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, pp 195-196

¹⁰⁷ Kazemzadeh F, *op cit.*, pp 127, 211

¹⁰⁸ Şahin E, *op cit.*, pp 98-99; *Istoriya armyanskogo naroda*, 1980, pp 280-283; Həsənov C, *op cit.*, p 92

1.4 Conflicts of the first Armenian Republic with Azerbaijan over Garabagh and Nakhchyvan

Among Soviet historians, it was Bagrat Borian who studied the border issues between Armenia and Azerbaijan, but omitted discussion on the Garabagh or Nakhchyvan problems. He mentioned that the South Caucasian republics could not come to any decision on the border issues, since the Armenian nationalists were full of strong tendencies towards power and the Georgian and Azerbaijani nationalists did not concede to them. Although Borian mentioned the territories to which Azerbaijan and Georgia asserted their claims at the Paris Peace Conference, he made no mention of the Armenian territorial claims, limiting the information only to the ‘great hopes of the Armenian delegation on the Great Powers’ on its borders, arguing that ‘not the interests of Armenia, but the interests of the Great Powers were the objects of the discussion of the Commission’ organised on the Armenian issue. The Armenian Republic, he noted, like the other two republics, existed within the boundaries, which it could defend with its own forces. Enlargement of the territory depended on the balance of powers of the neighbouring republics and the patronage of the Allied Powers, whose policy was aimed at developing international antagonism, in support of bloody actions between the republics and in the artificial and provisional delimitation of their borders. As for the settlement of the borders after the first Sovietisation of Armenia, Borian cited the text of the agreement of 2 December 1920 between Soviet Russia and the Armenian Republic, which declared Armenia a Soviet Socialist Republic and described its area. The latter, among others, contained the Zangazur *uezd* of Elizavetpol *guberniya* and the whole of Erevan *guberniya*, including the Muslim-dominated Nakhchyvan and Sharur-Daralayaz *uezds*. He also referred to the article of the Kars Treaty of 13 October 1921 between Turkey and the three Soviet republics of the South Caucasus, signed with the participation of Soviet Russia, which defined the status of Nakhchyvan as an autonomous territory within Azerbaijan SSR. He called the Kars Treaty the ‘worst’ and ‘dirtiest’ peace for Armenia, since it decreased the area of Armenian SSR in comparison with that in the above-mentioned agreement of 2 December 1920.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ Borian B, *Armeniya, mezhdunarodnaya diplomatiya i SSSR*, chast’ II, Moscow-Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel’stvo, 1929, pp 75-77, 162, 295-296, 303

Firuz Kazemzadeh considered the territorial conflicts between Armenia and Azerbaijan very briefly based on a few and mostly secondary Russian, British and Armenian sources. He did not reveal their essence and did not provide insight into the events of the mentioned period, including the interests and policies of the involved countries.¹¹⁰ Tadeusz Swietochowski touched upon the Garabagh and Nakhchivan problems in general terms in the context of his discussion of the first Azerbaijan Republic. He briefly mentioned British policy on the Garabagh and Nakhchivan problems.¹¹¹

Richard Hovannisian dedicated special chapters of his work to examining the territorial problems between the two republics. Although the reader can find much interesting information in these chapters from different primary and secondary sources, he made undocumented comments about the roots of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, which, in his opinion, lay in history, when, beginning in the eleventh century ‘the Azerbaijanis had swept into southern and eastern Transcaucasia as Turco-Islamic conquerors and had eventually driven the indigenous Christian population from the fertile river valleys and plains’.¹¹² The fact that Hovannisian from the very beginning considered the territories claimed by the first Armenian Republic to be historical Armenian territories and the Azerbaijani identity existing in the eleventh century¹¹³ affected his study of the issue and his conclusions on the subject. His examination of these territorial problems and Azerbaijan’s stance on them on the eve of the first Sovietisation of Armenia was also misleading.¹¹⁴ The use of the Armenian spelling ‘Shushi’, instead of Shusha, for the principal town of Garabagh throughout his books could be interpreted as an indication of a particular political position on the part of Hovannisian.

Ronald Suny did not discuss the territorial problems between the two countries, except for his undocumented short journey into the history of the Mountainous Garabagh question in 1918-1921, accompanied by interpretations influenced by the current stage of the conflict. He wrote that ‘with the revolution the Karabagh Armenians expressed their interest in joining independent Armenia, but the Azerbaijanis, supported by the Turks, forced the Karabaghtsis

¹¹⁰ Kazemzadeh F, *op cit.*, pp 215, 255-256, 268, 291-292

¹¹¹ Swietochowski T, *op cit.*, pp 142-143, 159

¹¹² Hovannisian R, *The Republic of Armenia. Volume I. The First Year, 1918-1919*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971, p 78

¹¹³ Note: For the discussion of the issue of formation of the Azerbaijani identity see Chapter 4, pp 111-114

¹¹⁴ Hovannisian R, *The Republic of Armenia. Volume IV. Between Crescent and Sickle: Partition and Sovietization*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996, pp 381-382

to remain in Azerbaijan'.¹¹⁵ This sentence is misleading, since there was no revolution after which there emerged an Armenian state which Garabagh Armenians would desire to join. Then, he continued, the British, who established their hegemony in the South Caucasus in late 1918, prevented Armenian annexation of the region. Following the establishment of Soviet rule in Azerbaijan, the historian continued without providing any evidence, Azerbaijan promised to cede Garabagh to Soviet Armenia. The Caucasian Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist (Bolshevik) Party adopted the relevant decision in July 1921, but later reversed itself and decided to give Mountainous Garabagh a broad autonomy within Azerbaijan.¹¹⁶

Simon Payaslian's study of the territorial problems between the two republics was limited to general information on the establishment of Garabagh General-Governorship in January 1919, the appointment of Azerbaijani Khosrov bay Sultanov as its Governor-General, his recognition by Britain as such, and Armenia's appeals to the British General, William Thomson, to prevent Sultanov's governorship in Garabagh.¹¹⁷ When touching upon the settlement of the territorial problems between the two countries, Payaslian made undocumented and contradictory comments about Garabagh and Nakhchyvan.¹¹⁸ The use of the Armenian spelling 'Shushi', not 'Shusha', as was the case with Hovannisian's works, could be interpreted as an indication of a particular political position on the part of Payaslian as well.

Artin Arslanian's article on British policy towards the Mountainous Garabagh question,¹¹⁹ despite its small size and evident pro-Armenian bias, contained interesting information about the positions of the British Foreign and War Offices on the Garabagh and Nakhchyvan problems and the methods of settling them.

¹¹⁵ Suny R, *op cit.*, p 194

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Payaslian S, *op cit.*, pp 155-156

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p 174

¹¹⁹ Arslanian A, 'Britain and the Question of Mountainous Karabagh', *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol 16, no 1, 1980, pp 92-104

The stance of the first Armenian Republic on the settlement of the territorial problems with Azerbaijan has been briefly examined by Gayane Makhmurian.¹²⁰

Enis Şahin, discussed the activities of the Armenian armed bands in Garabagh and Nakhchyvan.¹²¹

Within his above-mentioned work dedicated to the first Azerbaijan Republic and its international activities until the Bolshevik seizure of power in Baku on 28 April 1920, Jamil Hasanov explored the Armenian territorial claims to Garabagh, Armenian diplomatic efforts until the Mudros Armistice of October 1918 to include the area in Armenia, and the Armenian General Andranik Ozanian's atrocities in Garabagh, including Zangazur. He examined Armenian efforts towards the inclusion of Garabagh after the South Caucasus came under the British control as an Allied representative after the Mudros Armistice, their failure because of the establishment of the Garabagh General-Governorship as a part of the Azerbaijan Republic, and its recognition by the British General, William Thomson. Hasanov also considered the British temporary handover of Nakhchyvan to Armenia in May 1919, the resistance of its Azerbaijani population against this decision, and the failure of this British project. He also analysed the US Colonel, William Haskell's, project in October 1919 on the creation of a neutral zone in the Nakhchyvan region, the resistance of its Azerbaijani population, and the failure of the project.¹²²

The conflicts between the first Armenian and Azerbaijan Republics over Nakhchyvan and the Zangazur part of Garabagh have been studied by Ismayil Musayev. In addition to the above-mentioned discussions of the issues by Jamil Hasanov, Musayev analysed the process leading to the transfer of a western part of Zangazur *uezd* to Soviet Armenia with the help of Soviet Russia in July 1921, and the road leading to the status of Nakhchyvan within Azerbaijan SSR under the Moscow and Kars Treaties in March and October 1921 respectively.¹²³

¹²⁰ Makhmurian G, 'Popytki regional'nogo sotrudnichestva i II Konferentsiya Zakavkazskikh Respublik', *Istoriko-filologicheskiy zhurnal*, Izdanie Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, no 3, 2010, pp 54-70

¹²¹ Şahin E, *op cit.*, pp 254-279

¹²² Həsənov C, *op cit.*, pp 138-140, 151, 229, 234-236, 261, 263, 266-272

¹²³ Musayev İ, *Azərbaycanın Naxçıvan və Zəngəzur bölgələrində siyasi vəziyyət və xarici dövlətlərin siyasəti (1917-1921)*, Baku: Bakı Universiteti nəşriyyatı, 1998, pp 42-264, 264-356

The Garabagh problem in 1918-1921 has been studied by Tofiq Kocharli¹²⁴ and the Nakhchyvan problem by Vasif Gafarov,¹²⁵ among other Azerbaijani historians.

The current chapter has examined the views of different scholars on the issues under discussion. The next chapter will deal with the theoretical literature on nations, nationalism, state formation and delimitation of state boundaries. Going beyond the limitations of the present historiography, it will attempt to give a deeper theoretical basis to the study of the subject.

¹²⁴ Köçərli T, *Qarabağ*, Baku: Elm, 2003

¹²⁵ Qafarov V, *Türkiyə-Rusiya münasibətlərində Azərbaycan məsələsi (1917-1922)*, Baku: Azərneşr, 2011

Chapter 2: Theoretical Perspectives

In May 1918, three republics – Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia – emerged in the South Caucasus, declaring their independence in Tiflis, capital of the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic, which had existed from 22 April to 26 May 1918. The act on the independence of Georgia was adopted on 26 May 1918 by the Georgian National Council. The text of the declaration did not define the territories included in the Democratic Republic of Georgia.¹²⁶ The Azerbaijani National Council declared the independence of Azerbaijan on 28 May 1918: the area of the Azerbaijani Democratic Republic would cover ‘Southern and Eastern Transcaucasia’,¹²⁷ corresponding roughly to the present-day Azerbaijan Republic, northern, eastern and southern parts of the Republic of Armenia and part of southern Georgia. The decision on the proclamation of Armenia as a republic was adopted by the leaders of the main Armenian political party, *Dashnaktsutun* on 29 May 1918. But on 30 May 1918, the Armenian National Council, declaring itself ‘the supreme and only administration for the Armenian provinces’, made no mention of independence or republic and did not clarify in geographical or administrative terms what ‘Armenian provinces’ meant. The terms ‘independence’ and ‘republic’ were used publicly only after the signing of the Batumi Treaty with the Ottoman Empire on 4 June 1918.¹²⁸

The Ottoman Empire, Germany and Bolshevik Russia were directly involved in the regional processes during the emergence of the three republics. After the signing of the Armistice of Mudros on 30 October 1918 between the Ottoman Empire and the Allied Powers and that of Compiegne on 11 November 1918 between Germany and the Allied Powers, the Ottoman Empire and Germany were replaced by the UK and the US. In 1920, these countries were joined by Bolshevik Russia and Kemalist Turkey.

The chapter explores the major scholarly works on nations, nationalism, state-building and territorial/border issues which are central to the researched topic, and raises theoretical issues related to the Armenian case.

¹²⁶*Dokumenty i materialy po vneshney politike Zakavkaz'ya i Gruzii*, Tiflis: Tipografiya Pravitel'stva Gruzinskoy Respubliki, 1919, dok 165, pp 338-339

¹²⁷ *ARDA*, fn 894, l 10, fl 99, pp 2-3

¹²⁸ Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967, p 191

2.1 Nations and Nationalism

There is a vast literature on nationalism. The greater the number of studies, the more various the views on the issues. As Anthony Smith noted, the term ‘nationalism’ has been used in different ways:

1. The whole process of forming and maintaining nations or nation-states
2. A consciousness of belonging to the nation, together with sentiments and aspirations for its security and prosperity
3. A language and symbolism of the ‘nation’ and its role
4. An ideology, including a cultural doctrine of nations and the national will and prescriptions for the realisation of national aspirations and the national will
5. A social and political movement to achieve the goals of the nation and realise its national will.¹²⁹

The different views on nations and nationalism are usually classified under three main theories: primordialism, modernism and ethno-symbolism.¹³⁰

The notion of ‘primordialism’ has been used to describe the origins and strength of ethnic attachments. It is thought to have originally been coined by Edward Shils in 1957 in reference to relationships within the family, and developed by Clifford Geertz in 1963.¹³¹ According to Geertz, ‘a primordial attachment is [...] one that stems from the “givens” – or, more precisely, as culture is inevitably involved in such matters, the assumed “givens” – of social existence: immediate contiguity and kin connection mainly, but beyond them the givenness that stems from being born into a particular religious community, speaking a particular language, or even a dialect of a language, and following particular social practices. These congruities of blood, speech, custom, and so on, are seen to have an ineffable, and at times overpowering, coerciveness in and of themselves.’¹³² Pierre Berghe also had a socio-biological interpretation

¹²⁹ Smith A, *National Identity*, London: Penguin Books, 1991, p 72

¹³⁰ Ozkirimli U, *Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000, p 64

¹³¹ Eller J and Coughlan R, ‘The Poverty of Primordialism: The Demystification of Ethnic Attachments’, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol 16, no 2, 1993, p 183

¹³² Geertz C, ‘Primordial and Civic Ties’ in Hutchinson and Smith (ed.), *Nationalism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994, p 31

of ethnic and national ties.¹³³ He saw nationalism as an ‘extension of kinship selection and “nepotism” which has become salient in the modern world because of large-scale population movements, colonialism, and conquest’.¹³⁴

A variation of the primordialist theory was given by the Soviet ethnologist, Yulian Bromley. He maintained that ‘ethnos is a historically stable entity of people developed on a certain territory and possessing common, relatively stable features of culture (including language) and psyche as well as a consciousness of their unity and of their difference from other similar entities (self-awareness) fixed in a self-name (ethnonym) [...] Nation is not an ethnic group with a titular statehood – it is exclusively that part of the group which resides on its “own” national territory.’¹³⁵ Bromley and his followers consider that nation is the highest manifestation of ethnos.¹³⁶

As a reaction to the theory of primordialism, a new theory, modernism, emerged, challenging the theory of primordialism for the first time in its own terms in the article ‘The poverty of primordialism: the demystification of ethnic attachments’ by Jack Eller and Reed Coughlan in 1993 and concluding that the term is ‘unsociological, unanalytical and vacuous’, advocating dropping it from the sociological lexicon.¹³⁷

The modernists saw nations as relatively new creatures, the products of the processes that took place after the American and French Revolutions. Thus, Ernest Gellner held that ‘nations as a natural, God-given way of classifying men, as an inherent though long-delayed political destiny, are a myth; nationalism which sometimes takes pre-existing cultures and turns them into nations, sometimes invents them, and often obliterates pre-existing cultures: *that* is a reality’.¹³⁸ He argued that it is the need of modern societies for cultural homogeneity that creates nationalism. Although this is sociologically rooted in modernity, it is a product of the transition from ‘agro-literate’ societies, regulated by structure, to industrial societies, integrated by culture. Important components include the unevenness of industrialisation; the

¹³³ Berghe P, ‘Socio-Biological Perspective’ in Hutchinson and Smith (ed.), *Nationalism*, pp 48, 102

¹³⁴ Cited in Hutchinson J and Smith A (ed.), *Nationalism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994, p 48

¹³⁵ Tishkov V, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union: The Mind Aflame*, London: SAGE, 1997, p 3

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Eller J and Coughlan R, *loc cit.*

¹³⁸ Gellner E, *Nations and Nationalism (introduction by John Breuilly – 2nd ed.)*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2006, p 47

leading role of an excluded intelligentsia in the invention of the nation; mass, public education; and the discrepancy between the romantic aspirations of nationalists and the utilitarian outcomes.¹³⁹ Gellner distinguished three forms of nationalism: 1) 'Habsburg' nationalism, on behalf of a 'high culture not as yet properly crystallized, a merely aspirant or in-the-making high culture', by which he referred to the nationalisms in nineteenth-century Central and Eastern European countries¹⁴⁰; 2) classical liberal Western nationalism, on behalf of a 'fully effective high culture which only needs an improved bit of political roofing', which corresponded with the unification nationalisms of nineteenth-century Italy and Germany¹⁴¹; 3) diaspora nationalism, whose 'most famous and dramatic case' was Israel.¹⁴²

Another modernist scholar, Elie Kedourie, considered nationalism a doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century¹⁴³ and a form of secular millenarianism that arose from Kantian conceptions of human beings as autonomous, which, led to politics replacing religion as the key to salvation. He cited Rebbe, orthodox rabbi in Eastern Europe in 1900, as an example of the use of the past by nationalists in order to subvert the present, where Judaism becomes a product of Jewish national consciousness.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁹ Hutchinson J and Smith A (ed.), *Nationalism*, p 47

¹⁴⁰ Note: Gellner's explanation of 'Habsburg' nationalism can be summarised thus: The power-holders have privileged access to central high culture. The powerless are also the educationally deprived. They share folk cultures which can be turned into a rival new high culture, whether or not sustained by memory, real or invented, of a historical political unit allegedly once built around that same culture or one of its variants. The required effort is put into this task by the intellectuals/awakeners of this ethnic group, and eventually, if and when circumstances are propitious, this group sets up a state of its own. Non-speakers of the new culture who happen to live in the territory now controlled by the new state now face the options of assimilation, irredentist effort, emigration, disagreeable minority status and even physical liquidation (Gellner E, *op cit.*, pp 94-97).

¹⁴¹ Note: In this form of nationalism, some cultural groups have power, some do not, but in terms of access to education, there is no significant difference between the relevant populations. Most Italians, who were mostly literate, were ruled by foreigners, and most Germans, who were also mostly literate, lived in fragmented states, which were in the main small and weak, and thus unable to provide German culture, as a centralised modern medium, with its 'political roof'. In their case, they needed equality of power and a political roof over the culture and economy, and institutions which would be identified with it and committed to its maintenance (Ibid., pp 95-98).

¹⁴² Note: In Gellner's opinion, for this kind of nationalism, the acquisition of territory was the first and main problem. Nearly two thousand years of history had left no Jewish territorial base whatever, and had moreover left Jews as a set of discontinuous and fairly highly specialised strata within the structures of other societies. Human transformation in the Jewish case was counter to the global trend. It was necessary to make a 'few surrogate peasants', the manufacturing of whom from an urban background needed an ideology, and by historic accident a suitable mixture of socialism and populism was available and pervasive in the intellectual milieu. Kibbutzim, as a mechanism for effectively resettling the land with people drawn from heavily urbanised and embourgeoised populations, he concluded, proved to be outstanding and unequalled (Ibid., pp 98-104).

¹⁴³ Cited in Smith A, *op cit.*, p 71

¹⁴⁴ Kedourie E, 'Nationalism and Self-Determination' in Hutchinson and Smith (ed.), *Nationalism*, p 51

For Eric Hobsbawm, the nation is not a primary and unchanging social entity. It belongs historically to a recent period and is a social entity only insofar as it relates to a certain kind of modern territorial state, the nation-state. He concluded that ‘nations do not make state and nationalism but the other way round’.¹⁴⁵ For him, the nation was ‘invented’ by political elites in order to legitimise their power in a century of revolution and democratisation.¹⁴⁶

Benedict Anderson regarded the nation as an ‘imagined political community’ – imagined both ‘inherently limited and sovereign’; limited because ‘no nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind’; sovereign because ‘the concept was born in an age which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm’; and community because ‘the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship’.¹⁴⁷ He considered the main step in this process to be print technology, which created the possibility of a new form of imagined community, thus setting the stage for the modern nation. In his opinion, it was print-capitalism which precipitated the search for a new way of linking fraternity, power and time meaningfully and made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves and relate themselves to others in profoundly new ways.¹⁴⁸ Anderson also examined the nationalism of peoples living far away from their ‘homeland’, regarding that as ‘long-distance nationalism’.¹⁴⁹

Following the path of the modernists, the Russian scholar, Valeriy Tishkov, maintained that ‘nations are constructs, created by people, by the efforts of intellectuals and by the political will of the state. “Nation” is an in-group definition: it is not possible to assign to it strictly scientific or legal formulae. As to the category “ethnos”, this is an artificial construct which should be removed from public and, probably, academic discourse.’¹⁵⁰

Like primordialists, modernists have also been challenged, especially by supporters of the ethno-symbolist approach; scholars ‘who aim to uncover the symbolic legacy of pre-modern

¹⁴⁵ Hobsbawm E, *Nations and Nationalism since 1870: Programme, Myth, Reality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp 9-10

¹⁴⁶ Hobsbawm E, ‘The Nation as Invented Tradition’ in Hutchinson and Smith (ed.), *Nationalism*, p 48

¹⁴⁷ Anderson B, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso, 1983, pp 6-7

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp 46, 36

¹⁴⁹ Anderson B, ‘Long-distance Nationalism: World Capitalism and the Rise of Identity Politics’, *Wertheim Lecture Series*, Amsterdam: Centre for Asian Studies, 1992

¹⁵⁰ Tishkov V, *op cit.*, p 21

ethnic identities for today's nations'.¹⁵¹ The ethno-symbolist scholar, John Hutchinson, criticising the modernist approach, contended that the 'revolutionary' model of modernisation cannot explain the much more evolutionary formation of national states in Western Europe, and that post-eighteenth century nationalism can only be understood within the framework of 'a wider theory of ethnic formation that refers to the factors that may be common to the pre-modern and modern periods'.¹⁵²

According to Anthony Smith, nation is a 'named population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members'.¹⁵³ He identified three reasons why the origins of the nation should be sought in pre-modern ethnic ties: 1) the first nations, England, France, Spain and to a lesser extent Holland and Sweden, whose nationhood was attributed to their possession of military and economic power, were formed on the basis of pre-modern ethnic cores and provided models for the formation of nations in many parts of the world; 2) the basis of the pre-modern 'demotic' kind of community was ethnic and it survived into the modern era in many parts of the globe; 3) a coherent mythology and symbolism of a community of history and culture were forged out of available cultural components as conditions of national survival and unity if there were no important ethnic antecedents and any ethnic ties were shadowy or fabricated, since without some ethnic lineage the nation-to-be could fall apart.¹⁵⁴

Smith defined nationalism as an 'ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential "nation"'.¹⁵⁵ He identified two types of nationalism: 1) Territorial: a) pre-independence movements based on civic and territorial concepts of the nation seek to eject foreign rulers and substitute a new state-nation for the old colonial territory. Smith called these '*anti-colonial* nationalisms'; b) post-independence movements based on civic and territorial concepts of the nation often try to integrate disparate ethnic populations into a new political community and to create a new 'territorial nation' out of the

¹⁵¹ Ozkirimli U, *op cit.*, p 168

¹⁵² Ibid., p 124

¹⁵³ Smith A, *op cit.*, p 43

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., pp 59, 41-42

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p 73

old colonial state. He called these ‘*integration* nationalisms’.¹⁵⁶ 2) Ethnic: a) pre-independence movements based on ethnic and genealogical concepts of the nation seek to secede from a larger political unit (or secede and gather in a designated ‘ethnic homeland’) and set up a new political ‘ethno-nation’ in its place. Smith considered these ‘*secession* and *diaspora* nationalisms’; b) post-independence movements based on ethnic and genealogical concepts of the nation seek to expand by including ‘kinsmen’ outside the present boundaries of the ‘ethno-nation’ together with the lands they inhabit, or by forming a much larger ‘ethno-national’ state through the union of culturally and ethnically similar ethno-national states. He called these ‘*irredentist* and ‘*pan*’ nationalisms’.¹⁵⁷ Smith later added a third method of nation-formation: formation of immigrant nations largely from the fragments of other ethnic communities, like in the US, Canada and Australia.¹⁵⁸

Looking at the role of intelligentsia in the construction of the nation, which was advanced by the modernists, Miroslav Hroch noted that ‘nation-building was never a mere project of ambitious or narcissistic intellectuals, and ideas could not flow through Europe by their own inspirational force. Intellectuals can “invent” national communities only if certain objective preconditions for the formation of a nation already exist.’¹⁵⁹ According to his definition, nation is a ‘large social group integrated not by one but by a combination of several kinds of objective relationships (economic, political, linguistic, cultural, religious, geographical, historical), and their subjective reflection in collective consciousness’.¹⁶⁰ He distinguished two distinct stages in the nation-building process in Europe: 1) in Western Europe (England, France, Spain and others); and 2) in most of Central and Eastern Europe.¹⁶¹

Hroch divided the national movements in the Central and Eastern European countries into three phases: Phase A: inquiry into and dissemination of an awareness of the linguistic, cultural, social and sometimes historical attributes of the non-dominant group; Phase B: patriotic agitation of a new range of activists, who sought to win over their ethnic group to the project of creating a future nation; and Phase C: formation of mass movements with political

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p 82

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., pp 82-83

¹⁵⁸ Ozkirimli U, *op cit.*, p 180

¹⁵⁹ Hroch M, ‘From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation: The Nation-Building Process in Europe’ in Eley and Suny (ed.), *Becoming National: A Reader*, New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, p 61

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., pp 61-62

programmes.¹⁶² Moreover, he identified four types of national movement in Europe: 1) The inception of national agitation, which occurred under the old regime of absolutism, but acquired a mass character in times of revolutionary changes in the political system. The leaders of this phase developed their national programmes in conditions of political upheaval¹⁶³; 2) National agitation got under way under the old regime, but the transition to a mass movement was delayed after a constitutional revolution, which was the result of either uneven economic development or foreign oppression¹⁶⁴; 3) The national movement acquired a mass character under the old regime, which produced armed insurrections¹⁶⁵; 4) National agitation began under constitutional conditions. The national movement acquired a mass character quite early, while in other cases it did so only after long national agitation.¹⁶⁶

Like primordialists and modernists, ethno-symbolists have also been challenged. The main criticism claimed that they underestimated the differences between modern nations and earlier ethnic communities and that it is impossible to speak of nations and nationalities in pre-modern eras.¹⁶⁷ Reacting to these criticisms, Anthony Smith admitted that his definitions of nation and ethnic communities were closely aligned, but argued that ethnic communities lacked clearly delimited territory, a public culture, economic unity and legal rights and duties for everyone, which differentiated them from nations. Ethno-symbolists tried to trace in the historical record ‘the often discontinuous formation of national identities back to their pre-existing cultural foundations and ethnic ties – which is the matter for empirical observation rather than *a priori* theorising’.¹⁶⁸ In reply to the modernist, John Breuilly’s, criticism that pre-modern identities lacked an institutional basis, Smith acknowledged the important role institutions played as carriers and preservers of collective identities. He noted that although significant numbers of people were included in schools, temples, monasteries and a host of

¹⁶² Ibid., p 63

¹⁶³ Note: For example, Czech agitation in Bohemia, and Hungarian and Norwegian movements around 1800. The Norwegians declared their independence in 1814, while the Czechs and Magyars developed their national programmes during the revolutions of 1848 (Ibid., p 64).

¹⁶⁴ Note: Uneven economic development as in Lithuania, Latvia, Slovenia and Croatia, or foreign oppression, as in Slovakia and Ukraine. This phase started in Croatia in the 1830s, in Slovenia in the 1840s, in Latvia at the end of the 1850s and in Lithuania the 1870s, not turning into a mass movement in Croatia before the 1880s, in Slovenia the 1890s, and in Latvia and Lithuania during the revolution of 1905. Magyarisation checked the transition to a mass movement in Slovakia after 1867, as did Russification in Ukraine (Ibid.).

¹⁶⁵ Note: This was confined to the lands of the Ottoman Empire in Europe – Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria (Ibid.).

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p 64

¹⁶⁷ Ozkirimli U, *op cit.*, pp 184-186

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., p 185

legal and political institutions, their inclusion in linguistic codes and in popular literature, in rituals and celebrations, in trade fairs and markets, and in ethnic territories or homelands was more important.¹⁶⁹

Other approaches either contain elements of these three theories or present debatable perspectives. According to Stalin, ‘a nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture’.¹⁷⁰ By common economic life, he meant the growth of economic life, the development of means of communication and the rise of capitalism.¹⁷¹ This contained elements of the modernist approach, but Stalin’s ‘nation’ preceded the formation of a state. His reference to Georgia as an example, which, in his opinion, ‘came on the scene as a nation only in the latter half of the nineteenth century’,¹⁷² meant that he considered Georgians as a nation when there was no Georgian state. Stalin’s approach contained elements of primordialist theory as well, such as a historically constituted stable community of people with common language, territory and culture, which means that his interpretation of nation can be classified as mixed primordialist and modernist.

In addition to the requirements in Stalin’s theory of nation, according to the Soviet nationality policy, a ‘nation’ had to number over 100,000 people. Apart from the nation, there were notions like *natsional’nost* (nationality), *etnos* (a wider ethnic community), ethnographic group, *narod* (people), *narodnost’* (numerically small people) and indigenous and non-indigenous people.¹⁷³ The aim of this policy was to satisfy to some extent political and cultural autonomy aspirations of different peoples inhabiting the multi-national country, the realisation of which would, in their view, consolidate and strengthen the Soviet rule.

The Russian case examined by Vera Tolz presented a debatable perspective. She argued that although modernist and ethno-symbolist approaches had something to contribute to the understanding of the Russian case, none of them was sufficient to provide a comprehensive

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Stalin J, ‘The Nation’ in Hutchinson and Smith (ed.), *Nationalism*, p 20

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Wolczuk K and Yemeljanova G, ‘When the West Meets the East: Exploring Ethnic Diversity in Eastern Europe’, *Nationalities Papers*, May, vol 36, no 2, 2008, pp 180-181

analysis of Russian nation-building.¹⁷⁴ Her study of the Russian case demonstrated that different definitions of a nation can be used by politicians in their political and economic interests. In her opinion, ordinary Russians seemed to be more inclined to regard a nation as civic than the majority of intellectuals. She considered underdevelopment of civil society, and the major rift between political and business elites on the one hand and the majority of the population on the other, as obstacles to the creation of a civic Russian nation, although she held that the 'route from state to nation might well lead to the formation of a civic nation in the RF, as has usually been the case elsewhere'. For this scholar, rich and poor in modern Russia are 'two nations'.¹⁷⁵

2.2 Formation of state and territorial issues

Touching upon the issue of the circumstances under which the nationalist challenge is most likely to succeed, James Mayall described three great waves of modern state creation – in Latin America in the nineteenth century, in Europe after 1919, and in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific after 1945, all associated with the collapse of empires. As a single case of state-creation through successful separation since 1945, he noted Bangladesh, which separated from Pakistan in 1971 with the support of India.¹⁷⁶ Mayall did not mention the emergence of states in 1918, namely the three republics of the South Caucasus which were connected with the nationalist movements and the collapse of the Russian Empire. Moreover, not all nationalist movements ended in state-building as a result of the collapse of empires, as shown by the Kurdish case. The Kurdish nationalist movement developed during the second half of the nineteenth century in parallel with other nationalist movements in the Ottoman Empire,¹⁷⁷ but the collapse of the Ottoman Empire did not produce a Kurdish state, which can be explained by the absence of the Great Power support. On the other hand, Great Power support was central in the creation of the Jewish homeland in Palestine in 1919 and the

¹⁷⁴ Tolz V, *Russia: Inventing the Nation*, London: Arnold/Hodder Headline Group, 2001, p 3

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., pp 266-268

¹⁷⁶ Mayall J, 'Irredentist and Secessionist Challenges' in Hutchinson and Smith (ed.), *Nationalism*, pp 276-277

¹⁷⁷ Note: In the intellectual sphere it started with poetry, calling to unite Kurdish tribes, criticising the literate elite for neglecting their mother tongue to write in Persian or Turkish, castigating the religious elites for their sycophancy, urging people to appreciate the value of education, and at the same time to observe strictly all the moral decencies. The first Kurdish newspaper, 'Kurdistan' was published in 1897 and appeared at intervals until 1902 in different places like Cairo, Geneva, London and others. In 1908, the first political club and the first literary society were formed and several periodicals, volumes of verse, anthologies and the like were printed in Istanbul (Edmonds C, 'Kurdish Nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol 6, no 1, 1971, p 89).

establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. The establishment of Albania in 1912 is another example which was also facilitated by the support of Great Powers. States can also be created without nationalist movements, as in the case of the Republic of Liberia, established in 1847, which has never been a formal colony and was founded by settlers who arrived from 1822 onwards, originally freed US slaves offered passage to the area by US philanthropic societies.¹⁷⁸

According to international law, a permanent population and a defined territory are considered important qualifications of statehood, together with a government and capacity to enter into relations with other states. There is no rule prescribing the minimum area of a state's territory, as the examples of Monaco and Nauru show. The same is applicable to the population of a state, where there is also no minimum: see Nauru and San-Marino.¹⁷⁹

As for the borders of a newly emerged state, according to Boris Klimenko, for the definition or delimitation of a state territory, self-determination should be accepted as a major principle. This has two faces: external self-determination – the right of people to enter into this or that state or to establish their own state; and internal self-determination – the determination by people of their own internal order. For territorial delimitation, he wrote, external self-determination is of primary importance, since in deciding to enter this or that state or to establish their own, a self-determining people resolves the issue of its territory belonging to this or that state, or turning into a separate state territory if it creates its own state. Identification of which territory changes its status by virtue of self-determination and the definition of the boundaries of this territory depend on the establishment of the subject of self-determination. It is accepted that the subject of self-determination is either a nation or people. However, there is no unified definition of 'nation' or 'people'.¹⁸⁰

Klimenko continued to say that the boundaries of the area of settlement of a self-determining group are the basis for the establishment of the borders of its territory. This criterion cannot be taken in isolation from other factors, otherwise any movement of population would create a right to territory. Moreover, different national groups can live in any place. In this case, other

¹⁷⁸ Outram Q, 'Liberia: Roots and Fruits of the Emergency', *Third World Quarterly*, vol 20, no 1, 1999, p 163

¹⁷⁹ Crawford J, *The Creation of States in International Law*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979, pp 36, 40

¹⁸⁰ Klimenko B, *Mirnoe reshenie territorial'nykh sporov*, Moscow: Mezhdunarodniye otnosheniya, 1982, pp 6-7

factors like economic, historical, and historically established and stable internal social and cultural relations of the self-determining population group help to ascertain the truth. Touching upon the economic factor, Klimenko argued that in itself it cannot be the only basis for the establishment of borders, otherwise every economic expansion would mean a right to territory. Settlement and historicity, including the establishment of economic relations, should be taken into account. Historicity also needs a careful and dialectical approach, since throughout history many peoples have changed location, moved, mixed with other peoples and created new and stable economic, social and other relations. Historicity suggests a long process and in isolation from other factors can serve groundless territorial claims.¹⁸¹

Here it should be mentioned that there are two conceptions in public and academic political discourse related to historical rights with regard to territorial disputes: one emphasises the ‘primacy of the national group in the history of the territory over which it demands sovereignty’; and the second focuses on the ‘primacy of that territory in the history of the national group demanding the sovereignty’.¹⁸² In the first conception, the fact of occupation of the claimed territory by one national group earlier than others is considered crucial for the purpose of determining sovereignty over it, whereas in the second conception, primary importance is given to the role of the claimed territory in forming the historical identity of the group.¹⁸³

Examining the methods of delimiting national territory borders, Yuriy Barsegov held that the borders can be defined on the basis of the settlement area of a national group, which is conditionally called the ‘ethnic’ principle in international law.¹⁸⁴ In his opinion, ethnic and language factors should be combined with economic, historical and other factors when delimiting national territories. The economic factor suggests economic and trade relations, division of labour between different provinces of the national territory, the presence of markets and the basis of raw materials. This factor also includes the necessity of access, if possible, to the sea or to international water arteries, taking into account the character of

¹⁸¹ Ibid., p 9

¹⁸² Gans Ch, ‘Historical Rights: The Evaluation of Nationalist Claims to Sovereignty’, *Political Theory*, vol 29, no 1, 2001, p 59

¹⁸³ Ibid., pp 59-60

¹⁸⁴ Barsegov Yu, *Territoriya v mezhdunarodnom prave: yuridicheskaya priroda territorial'nogo verkhovstva i pravoviye osnovaniya rasporyazheniya territoriei*, Moscow: Gosyurizdat, 1958, pp 128-129

national transport systems and their importance for the economy of the country. But the consideration of the economic factor excludes the possibility of territorial expansion with reference to economic needs to establish 'vital space' for some countries.¹⁸⁵

Robert Strausz-Hupe and Stefan Possony described twelve criteria for delimiting a frontier: linguistic, religious, cultural, military, economic, historical, administrative, ideological, geographical, racial, sociological and psychological.¹⁸⁶ Andrew Burghardt contested that claims based on these considerations lack a strong legal basis, but added that such claims are often sympathetically heard by individual Great Powers or by the United Nations and can be placed in one or more of the following categories: 1) effective control, 2) historical, 3) cultural, 4) territorial integrity, 5) economic, 6) elitist claims, which state that minorities have the right or duty to control certain territories, and 7) ideological.¹⁸⁷

The case of Northern Ireland, discussed by Burghardt,¹⁸⁸ highlights the issue of demography, which also influences the viability of borders. The growth of the population of non-titular people may pose a threat to the ability of titular people to maintain control: the British plantation of Scots Ulstermen in Northern Ireland in order to outnumber the Catholic Irish cannot be regarded as successful, taking into account the increase of the number of Catholic Irish. On the other hand, the growth of titular people – be it natural or through migration – may lead to claims for larger territory in order to accommodate the growing population by creating settlements or colonisation, as in the case of Israel. By creating Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza amidst the Arab population in Palestine, Israel expanded its area and demonstrated in practice that a state does not need to have defined and fixed borders. Another case is that where one state occupies the territory of another state, not because of the

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., p 137

¹⁸⁶ Cited in Burghardt A, 'The Bases of Territorial Claims', *Geographical Review*, vol 63, no 2, 1973, p 228

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., pp 228, 238

¹⁸⁸ Note: Arguing that in practice most territorial claims are composites of these seven categories, Burghardt refers to the case of Northern Ireland, writing that 'the claim of the Catholic Irish to all of Ireland is based on territorial integrity, the unity of the whole island; on priority, they occupied the entire island before the plantation of the Scot Ulstermen; on duration, they have always been there and hence are the only true Irish; on cultural majority, they form the majority in the whole island; on self-determination for the Catholics of the North; and on justice. In contrast, the Orangemen maintain their right to control the six counties on cultural majority, they form the majority in the North; on effective control, which they clearly enjoyed until the outbreak of the current troubles; on economic elitism, they have produced a standard of living higher than that which exists in the South; on justice, they have always stood by Britain; and on the weaker arguments of duration – 300 years certainly makes them Irish – and of territorial integrity, the unity of the British Isles.' (Ibid., p 240)

accommodation of the growing population, but because of a nationalist and expansionist policy to have a mono-ethnic state with a bigger area, as is the case with Armenia. Although Armenians have been emigrating, leading to its population decreasing dramatically after gaining independence in 1991, the Armenian Government encourages Armenian settlements in Garabagh, the territory of Azerbaijan which was occupied by Armenia in 1991-1994 and is still under occupation. The aim is to expand the area of the Armenian Republic and impede the return of the internally displaced Azerbaijanis to their lands in the future by creating facts on the ground, increasing the number of Armenians in the occupied territories by these new settlements.

Burghardt argued that three interrelated types of claim to territory possess the greatest persuasive power: effective control, territorial integrity, and a combination of culture and history.¹⁸⁹ The principal legal and strongest claim to territory, in his opinion, is the 'uncontested administration of the land and its resident population'.¹⁹⁰ A special form of effective control occurs when a newly independent state inherits its territory from the pre-existing colonial system. *Uti possidetis, ita possideatis* – as you possess, so you may continue to possess – is the operative principle. He raised the example of the Latin American states, which claimed sovereignty over the territories they had held as colonies.¹⁹¹

Burghardt's combination of cultural and historical, ethnic and duration of occupation, suggested the closest possible man-land symbiosis. The most powerful claim based on history, he wrote, is when the territory is seen as the nation's homeland, which includes both priority and duration. The land becomes an indispensable part of the nation's self-identity. Historical claims are strengthened by duration, the existence over a long period of time of those features that form the basis of the claim. Rather than town dwellers, owners and managers of estates, a peasantry that has lived in a territory for centuries is the strongest non-legal claim. A timeless peasantry, Burghardt argued, is such a powerful claim to territory that states with such minority groups have tried various methods of liquidating the problem: forced uprooting and dispersal, exchange of population, assimilation, which succeeds better

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., p 244

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., p 228

¹⁹¹ Ibid., pp 228-229

with urbanites than with peasants, and finally, plantation of colonies of loyal people within the area concerned.¹⁹²

Cultural claims include all those based on the sense of a group of people belonging together, which includes ethnic, religious and other cultural characteristics that bind people together. The ultimate cultural-political ideal is expressed in the notion of 'self-determination'. Attempts to implement self-determination immediately lead to questions around defining the area concerned and its size. The cultural argument tends to lead to majority rule. According to this principle, the largest cultural group is entitled to control the administration of the territory. Although majority rule is highly venerated in the world today, Burghardt added that it has been shown to be almost unworkable in states with strong self-conscious minorities, such as Cyprus, Ceylon, Northern Ireland, and Yugoslavia before 1945.¹⁹³

Territorial integrity includes all claims based on the relative location of an area. Burghardt cited Yugoslavia as an example, which claimed Trieste on the grounds of geographical unity. The Romanians, he continued, claimed the entire Banat because of its supposed indivisibility, regarding Banat not as a geographical term, but as a complete and indivisible geographical region and province throughout the ages. When the territory under question is seen not only as contiguous but also as necessary to the security of the claimant, such claims are strengthened, for example the Soviet seizure of Karelia from Finland in 1940 to move the boundary farther away from Leningrad.¹⁹⁴

Concerning geographical claims, referring to Surya Sharma, Klimenko mentioned that neither theory nor practice of settlement of territorial disputes recognises territorial claims based exceptionally on geographical characteristics of the places: they only have any sense in combination with other factors.¹⁹⁵ Barsegov also assigned strategic and geographical factors an auxiliary role in territorial settlement. In his opinion, military-strategic and geographical factors are considered for security reasons during the establishment of state borders. Wherever possible, natural boundaries are also used for territorial delimitation. In this case, military-

¹⁹² Ibid., p 232

¹⁹³ Ibid., pp 233-235

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., pp 235-237

¹⁹⁵ Klimenko B, *op cit.*, p 151

strategic and geographical factors complement each other. Barsegov referred to examples when mountains, rivers and watersheds serve as borders between countries: the French-Spanish border along the Pyrenees, the Indian-Chinese border along the Himalaya, the US-Mexican border along the Rio-Grande-del-Norte River, etc.¹⁹⁶

Where some area of the territory is disputed, it can be settled by plebiscite, i.e. by the expression of the will of the population of the area as to which state this area should belong. The right of self-determination of peoples and nations is the basis of the plebiscite. The subject of a plebiscite in a territorial dispute can be a relatively small group of people who do not have the characteristics of a nation, otherwise this would be not a territorial dispute, but an issue of realisation of the principle of self-determination. Rare and accidental settlements in the disputed territory cannot serve as a basis for a plebiscite. It cannot involve new settlers of one of the disputing sides; the population must be indigenous, living there for a long time. The prescription of settlements suggests economic connection with the territory. A plebiscite on the disputed territory can only be held on the basis of agreements between disputing states. The existence of the territorial dispute to a certain degree depends on its admittance by the disputing sides as such, or other actions of the disputing sides.¹⁹⁷ The Versailles Treaty between the Allies and Germany in 1919 provided for six plebiscites, whereas other peace treaties following the First World War accorded a small place to it.¹⁹⁸

Discussing the consequences of the delimitation of borders after the war, Frank Jones wrote that the Austrian representatives had protested against three million of the German-speaking population of Austria being handed over without their consent to Czechoslovakia and to two hundred thousand being handed over to Italy. Mainly as a result of the peace treaties and the exclusion of Austria and Switzerland from consideration, thirteen or fourteen European countries counted German-speaking populations among their subjects. One third of the Magyar population of Europe – three out of nine million – were assigned to the states bordering Hungary¹⁹⁹ as a result of the Trianon Treaty of 1920 between the Allies and Hungary, which confirmed the transfer of Slovakia to Czechoslovakia, of Croatia to

¹⁹⁶ Barsegov Yu, *op cit.*, pp 151, 153

¹⁹⁷ Klimenko B, *op cit.*, pp 177-179

¹⁹⁸ Jones F, 'Plebiscites', *Transactions of the Grotus Society*, vol 13, Problems of Peace and War, Papers Read before the Society in the Year 1927, 1927, pp 169, 177

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp 177, 183, 180

Yugoslavia and of Transylvania to Romania. The frontiers of Hungary, E.H. Carr noted, bear witness to a certain eagerness of the treaty-makers to stretch their principles wherever possible to the advantage of the Allies and the detriment of the enemy.²⁰⁰

Although treaties defining the borders occupy the first place among many means applied for identifying the real state of borders,²⁰¹ they do not mean the solution of territorial problems, as the defeated side does not always accept the conditions of the humiliated peace. The borders established on the basis of the First World War peace treaties prompted the revanchist aspirations of the Second World War. Not only borders, but also the right of the state to exist, can be contested, as was and is the case with Israel's existence, which was and is contested by different Muslim, especially Arab, countries.

Plebiscites, although less successful,²⁰² are regarded as one of the means of resolving border disputes. As for the issues of areas within a state where non-titular nationalities are in strong concentration, these can be solved by minority status either in the form of political (self-rule) or cultural rights. It should be admitted that solutions to minority problems are usually guided by political considerations, as they are most often seen as a threat to the state's territorial integrity. For that reason, approaches to the problem can be different. Thus, according to Aviel Roshwald, minority treaties were signed by fourteen European states after the First World War. He mentioned that for the Western powers, the fundamental objective of the treaties was to smooth the path to the peaceful assimilation of minorities into state-promoted frameworks of national identity. The weakness of the treaties' enforcement mechanisms, Roshwald held, in practice meant the freedom of the new and expanded states to abuse their minorities. Referring to Poland, he pointed to the Polonisation of the Belorussians, application of forced Polonisation and divide-rule strategies among Ukrainians and so on. In his opinion, attempts at the nationalisation of culture and identity by Poland stimulated the consolidation

²⁰⁰ Carr E, *International Relations between the Two World Wars, 1919-1939*, Basingstoke: Palgrave/Macmillan, 2002, p 10

²⁰¹ Klimenko B, *op cit.*, p 137

²⁰² Note: For the study of the issue of plebiscites after the First World War see Jones F, 'Plebiscites', *Transactions of the Grotus Society*, vol 13, Problems of Peace and War, Papers Read before the Society in the Year 1927, 1927

of separate ethno-national identities among its minorities, something repeated in various forms in all other states of East Central and Eastern Europe between the two world wars.²⁰³

Although minority treaties guaranteeing political rights, religious freedom, the provision of schools, and the use of their language before the courts and with the authorities, were signed with the newly created states, as well as other states which had received large accessions of territory after the First World War, Germany was not asked to subscribe to any minority obligations.²⁰⁴

As for minority rights in the Soviet Union, these were based on the belief that effective control and management of a vast multi-ethnic state could be achieved only through a combination of political and economic centralism and limited 'self-determination' for non-Russian peoples, especially in the ethno-cultural sphere. This strategy was realised by the application of Stalin's plan of national-territorial delimitation, under which some nationalities were classified as 'first-class', 'second-class' or even 'third class', while others were not recognised at all and were incorporated within larger ethnic communities. Only fifteen out of a hundred nationalities acquired 'first-class status', with their own union republics and more extensive rights; the status of others was either an autonomous republic, province, region, district within a union or republic, or they were denied any form of autonomy or homeland. All unions and autonomous republics had their own legislative, executive and juridical institutions, academies of sciences, mass media, higher schools, national schools using national languages, national theatres and publishing houses. On the other hand, Moscow sought to merge representatives of different ethnic groups into the supra-national entity of 'Soviet people' in order to form a civic Soviet nationality through introducing a Cyrillic alphabet across almost the whole country, the promotion of the Russian language as the lingua franca and the use of Russian in higher education as the sole language of instruction, which facilitated the assimilation of some ethnic groups, especially those deprived of their own territory. Decisions about political recognition of particular ethnic groups tended to be political: for example, Tatars, who had a lengthy tradition of

²⁰³ Roshwald A, *Ethnic Nationalism and the Fall of Empires: Central Europe, Russia and the Middle East, 1914-1923*, London: Routledge, 2001, pp 168-169

²⁰⁴ Carr A, *op cit.*, pp 12-13

statehood, were only granted an autonomous republic within Russia.²⁰⁵ However, the Armenians, in addition to their union republic, also had an autonomous region within Azerbaijan, but the Azerbaijanis who compactly resided in Armenia in greater numbers than those of Armenians in the autonomous region were refused political autonomy in Armenia by both Moscow and the Armenian government.

The establishment of territorial autonomies on an ethnic basis in the union republics created a strong power to keep the latter in constant dependence and prevent any actions which would jeopardise Moscow's interests. The skilful manipulation of the autonomies, part of this well-planned strategy, proved its viability even after these republics regained their independence. This is the best illustration of how ethnic factors and minority rights can be used for separatist purposes and destabilisation of states, especially when they are instigated, directed and supported from outside powers with political interests.

2.3 The Armenian case

Each of the theories on nations raises issues with regard to the Armenian case. By applying primordialist theory, one discovers similarities between it and the views of most scholars who have created an unbreakable direct link between the modern Armenian people and the Armenians of millennia ago. This in its turn raises a question as to the connection between the modern Armenian population of Garabagh and the Christian Albanians of the region whose name appears in primary sources up until the early nineteenth century, whereas no such name can be seen in the sources produced after that period. This suggests that there was a change in the composition of the Armenian people in the nineteenth century. The application of modernist theory raises a question as to the means by which the Christian Albanians of Garabagh were Armenianised in the nineteenth century. The ethno-symbolist approach is helpful in the study of the Armenianisation process.

Examination of the theoretical issues on the definition of borders of the newly emerged states has revealed that the most powerful historical claim to the territory is considered to be the 'historical homeland' of the self-determining people, where it was formed or occupied the

²⁰⁵ Wolczuk K and Yemelianova G, *op cit.*, pp 178-179

territory under consideration earlier than other claimants. Therefore, nationalist activists in the 19th-early 20th centuries, including those among the Armenians, conducted heated debates on the location and borders of these 'national historical homelands'.

All three theories of nationalism have similarities stressing the importance of cultural homogeneity: natural, invented or a combination of both. The typologies of nationalism proposed by Gellner, Anderson and Smith have showed that all three scholars distinguished diaspora nationalism as one of the types of nationalism. The Jewish example raised by Gellner is similar to the Armenian case, since the Armenians were also a diaspora people, although a great number of them, unlike Jews, continued living in their 'historical homeland' in Eastern Anatolia. However, unlike Jews, Armenian nationalism did not end in the declaration of the Armenian state in that 'historical homeland'. Taking into account that the case of Liberia suggests that states can be established without nationalist movements, the Armenian case can be regarded as a distinct case between Liberia, as a dispersed people who established their state without a nationalist movement and not in their 'historical homeland', and Israel, as a result of diaspora nationalism, which led to state construction in the 'historical homeland'.

The positions of Kedourie and Smith show similarities related to ethno-religious communities, which can be applied to the Armenian case and the Jewish example. Religion and confession were the main indicators of Armenianness until the Armenian nationalist movement. It was Christian, including a monophysite identity of Armenians, which was replaced by Armenian ethnic identity under the Armenian nationalist movement. The Jewish and Armenian cases have other similarities as well: neither Israel nor Armenia would have emerged without external power support. As in the Jewish case, this support was crucial in the settlement of the Armenians in the South Caucasus and the declaration of the Armenian Republic in the region, whereas its absence was instrumental in the failure of Armenian nationalism in the Ottoman Empire. As in the case of Israel, the declaration of the Armenian Republic was preceded by waves of voluntary settlements in the area of the state-to-be, war, tragic events and displacement. The declaration of their state was followed with dissatisfaction with their area, wars with their neighbours over territory and subsequent displacement of indigenous populations. Another similarity is that both countries could separate one part of the neighbouring country from another: Nakhchivan and other parts of

Azerbaijan are disconnected from each other through Armenia, whereas Gaza and the West Bank of Palestine were separated from each other through Israel.

The Armenian case demonstrates that the settlement of territorial problems is not a guarantee of stable borders and prevention of further territorial claims. Although the mountainous part of Garabagh was granted ethno-territorial autonomy within Azerbaijan SSR, Armenia was not satisfied with this settlement. Referring to the ‘policy of discrimination’ against Armenians in the Mountainous Garabagh Autonomous *Oblast* (MGAO) of Azerbaijan, which Azerbaijan considered as unsubstantiated,²⁰⁶ Armenia continued making claims to this region up until the last days of the USSR. This led to the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan and resulted in the occupation of the autonomy and surrounding districts of Azerbaijan by Armenia.

The following chapters will test the empirical views of Chapter 1 against the findings from diverse primary and secondary sources and will apply the theoretical approaches discussed in the current chapter to the Armenian case.

²⁰⁶ For a discussion of the Armenian claims on discrimination against Armenians in MGAO see Imranli K, *Sozdanie armyanskogo gosudarstva na Kavkaze: Istoki i posledstviya*, Moscow: Nauchno-izdatel'skiy tsentr 'Ladomir', 2006, pp 190-209

Part 2

Chapter 3: Construction of an ‘Armenian Homeland’ in the Ottoman Empire before the First World War

The notion of the ‘ethnic’ or ‘historical’ homeland, as it crystallised in the nineteenth century, played an important role in the development of nationalist activists’ arguments about nation-states, whose creation they strove to achieve. This chapter explores the process of constructing an ‘Armenian homeland’ in the Ottoman Empire up until the First World War. The Armenian nationalist movement is also discussed. Moreover, the chapter studies the cultural, social, economic and legal situation of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and analyses a change in the attitude of the Armenian nationalist leaders towards the Ottoman rule. The discussion continues with the consideration of the emergence of an article related to the Armenians in the Berlin Treaty of 1878, statistics on the population of the area claimed by the Armenians, interests and policies of the powers-signatories of the Berlin Treaty vis-à-vis the ‘Armenian homeland’ project and related activities of the Armenian revolutionary organisations.

3.1 Construction of the notion of an ‘Armenian homeland’

The notion of an ‘Armenian homeland’ with clear political aims was constructed in the second half of the nineteenth century to include Ottoman provinces in Eastern Anatolia with their scattered historical Armenian minority, as well as parts of two other provinces on the Mediterranean Sea (see Map 5).

Academic conceptions on the Armenian ‘historical homeland’

The current section discusses different scholarly views on the formation of the Armenian people, which are classified as ‘classical’ and ‘revisionist’ conceptions. The ‘mythic’ conception will be discussed in the next chapter.

Supporters of the ‘classical’ conception adhere to the mixed origins of the Armenian people: migrational (from the Balkans) and local (Eastern Anatolian). Thus, in 1908, Nicolas Adontz,

founder of modern Armenian scholarly historiography, wrote that in the seventh century BC, the Phrygians,²⁰⁷ ‘driven out of their territory, crossed the Euphrates and drove a wedge into the local Aramean population. Some of the latter remained in the north, and some in the south, while the conquered middle group mingled with the conquerors. The core of the Armenian nation was formed from this fusion of invading Phrygians and of natives who were in the main of Aramean descent. The best of the double composition of this core is the double name of the Armenians: *Hay* to themselves, *Armenios* to their neighbours, one derived from the invaders, the other from the aborigines.’²⁰⁸

Adontz noted, ‘under the Achaemenids [550 BC-330 BC – I.K.]²⁰⁹ the territory subsequently called Armenia was inhabited by various peoples and made up two satrapies [provinces – I.K.]. The Paktyians and the Armenians, together with their neighbours as far as the Black Sea, formed the Thirteenth satrapy, while the Matienians, Sasprians and Alarodians formed the Eighteenth. On the western border of Armenia lived the Cilicians, and on the eastern one the Matienians. Moreover, the Armenians were separated from the former by the Euphrates, and from the latter by one of the tributaries of the Tigris, probably the Zab.’²¹⁰ In his opinion, ‘other peoples joined the original nucleus, new ethnic currents continually flowed into it from the frontiers, from the lands of Atropatene, Iberia, Cappadocia and Syria.’ The ‘assimilation’ of the peoples, he went on, continued until the early second century BC, ‘when an important period for the Armenians came to an end’,²¹¹ which ‘manifested itself in the formation of a single language accessible to all’.²¹²

As it appears from Adontz’ approach, the formation of the Armenian people in the areas of the above-mentioned two provinces of the Achaemenid Empire, which was confined to Eastern Anatolia, was completed by the second century BC. A similar view was held by Igor Diakonoff, the leading representative of the ‘classical’ conception. According to him, two

²⁰⁷ Note: According to Igor Diakonoff, a movement of Phrygian tribes from the Balkans to the Upper Euphrates took place between the end of the 13th – beginning of the 12th centuries BC through the 10th or 8th centuries BC (Diakonoff I, *The Pre-history of the Armenian People*, Delmar, N.Y.: Caravan books, 1984, p 67).

²⁰⁸ Adontz N, *Armenia in the Period of Justinian: The Political Conditions based on the Naxarar System*, Lisbon: Galouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1970, p 309

²⁰⁹ Note: The Achaemenid Empire was the first Persian Empire, which existed from 550 BC to 330 BC and at its peak extended from Libya to India.

²¹⁰ Adontz N, *op cit.*, p 306

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, p 310

²¹² *Ibid.*, p 307

satrapies existed in the ‘Armenian Highland’,²¹³ which became unilingual, i.e. Armenian-speaking, not later than the end of the first century BC.²¹⁴ Exploring the formation of the Armenian people in the same work in 1968, Diakonoff wrote that the ‘Armenian nation’ was formed from four components in two stages. The first stage, in the 12th-6th centuries BC, which he called the formation of the ‘Old Armenian nation’, included the local population of the Upper Euphrates such as the Hurrians and the Luwians, and the Proto-Armenians (the Mushki (the Assyrians’ name for the Thraco-Phrygian tribes from the Balkans), and possibly the Urumeans, whose origins are very difficult to identify). The second stage in the 5th-2nd centuries BC included the merger of the Urartians, who lived on the upper reaches of the Upper Zab River, next to Van Lake, and further north in the direction of the Araz River, with the ‘Old Armenian nation’. The Hurrians and Urartians constituted the main mass of the ‘nation’ and determined the basic line of biological succession, while the language of the ‘nation’ was taken over from the Proto-Armenians. The Luwians made a less significant contribution²¹⁵ (see Map 1). As for the name of the ‘Armenian nation’, who call themselves *Hay*, Diakonoff supposed that when the Urartians merged with the ‘Old Armenian nation’, the name ‘Hittites’ which the Urartians called the language of the Proto-Armenians, became their own self-designation. ‘Hittites’, which could have sounded like *Hatiyos* in Proto-Armenian, according to the rules of the Old Armenian phonetics, had to develop into *hayo*.²¹⁶

The American scholar of Armenian studies, James Russell, who inclined toward the ‘classical’ conception, wrote that ‘ancient Armenians’ meant a ‘people identifying themselves as such, their main common denominator usually being the Armenian language’.²¹⁷ Based on this, he constructed a tentative model of Armenian origins in the following way: related Phrygian and Armenian populations in the mid-second millennium BC moved from the Balkans to Anatolia, some of whom moved the farthest eastward and became the ancestors of the future Armenian people, interacting in the new area with the local Hurro-Urartians. The

²¹³ Note: For the localisation of the ‘Armenian Highland’ by Igor Diakonoff see the map for chapter ‘Predystoriya drevnevostochnykh tsivilizatsiy: Geografiya drevneyshego Blizhnego Vostoka’ in *Istoriya Drevnego Vostoka. Zarozhdenie drevneyshikh klassovykh obshchestv i pervye ochagi rabovladel’cheskoy tsivilizatsii, chast’ I, Mesopotamiya (pod redaktsiei I.M.D’yakonova)*, Moscow: Glavnaya redaktsiya vostochnoy literatury izdatel’sstva ‘Nauka’, 1983

²¹⁴ Diakonoff I, *op cit.*, p 202, notes 126 and 129

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp 6-7, 67-68, 127-128

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p 127

²¹⁷ Russell J, ‘Formation of the Armenian Nation’ in Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Volume I, New York: St.Martin Press, 2004, p 24

Armenians adopted the name of the ‘Hittite nation’ over whose lands they passed in their eastward migrations from south-eastern Europe, which was perhaps connected to the crisis and decline of the Hittite Empire. The ethnonym *Hay* is possibly the result of the loss of an intervocalic -t-, and comes from an original form *Hati-yos* (Hattian).²¹⁸

The ‘classical’ conception has been challenged by supporters of the ‘revisionist’ conception. According to this conception, put forward in the second half of the 1940s by Soviet scholars, Armenians were not of Balkan-Eastern Anatolian origin, but a mixture of indigenous inhabitants of Eastern Anatolia.²¹⁹ Thus, Grigoriy Kapantsian wrote that the Armenian people was formed from *Hays* in Hayasa-Azzi (1400-700 BC) located between the upper reaches of the Euphrates (Karasu), Chorokh and Araz Rivers through mixture with semi-Syrianised Hurrians (Subarians) in the countries of Arime and Shupria on the upper reaches of the Tigris in the 7th-early 2nd centuries BC²²⁰ (see Map 2).

According to Suren Eremian, the formation of the Armenian people is divided into four periods, corresponding to four ethno-cultural and historical centres in the ‘Armenian plateau’ (see Map 3). The first period: Hayasa-Azzi (15th-13th centuries BC) populated by Mushks–Proto-Armenians–Arimes–Urumeans. The second period: penetration of the Mushks and the Urumeans from the central provinces of Anatolia and Hayasa-Azzi into the territory of Sophena and Arzanena in the upper reaches of the Tigris in around 1165 BC, where a new tribal unity arose on the basis of local Hurrian and Urartian tribes, as well as alien Mushks–Arimes. From now on, he noted, the Assyrians and the Urartians called the country of Shupria ‘Arme’ or ‘Ur(u)me’. The third period: from 860 BC, Armenian tribes penetrated the basin of the Van Lake, i.e. central provinces of Urartu, which promoted the strengthening of the Armenian element in the centre of this state. Eremian considered that the internal crisis of Urartu paved the way for the assimilation of the Urartians by the Armenians, who became one of the main components of the Armenian people. Referring to the Armenian historical

²¹⁸ Ibid., pp 22-24

²¹⁹ Note: Boris Piotrovskiy, Grigoriy Kapantsian and Suren Eremian are famous representatives of the ‘revisionist’ conception. See Piotrovskiy B, *O proiskhozhdenii armyanskogo naroda*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, 1946; Kapantsian G, *Khayasa – kolybel' armyan: Etnogenez armyan i ikh nachalnaya istoriya*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, 1947; Eremian S, ‘Protsess formirovaniya armyanskogo naroda’, *Istoriko-filologicheskii zhurnal*, Izdanie Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, no 2, 1970

²²⁰ Kapantsian G, *Khayasa – kolybel' armyan: Etnogenez armyan i ikh nachalnaya istoriya*, pp 27, 178, 192, 240

tradition, he connected the origins of the Armenians with the town area of Van, the centre of Urartu. In this period, he wrote, *Hayk*, the name that the Armenians called themselves and their country, originating from the ethnonym *Hayasa*, already existed. The fourth period: completion of the formation of the Armenian people in the 6th-5th centuries BC. This period, according to Eremian, was connected with the ‘Ayrarat’ province, which became the ‘attractive centre of the Armenian tribes on their way to final mixture into one people’.²²¹ Later the Armenian people spread to the whole territory of the ‘Armenian plateau’ (see Map 3) and by the second century BC the process of the final formation of the Armenian people was completed.²²² Most scholars, including supporters of the ‘classical’ conception, reject the ‘revisionist’ conception.²²³

Application of the theories on nations to the Armenian case suggests that both conceptions were primordialist, since according to them, the formation of the Armenian people was completed at the latest by the early second century BC in Eastern Anatolia.

Political considerations versus academic conceptions

The Armenian revolutionary movement of the last decades of the nineteenth century brought the issue of the ‘Armenian homeland’ to the forefront. The discussions revealed that the projected homeland was to cover not only the area of both conceptions in Eastern Anatolia, but also parts of the Adana and Halep provinces on the Mediterranean (see Map 5), which they called Cilicia, to be discussed in the current section.

The projected Armenian homeland was also the subject of an interview between the Armenian Istanbul Patriarch, Nerses Varzhapetian, and the British Ambassador to Istanbul, Austin Layard, on 18 March 1878. When the British Ambassador asked the Patriarch ‘what he understood by “Armenia,” and what part of Turkey in Asia he considered ought to be included in the autonomous province that he had in view’, the reply was as follows: ‘Armenia should contain the *Pashalics* [provinces – I.K.] of Van and Sivas, the greater part of that of

²²¹ Eremian S, ‘Protseess formirovaniya armyanskogo naroda’, *Istoriko-filologicheskii zhurnal*, Izdanie Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, no 2, 1970, pp 54-56

²²² Ibid., p 56

²²³ Diakonoff I, *op cit.*, pp 112-115, 120-121; Russell J, *op cit.*, p 26

Diyarbakir, and the ancient kingdom of Cilicia.’²²⁴ In other words, taking into account the administrative divisions of 1877-1878, the ‘Armenia’ of the Patriarch included Van, Bitlis, Mamuret-ul-Aziz, Sivas and Diyarbakyr *vilayets* (provinces), and parts of Adana and Halep *vilayets* (see Map 5).

The Patriarch excluded Erzurum from the list of provinces of his ‘Armenia’, although this province formed part of the ‘Armenian homeland’ according to both conceptions. Taking into account the date of this meeting between the *Yeşilköy* (San-Stefano) Preliminary Treaty of 3 March 1878 and the Berlin Treaty of 13 July 1878, it can be argued that the exclusion of Erzurum from the list was connected to uncertainty around this province, parts of which were ceded to Russia under the San-Stefano Preliminary Treaty.²²⁵

Excluding Erzurum, the Patriarch included Cilicia in his definition of ‘Armenia’. In contrast, the Armenian Echmiadzin Catholicos, Simeon Erevantsi (1763-1780), had not considered the Cilician Kingdom of the 12th-14th centuries as Armenian land either, when talking one century earlier about the Cilician Kingdom and the situation of Armenians there. He wrote that ‘when the seat of Catholicos had been transferred to Rum-Kale [in 1117 - I.K.], our people started gradually moving there; clerics and laypeople even established a kingdom there for a while. However, as the land was Greek, and inhabited by Greeks, our settlers mixed with them and adopted their customs, manners, language, dress, food and other features of daily life to the extent that only the name ‘Armenian’ and ‘Gregorian’ confession (and even this not fully) still belonged to us.’²²⁶ The comparison of the views of the Armenian Echmiadzin Catholicos and Armenian Istanbul Patriarch suggests that the aim of the Patriarch’s inclusion of Cilicia in the notion of ‘Armenia’ was political: to provide access to the Mediterranean Sea.

The immediate objectives of the main Armenian political parties, *Hnchak* (Bell) and *Dashnaktsutiun* (Federation), established in 1887 and 1890 respectively, were connected with

²²⁴ *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians. Volume I (1856-1880)*, Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1982, no 64, p 160

²²⁵ Note: Although under the San-Stefano Preliminary Treaty, Ardahan, Kars, Bayazyt and Eleşkirt (Toprakkale) in Erzurum province were ceded to Russia; however, under the Berlin Treaty, Bayazyt and Eleşkirt were returned back to the Ottoman Empire.

²²⁶ Erevantsi S, *Dzhambr. Pamyatnaya kniga, zertsalo i sbornik vsekh obstoyatel'stv Svyatogo prestola Echmiadzina i okrestnykh monastyrey* (perevod s drevnearmyanskogo S.Malkhasiantsa pod redaktsiey i s predisloviem P.Arutyuniana), Moscow: Izdatel'stvo vostochnoy literatury, 1958, p 125

the Ottoman territories and were ‘political and national independence of Turkish Armenia’ (according to the programme of the *Hnchak* Party) or ‘political and economic freedom of Turkish Armenia’ (according to the first programme of 1892 of the *Dashnaktsutiun* Party).²²⁷ Although it is quite clear that by ‘Armenian homeland’ these parties meant Ottoman territories, they did not list the names of the places which they included in so-called Turkish Armenia. Nevertheless, as the activities of these parties covered six main Eastern Anatolian provinces (Van, Bitlis, Diyarbakyr, Mamuret-ul-Aziz, Sivas and Erzurum) and parts of Adana and Halep provinces, it can be concluded that by so-called Turkish Armenia, Armenian political parties meant the above-mentioned provinces (see Map 5).

As for the Armenians of the South Caucasus, in the words of Richard Hovannisian, by the end of the nineteenth century, they had ‘definite aspirations’: not independence, but ‘local native administration’ and the division of South Caucasus into ‘distinct ethnic provinces’.²²⁸ According to Hovannisian, for them, ‘the land on which they lived often seemed much less significant’ and ‘warranted less attention than the “real homeland,” Turkish Armenia’.²²⁹ ‘The traditional Armenia, the focus of nineteenth-century reform and revolutionary movements,’ Hovannisian wrote, ‘lay to the west in Turkish Armenia’.²³⁰ A similar view can be found in Bagrat Borian’s quotation from the 1876 Armenian source, ‘Forts’: ‘Turkish “Armenia should be recognised as Armenia by the Sublime Porte, and when it comes to the question of the Armenians, this territory should be considered their fatherland and the source of their rights [...] The attention of all Armenians should be called solely to this country.”’²³¹ The words of Bogos Nubar Pasha, Head of the Armenian National Delegation representing the Ottoman Armenians at the Paris Peace Conference, and his supporters about the first Armenian Republic saying that ‘the existing small republic [...] was not established in the historic lands of Armenia’²³² suggest that, even in the early twentieth century, Ottoman Armenian

²²⁷ Nalbandian L, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement: The Development of Armenian Political Parties through the Nineteenth Century*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1963, pp 108, 167

²²⁸ Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967, p 23

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ Hovannisian R, *The Republic of Armenia. Volume I. The First Year, 1918-1919*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971, p 259

²³¹ Borian B, *Armeniya, mezhdunarodnaya diplomatiya i SSSR*, chast’ I, Moscow-Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel’stvo, 1928, p 223

²³² Payaslian S, *The History of Armenia*, New York; Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p 153

nationalist activists did not consider the territory of the Armenian Republic to be the ‘historical homeland’ of the Armenians.

3.2 Armenian diaspora nationalism

Diaspora, according to its broad definition by Walker Connor, is ‘that segment of a people living outside the homeland’.²³³ As discussed in the previous section, according to the academic conceptions, the ‘Armenian homeland’ was in Eastern Anatolia, where it was formed as a people. Consequently, the Armenians who lived outside Eastern Anatolia could be classified as the diaspora. This was the place where the Armenian nationalist movement originated.

The initial period of the national movement, which Miroslav Hroch called Phase A – ‘inquiry into and dissemination of an awareness of the linguistic, cultural, social and sometimes historical attributes of the non-dominant group’²³⁴ – in the Armenian case started in the early eighteenth century and included the works of Catholic Mekhitarists²³⁵ of Istanbul, Venice and Vienna on grammars of vernacular and classic Armenian, the dictionary of the Armenian language, and the publication of works of ancient Armenian historians. The first history written by Mekhitarists themselves in the person of Mik’ayel Ch’amch’yants’, which was published in three volumes in 1784-1786, was followed by researches of other Mekhitarists, who focused on the archaeology, ethnography and geography of ancient Armenia.²³⁶ Their ‘ancient Armenia’ included territories in the South Caucasus.

²³³ Cited in Safran W, ‘Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return’, *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, vol 1, no 1, 1991, p 83

²³⁴ Hroch M, ‘From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation: The Nation-Building Process in Europe’ in Eley and Suny (ed.), *Becoming National: A Reader*, New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, p 63

²³⁵ Note: Mekhitarists were named after Mekhitar from Sivas, originally Gregorian, who converted to Catholicism and founded the congregation in 1701 in Istanbul as a Benedictine order. Unable to withstand the harassment of the Armenian Gregorian Patriarchate in Istanbul, he left for Venice in 1715 and was given the island of St.Lazarus by the Venetian Republic in 1717, where the still-existing monastery of the Congregation, named after Mekhitar after his death, was established. Nalbandian wrote that the Order also had a branch in Trieste, which moved to Vienna in 1811 (Nalbandian L, *op cit.*, p 33). However, according to Vahe Oshagan, the Mekhitarists of Vienna broke away from the congregation in Venice (Oshagan V, ‘Modern Armenian Literature and Intellectual History’ in Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Volume II, New York: St.Martin Press, 2004, p 157).

²³⁶ Note: For the part played by Mekhitarists in the ‘Armenian national awakening’ see, among others, Nalbandian L, *op cit.*, pp 32-34; Oshagan V, *op cit.*, pp 139-174; Ch’amch’yants’ M, *History of Armenia: From B.C. 2247 to the Year of Christ 1780 or 1229 of the Armenian Era* (translated from the original Armenian text by Johannes Avdall), Volume I, Calcutta: Bishop’s College Press, 1827, pp XXIV-XXXV; Bardakjian K, *The*

The Armenian diaspora in the Russian Empire also passed Phase A. However, this phase was mixed with Phase B features of Hroch, when ‘a new range of activists emerged, who now sought to win over as many of their ethnic group as possible to the project of creating a future nation, by patriotic agitation to “awaken” national consciousness among them’.²³⁷ The foundation of the Lazarev Institute and its press in Moscow accordingly in 1815 and 1829, with the Armenological direction which it gained by 1850, and the establishment of the Nersesian College in Tiflis in 1824,²³⁸ where the first steps in forging the modern literary Armenian in Russia were taken, can serve as evidence. The process was finalised in 1855 with the publication in vernacular Armenian of the poetry of Rafael Patkanov. The son of a Mekhitarist-trained father and famous for his nationalistic poems, Patkanov was the founder of the first newspaper in modern Armenian in the Russian Empire, entitled *Ararat* (1850-1852).²³⁹ The same happened in the Armenian diaspora of Istanbul, where Phase A, which had started in the early eighteenth century, continued into the second half of the nineteenth century²⁴⁰ and was mixed with the features of Phase B, which started around the mid-nineteenth century.²⁴¹

Mekhitarist Contributions to Armenian Culture and Scholarship. Notes to accompany an exhibit of Armenian printed books in the Widener Library displayed on the 300th anniversary of Mekhitar of Sebastia, 1676-1749, Boston: Middle Eastern Department, Harvard College Library; Panossian R, *The Armenians: From Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars*, London: Hurst and Company, 2006, pp 101-188

²³⁷ Hroch M, *loc cit.*

²³⁸ Oshagan V, *op cit.*, pp 148-150; Vigasin A, Khokhlov A, Shastitko P (ed.), *Istoriya otechestvennogo vostokovedeniya s serediny XIX veka do 1917 goda*, Moscow: Izdatel'skaya firma 'Vostochnaya literatura' Rossiyskoy Akademii Nauk, 1997, pp 27-29, 32

²³⁹ Oshagan V, *op cit.*, pp 149-150; Note: According to Ronald Suny, *Ararat* was printed from 1849 to 1851, when it was closed by the censor ‘for a trivial breach of decorum’ (Suny R, *Looking toward Ararat: Armenia in Modern History*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993, p 59).

²⁴⁰ Note: In 1851, Paris-educated Gregor Otian published a pamphlet on a proposal to modify the Armenian vernacular and make it the common language, and in 1853, Nahapet Rusinian, also Paris-educated, published a book on the correct speaking of modern Armenian. Although the use of this book was prohibited by a patriarchal declaration in 1855, attempts to reform the language were carried out in the pages of Armenian journals. *Masis* journal, previously called *Hayastan*, the official organ of the patriarchate, became the most widely read Armenian journal in the Ottoman Empire from 1852 to 1907. It introduced Western ideas to Armenians and made attempts to purify the Armenian vernacular language from foreign words (Artinian V, *The Armenian Constitutional System in the Ottoman Empire (1839-1863): A Study of its Historical Development*, Istanbul, 1988, pp 68, 70-72).

²⁴¹ Note: If in 1847 there were twenty-four Armenian elementary schools in Istanbul, owing to the efforts of the Armenian youth who studied in Europe their number increased by 1859 to forty-two schools, which taught grammar, geography, history, religion, philosophy, algebra, physics, different languages and music. By the last decades of the nineteenth century, schools, cultural organisations, clubs, printing and periodic presses and theatres had been organised as forums for nationalist activities (Artinian V, *op cit.*, p 70; Oshagan V, *op cit.*, 160).

Phase C, the formation of mass movement with political programmes,²⁴² did not happen simultaneously in all Armenian diaspora communities either. The Armenian community of Madras had already published two works²⁴³ in 1772/1773 and 1787/1788, the most remarkable feature of which, according to Sebouh Aslanian, was ‘their radical re-imagining of the nation’s “center” [...] Breaking away from traditional modes of thinking, these works advocated that such a center could only be located on the native territory of the homeland, the myth-symbol complex represented by the land of Ararat. More importantly, they asserted that only a popularly elected senate or parliament [...] not the sacral institution of Echmiadzin and its ruling Catholicos – could serve the role of “centering center” for the Armenian nation.’²⁴⁴ Another representative of the Armenian community of British India from Calcutta, Joseph Emin, also published his ideas about the ‘liberation of Armenians through education and armed struggle’ in London in 1792.²⁴⁵ This Phase C also contained features of Phases A and B, since the Armenian diaspora of India was active in the publication of different journals and translation of the works of European authors, as well as in financing the publication of works of Catholic Mekhitarists in Venice and Trieste and their dissemination among world Armenians.²⁴⁶ Phase C in the Armenian diaspora of Russia started in the second half of the nineteenth century,²⁴⁷ almost a century later than that of the British Indian diaspora.

The Armenian ‘historical homeland’ in Eastern Anatolia was the last place reached by Hroch’s Phase A in the second half of the nineteenth century: this was also mixed with elements of Phases B and C.²⁴⁸ Although Louise Nalbandian wrote that the first Armenian

²⁴² Hroch M, *loc cit.*

²⁴³ Note: The first work published in 1772/1773 was titled *Nor tetrak or kochi yordorak* (New Book Called Exhortation) and the second work published in 1787/1788 was titled *Orogayt parats* (Book Entitled the Snare of Glory) (Aslanian S, *Dispersion history and the polycentric nation: the role of Simeon Erevantsi’s Girk or Koci Partavcar in the 18th century national revival*, Venice: S.Lazarus, 2004, pp 65, 69).

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p 69

²⁴⁵ Oshagan V, *op cit.*, p 145

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp 146-148

²⁴⁷ Note: The first Armenian revolutionary societies, *Barenepatak Enkeruthiun* (Goodwill Society) and *Kontora Hairenaitis Siro* (Fatherland Bureau), were established in Alexandropol, Russia respectively in 1868 and in 1874. The primary aim of these societies was the organisation of revolutionary resistance in Eastern Anatolia with the purpose of detaching the Armenian-populated provinces from the Ottoman Empire (Nalbandian L, *op cit.*, pp 133-135).

²⁴⁸ Note: Sanasarian College in Erzurum, the Normal School in Van, and the seminaries of the different monasteries in Eastern Anatolia were established in the second half of the nineteenth century. Protestant missionaries also established various schools and colleges in Mamuret-ul-Aziz, Marash and other parts of Eastern Anatolia. The first journal in the Armenian homeland *Ardzvi Vaspurakan* (Eagle of Vaspurakan) was published by Mkrtich Khrimian (patriarch of the Ottoman Armenians in 1869-1873 and the Catholicos of All

political party, *Armenakan*, was founded in Van, Eastern Anatolia, in 1885; she additionally noted that its founder was Istanbul-born Mkrtych Portukalian, a son of a wealthy Armenian banker, whose activities were directed by Armenian political and revolutionary leaders in Russia.²⁴⁹ According to Vardan Parsamian, the party was founded in Marseilles, France.²⁵⁰ The analysis of the information given by both Armenian historians demonstrates that the most important component of Phase C originated in the diaspora, like the other Armenian political parties *Hnchak*²⁵¹ and *Dashnaktsutiun*²⁵² which were founded in Geneva in 1887 and in Tiflis in 1890 respectively.

The above-mentioned facts show that although the Armenian national movement contained features of Hroch's three phases, these phases did not replace each other in chronological order, since each phase contained elements of the other two. In turn, the typology of national movements offered by Hroch for European countries applies fully to the Armenian case, as national movement acquired a mass character under the old regime and produced armed insurrections.²⁵³

Since all phases of the Armenian national movement started in the diaspora and were only later brought to the Armenian 'historical homeland' in Eastern Anatolia, the Armenian case

Armenians at Echmiadzin in 1893-1907), at the monastery of Varag in Van in 1858, which then moved to the monastery of St.Karapet in Mush in 1863 (Nalbandian L, *op cit.*, pp 50, 54).

²⁴⁹ Nalbandian L, *op cit.*, p 90

²⁵⁰ Parsamian V, *Istoriya armyanskogo naroda (1801-1900 gg.). Kniga pervaya*, p 315

²⁵¹ Note: The *Hnchakian* Revolutionary Party (commonly referred to as *Hnchak* (Bell)) was founded in Geneva in 1887 by six Armenian youths from Russia studying in France and Switzerland. According to the programme of the party, which was adopted in 1886 as a plan of its future organisation by the committee of these students, its immediate objective was the establishment of an independent Armenia in the territory of the Ottoman Empire. Revolutionary activity in the latter through the methods of propaganda, agitation, terror, organisation, and peasant and worker activities was considered to be the only means of achieving this objective. The most opportune time for the general rebellion was considered to be when the Ottoman Empire was engaged in a war. Once this goal was achieved, it would have been extended into the Russian and Persian territories with the purpose of establishing a politically independent Armenian federative democratic republic, with the future objective of a socialistic society for all humanity (Nalbandian L, *op cit.*, pp 108-112).

²⁵² Note: *Hai Heghapokhakan Dashnaktsuthiun* (the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, commonly referred to as *Dashnaktsutiun* (Federation)) was founded in 1890 in Tiflis by the merger of different Armenian groups, primarily in Russia, and became the most influential and long-standing party in Armenian history. According to the first programme of the party, which was adopted in 1892, its immediate objective was 'political and economic freedom of Turkish Armenia' (Nalbandian L, *op cit.*, pp 151-152, 167). When the party was established, there was widespread feeling among the Armenians that the 'Sick Man of Europe' (the Ottoman Empire) needed only a spark to start a revolution that would overthrow the regime. The Armenian revolutionaries thought that they could serve as such a spark (Ibid., p 160; Libaridian G, 'Revolution and Liberation in the 1892 and 1907 Programs of the Dashnaktsutiun' in Suny (ed.), *Transcaucasia: Nationalism and Social Change*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983, p 191).

²⁵³ Hroch M, *op cit.*, p 64

can be classified as Gellner and Smith's diaspora nationalism. Anderson's 'long-distance nationalism' classification can also be applicable to the Armenian case as nationalism of the people who lived away from their 'homelands'.

3.3 Armenian political aspirations in the projected homeland

Armenian life in the Ottoman Empire can be divided into two periods: before and after the late nineteenth century nationalist movement, which had its origins in the Ottoman-Russian war of 1877-1878. One of the Russian aims in this war was to separate the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire, which were populated by, among other peoples, Christian Armenians. This war brought a visible change in the attitude of the Ottoman Armenian nationalists, headed by the Armenian Istanbul Patriarch, towards the Ottoman Government. However, this change was not of a mass character. It was the activities of Armenian political organisations in the late nineteenth century that mobilised the Armenian masses in the eastern provinces against the government and Muslims and brought about a significant deterioration in Ottoman-Armenian relations.

Ottoman Armenians before the 1877-1878 Ottoman-Russian War

In 1876, when Bulgarians of the Ottoman Empire rebelled, the Ottoman Sultan appealed to all Ottoman subjects to support the government in the current situation. Armenian Istanbul Patriarch Varzhapetian appealed to the Armenian community of the Empire as follows: if the Armenian nation had survived so far as a nation and preserved its religion, church and language, and historical and cultural values, all these were because of the patronage, support and sympathetic attitude of the Ottoman Government. The Armenians were obliged to help the Ottoman State, enrolling in the Ottoman Army and defending the 'homeland' for the sake of 'national interest and pride'.²⁵⁴

The Armenian Patriarch's appeal suggests the following vision: first, the Ottoman Empire was considered the 'homeland' of the Armenians; second, the Armenian nation had survived

²⁵⁴ Borian B, *Armeniya, mezhdunarodnaya diplomatiya i SSSR*, chast' I, Moscow-Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1928, p 228

by 1876 owing to the Ottoman Government; and third, the ‘national interest and pride’ of the Armenians were synonymous to those of the Ottoman State. Although it should be acknowledged that the statement was made under particular political and historical circumstances, which might have shaped the position which the Patriarch felt obliged to articulate, the relatively good condition of non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire are indeed documented by historians.

Thus, examining the situation of the Ottoman, especially Eastern Anatolian, Armenians until the mid-nineteenth century, Hagop Barsoumian wrote that it was on an individual level that the non-Muslims of the Ottoman Empire felt discrimination in the legal, social and financial spheres most strongly. The distinctive clothing, the show of deference to Muslims, the interdiction against non-Muslims to bear arms or to ride on a horse and the non-acceptance of the testimony of a non-Muslim against a Muslim in a court of law were still in evidence.²⁵⁵

It should be mentioned that the problems mentioned by Barsoumian were eliminated at least on paper with the Imperial Edicts of 1839 and 1856. These *Tanzimat* (Reform) laws ‘enunciated the abolition of tax farming and abuses associated with it, the establishment of a regular system of taxation, and the setting up of an orderly recruitment for the army. It also provided for public and fair trial for all crimes, as well as equality before the law for all subjects “of whatever religion or sect they may be”.’²⁵⁶ In 1855, the poll tax was abolished and conscription into the army for non-Muslims recognised, with the option of paying an exemption tax.²⁵⁷ Despite this law, it was only in 1912 that Christians were enlisted in the Ottoman Army for the first time, for the Balkan War.²⁵⁸

The legal, social and economic problems which Armenians faced did not exclude Eastern Anatolian Muslims. William Palgrave, British Consul to Trabzon, in his report of 1868, wrote that ‘the Christians have at the capital and throughout the Empire as many Courts of Appeal and redress-demanding representatives as there are Consulates, Agencies, and, sometimes,

²⁵⁵ Barsoumian H, ‘The Eastern Question and the Tanzimat Era’ in Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Volume II, New York: St.Martin Press, 2004, pp 182-183

²⁵⁶ Ibid., p 181

²⁵⁷ Ibid., p 182

²⁵⁸ Walker Ch, ‘World War I and the Armenian Genocide’, in Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Volume II, New York: St.Martin Press, 2004, p 243

Embassies, at hand. Indeed, not only are their complaints listened to when made, but even fabricated for them when not made.’²⁵⁹ However, ‘the Mahometan population is absolutely “unrepresented,” at the central, irresponsible, and dissevered government of Constantinople, where the Mahometan subjects of the Sultan have really no one to whom they can make known their interests or expose their wrongs.’ The British Consul concluded that ‘as matters now stand, the Ottoman Government lies under the very serious charge of oppressing its Mahometan in favour of its Christian subjects. I regret to have to confirm the charge.’²⁶⁰ As Palgrave claimed, the grievances of the Eastern Anatolian population were connected not with their ethnic origin or religion, but with the maladministration of the Ottoman Government. This weakness affected the Muslim population of the Empire more than its Christian population, since the grievances of the latter were at least heard by the Ottoman State under the pressure of the Great Powers, whereas the Muslims were helpless from both sides.

Concerning the economic situation of the Armenians in the Empire, Barsoumian wrote that urban Armenians kept commerce and most of the handicrafts in Eastern Anatolia under their control, but they had been in slow decline since the eighteenth century, which accelerated after the 1830s as they could not compete with better quality and cheaper European goods. This resulted in the disappearance of some of these handicrafts, which affected Armenian society in the provinces.²⁶¹ The decline of the handicrafts, however, affected Muslims in far larger numbers than non-Muslims, including Armenians.²⁶²

As for the rural Armenians, Barsoumian added that during the long centuries of Ottoman rule, Armenian peasants lost fertile and well-maintained pieces of their land to Turks or Kurds. The latter lent the Armenian peasants money at rates of 50 percent interest or more, which would force the peasants to sell their land to pay back this money, turning them into landless peasants.²⁶³ The problem also affected the Muslims of the Empire, including those in Eastern Anatolia, where Muslim Kurds were turned into landless peasants working as serfs for their

²⁵⁹ *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians. Volume I (1856-1880)*, no 23, p 52

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp 52-53

²⁶¹ Barsoumian H, *op cit.*, p 192

²⁶² Issawi Ch, ‘The Transformation of the Economic Position of the *Millets* in the Nineteenth Century’ in Braude and Lewis (ed.), *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society. Volume I, The Central Lands*, New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982, p 272

²⁶³ Barsoumian H, *op cit.*, p 193

Kurdish chieftains.²⁶⁴ Charles Issawi wrote that the Turks, handicapped by conscription, fell into the hands of Armenian, Greek or European bankers to whom the whole property or estate was soon sacrificed.²⁶⁵ According to Feroz Ahmad, after the reform edicts, rural moneylenders were largely non-Muslims: peasants in the countryside became dependent on them and sometimes gave up their land in lieu of debts. He argued that the reason was a marked increase in commercial activity which forced the peasantry to produce more and more for the market so as to be able to pay their taxes and buy imported necessities.²⁶⁶

Barsoumian wrote that the number of landless Armenian peasants grew rapidly in the 1860s and 1870s, especially in mixed areas of Armenians and Kurds. But Bagrat Borian demonstrated the opposite. Referring to the Tiflis Armenian newspaper *Mshak* (Labourer) in 1877-1878, he wrote that during the military campaign of Russia against the Ottoman Empire, the Russian Army saw rich Armenian villages in Eastern Anatolia with full barns and great numbers of cattle that none of the *guberniyas* (provinces) in the South Caucasus had.²⁶⁷ Borian, based on Sarkisian, continued that 'the Armenian peasant in Turkey does not complain of shortage of arable land as we see in Alexandropol *guberniya*' and that 'public landownership in Turkey does not exist' and land ownership depended on one's own resources. The economic conditions of Christian peasants were better than those of Muslim Turks, Kurds and others.²⁶⁸

Vladimir Mayewski, the Russian Consul-General to Van and Erzurum, wrote in 1916 that Armenian peasants of the Ottoman Empire always had great abundance of food and their material welfare was higher than that of Russian peasants in central Russia. However, he noted that villagers of Eastern Anatolia, including Muslims, were not protected from the arbitrariness of violent elements among the Kurds, but this does not mean that Armenian peasants lived constantly under the fear of Kurdish massacre. If this was the case, then the

²⁶⁴ Borian B, *op cit.*, p 180

²⁶⁵ Issawi Ch, *op cit.*, p 276

²⁶⁶ Ahmad F, *From Empire to Republic: Essays on the late Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Volume II, Istanbul: Istanbul Bilgi University Press, 2008, pp 4-5

²⁶⁷ Borian B, *op cit.*, p 178

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire would have become poorer and even disappeared.²⁶⁹

Armenian peasants, according to Barsoumian, also paid different taxes (official taxes like the tithe of annual produce, property taxes, taxes for the use of roads, for birth, marriage and death, for the transfer of goods, war taxes and non-official taxes to Kurdish or Turkish chieftains, who 'owned' or 'protected' the village or the district), which varied from place to place and from year to year. The Armenian peasants paid dues and gave gifts to their churches and clerics, made donations at the birth and baptism of a child, at marriage and death and on religious feast days. The peasants also worked without pay for a certain number of days on land owned by the church or the nearby monastery.²⁷⁰

Concerning the official taxes, according to Barsoumian, it was the Armenian Istanbul Patriarch, the head of the Armenian *millet* (Armenian nation), which included monophysite Armenians, Assyrians (Jacobites), Copts and Nestorians, who was responsible for the collection of state taxes from members of his community. The patriarch himself was exempt from taxation and had the power to appoint state tax collectors.²⁷¹

Here it is necessary to touch upon the issue of taxes paid by non-Muslims for exemption from military service. The British Consul to Trabzon, Palgrave, in his report of 1868, wrote that 'the whole burden of military service, active and reserve, falls exclusively on the Mahomedan population. The Christians do indeed pay into the public Treasury a small – a trifling sum, bearing no real proportion soever to the advantages it obtains them for their exemption; but, even were the 'Bedel Askeri,' or Ransom Service Tax [military exemption tax – I.K.], weighty enough to balance the effective value of such exemption to the Christians, it could never equipoise the misery which it entails on the Mahomedan fellow-subjects by the enormous burden of the conscription thus thrown on their unassisted shoulders.' This is the reason why the Muslim population proportionately decreased, and the Christian increased. He added that Muslims were systematically overburdened, not to say oppressed, while the Christians, 'under the protection of advantageous position in the Ottoman Empire, have been

²⁶⁹ Mayewski V, *Les Massacres d'Arménie*, Saint Petersburg, 1916 (in French and Russian), pp 6, 8

²⁷⁰ Barsoumian H, *op cit.*, p 194

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, *op cit.*, pp 182, 184; Artinian V, *op cit.*, pp 11, 37

enriching themselves for the last half century mainly by questionable speculation or by direct fraud and usury'.²⁷²

The Armenians not only enjoyed a relatively good economic position within the Ottoman Empire, they also held high government posts. There were Armenian Pashas (the highest government rank), ministers, senators and deputies in the first Ottoman parliament in 1876, Under-Secretaries of State, a number of ambassadors, consuls-general and consuls, many counsellors, directors, Councillors of State, deputy governors-general of provinces and sub-governors of districts, university professors and many other high ranking civil servants.²⁷³

As for the Armenian peasants compelled to work without pay on land owned by the churches or monasteries, this was an internal issue of the Armenian *millet*, in which the Ottoman Government did not interfere. The Armenian Istanbul Patriarch, as the head of the *millet*, enjoyed complete jurisdiction over the religious, charitable and educational institutions of the Armenian *millet* and had his own court and prison, where he could try all cases except those involving 'public security and crime'.²⁷⁴

The above-mentioned evidence demonstrates that the legal, social and economic problems of the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire, including Eastern Anatolia, were common to the entire population of the Empire. The Armenians – regardless of whether they were contented or discontented with their situation – who did not seem to be complaining until the reform edicts of 1839 and 1856, which benefited the Ottoman Christians more than the Muslims, started complaining after them, especially that of 1856. The power behind this process can be explained by Phase B, both in the 'diaspora' and 'homeland'.

Anthony Smith explains the change of stable, if sometimes uneasy, relations between the populations of the Eastern Europe and parts of the Middle East that had long lived side by side into competition and even conflict by their intense preoccupation with 'authentic' vernacular culture and history.²⁷⁵ This view is applicable to the Armenian case in the sense

²⁷² *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians. Volume I (1856-1880)*, no 23, pp 51-52

²⁷³ Sonyel S, *op cit.*, p 26

²⁷⁴ Barsoumian H, *op cit.*, pp 184-185

²⁷⁵ Smith A, *National identity*, p 130

that it was during and after the Phase B of the Armenian national movement that the relations between the Muslims and Armenians started to deteriorate.

Armenian nationalist activists stressed the intolerable situation of the Armenians under Ottoman rule. The evidence is more ambiguous. The Armenian Patriarch in 1876 made a pro-Ottoman appeal to the Ottoman Armenians. However, following the success of Russia in the Russian–Ottoman war of 1877-1878, the same Patriarch voiced complaints against the Ottoman Government and came out in favour of the ‘Armenian homeland’ project which will be discussed further in the thesis. This demonstrates that the views of the Armenian nationalist leaders, including the Patriarch, on the situation of the Armenians were conditioned by political expediency. The change in position of the Armenian nationalist leaders can be explained by the changing political circumstances: the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in its frequent wars with Christian powers which, together with the success of the nationalist rebellions of the Balkan Christians, accompanied its gradual decay, and the increase in Armenian national and political awareness. These factors gave stimulus to Armenian self-confidence: their nationalist leaders started thinking that they could take control of the destiny of their people and construct a ‘national homeland’, following the example of other Christians, in Eastern Anatolia with Great Power help. The turning point was the Russian success in 1877-1878 in the Ottoman-Russian war.

Ottoman Armenians after the 1877-1878 Ottoman-Russian War

The Russian success in the Ottoman-Russian war brought about visible changes in the positions of the nationalist leaders of the Ottoman Armenians. In accordance with the *Edirne* (Adrianople) Armistice, signed on 31 January 1878, Bulgaria was declared an autonomous principality, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro won independence, and Bosnia and Herzegovina became autonomous provinces.²⁷⁶ Thus, with the Adrianople Armistice, which declared Bulgaria an autonomous principality, Russia lost its pretext of interfering in Ottoman affairs and was in need of a new tool. The Armenians, whom the Armistice did not mention, became this tool. The active engagement of the Russian authorities with the Armenian clergy

²⁷⁶ Imranli K, *Sozdanie armyanskogo gosudarstva na Kavkaze: Istoki i posledstviya*, Moscow: Nauchno-izdatel'skiy tsentr 'Ladomir', 2006, p 12; the source cited by Imranli K: *Sbornik dogovorov Rossii s drugimi gosudarstvami (1856-1917)*, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoy literatury, 1952, p 168

resulted in the inclusion of Article XVI on the Armenians in the text of the San-Stefano Preliminary Treaty of 3 March 1878. The article read: ‘As the evacuation by the Russian troops of the territory, which they occupy in Armenia and is to be restored to Turkey, might give rise to clashes and complications detrimental to the good relations between the two countries, the Sublime Porte undertakes to carry out, without any delay, the improvements and reforms deriving from the local requirements in the provinces inhabited by Armenians, and to guarantee their security from Kurds and Circassians.’²⁷⁷

The Armenian-Kurdish problem was mentioned above. According to Stephan Astourian, the Armenian-Circassian problem was related to the land seizure issues which arose as a result of the settlement of Circassian refugees from Russia in the Ottoman Empire between 1856 and 1878, including in Zeytun, Hajin and Marash in Cilicia.²⁷⁸

Although the word ‘Armenia’ was used for the first time in an international pact, in the San-Stefano Treaty, Armenian leaders were not satisfied with it, as it did not mention anything about autonomy. Britain was also unsatisfied with this treaty, as it would jeopardise its interests in the East.²⁷⁹ For that reason, Britain declared that no separate Russian-Ottoman treaty, which would change the conditions of the Paris Treaty (1856) and London Convention (1871),²⁸⁰ could be considered legal without the consent of the other European powers.²⁸¹ In order to get this consent, it was decided to convene a conference in Berlin, where on 8 July 1878 the article proposed by Britain was adopted. Article LXI of the Berlin Treaty of 13 July

²⁷⁷ *Sbornik dogovorov Rossii s drugimi gosudarstvami (1856-1917)*, p 168

²⁷⁸ Astourian S, ‘The Silence of Land: Agrarian Relations, Ethnicity, and Power’ in Suny, Gocek and Naimark (ed.), *Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the end of the Ottoman Empire*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, pp 59-60, 72

²⁷⁹ Note: The Russian annexation of Eastern Anatolia or Batumi, Ardahan and Kars was considered from four points of view with regard to British interests in the East in the letter of Austin Layard, British Ambassador to Istanbul, to the Earl of Derby, British Foreign Secretary on 4 December 1877: 1) its effect upon the Muslim populations of Central Asia and of India; 2) the facilities it would afford to Russia for further conquests in Persia and Asia-Minor; 3) its consequences for the direct British communication with India; and 4) its impact upon British commerce. Taking into account these implications for the British interests, Britain on 4 June 1878 concluded a secret agreement with the Ottoman Empire, according to which, in return for the Sultan’s consent to the occupation and administration of Cyprus by Britain, the latter would defend by force the Sultan in Batumi, Ardahan, Kars or any of them if they should be retained by Russia and if any attempt shall be made at any future time by Russia to take possession of any further portion of the Asiatic territories of the Sultan (*British Documents on Ottoman Armenians. Volume I (1856-1880)*, no 50, p 135; no 72, p 179).

²⁸⁰ Note: Under the Paris Treaty of 1856, the Black Sea was declared neutral and access was closed to all warships. The article was amended by the London Convention of 1871, which eliminated the restriction to Russian military presence at the Black Sea. The London Convention also stipulated that articles of the Paris Treaty, except for the amended ones, could not be revised without the consent of all powers-signatories.

²⁸¹ *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians. Volume I (1856-1880)*, no 50, p 135

1878 replaced Article XVI of the San-Stefano Preliminary Treaty in the following edition: ‘The Sublime Porte undertakes to carry out, without any delay, improvements and reforms deriving from local needs in the provinces populated by Armenians, and to guarantee their security from Circassians and Kurds. It will regularly report on the measures taken to that end to the powers, which will observe their implementation.’²⁸²

Thus, the word ‘Armenia’ of Article XVI of the San-Stefano Preliminary Treaty was replaced by the ‘provinces populated by Armenians’ in Article LXI of the Berlin Treaty, which was signed by Russia, Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Austro-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, the preference the San-Stefano Preliminary Treaty gave to Russia in the observation of the implementation of the reforms in Eastern Anatolia was replaced by the observation of six powers-signatories.

Statistics on the provinces populated by Armenians

The implementation of the Berlin Treaty, first of all, necessitated the definition of the area inhabited by Armenians. According to the British project of August 1881, the ‘country inhabited by Armenians’ covered the *vilayets* (provinces) of Erzurum, Van, Bitlis, Mamuret-ul-Aziz, Diyarbakyr (excluding Malatya *sanjak* (county)); *sanjaks* of Sivas, Karahisar and Tokat of the *vilayet* of Sivas, Marash *sanjak* of the *vilayet* of Halep and part of Sis *sanjak* of the *vilayet* of Adana²⁸³ (see Map 5).

The tables below provide statistics on the Armenian and Muslim population of the above-mentioned six main provinces on the basis of Armenian Istanbul Patriarch (1881), official Ottoman (1890) and European (1892) sources (see Tables 3.1 and 3.2). As is seen from these tables, the figures of the Armenian Patriarch are of 1881, whereas those of the Ottoman Ministry of Justice and Vital Cuinet, a French geographer, are closer, in 1890 and 1892. However, the differences were more likely related to inaccuracy rather than time, since such huge difference between the first and other two sources cannot be a matter of growth over ten years.

²⁸² Parsamian V, *op cit.*, pp 290-291; *Sbornik dogovorov Rossii s drugimi gosudarstvami (1856-1917)*, p 205

²⁸³ *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians. Volume II (1880-1890)*, Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1983, no 124, p 337; no 105, pp 298-299

Thus, according to the Patriarch's figures, Armenians constituted a significant majority in Bitlis (86%), a significant minority in Van (40%), Erzurum (41%) and Mamuret-ul-Aziz (about 39%). According to official Ottoman figures, Armenians did not constitute a majority in any of these provinces and had a significant minority in Bitlis (39%). According to Cuinet, Armenians again did not constitute a majority in any of these provinces and had a significant minority in Bitlis (33%).

Examining the issue of the reliability of these sources, the British Foreign Office source noted that Ottoman official figures were based on 'taxation registry and recruiting rolls; consequently they usually tend to underestimate the population, as females are not directly included and the desire to avoid taxation and military service is universal. There is additional difficulty in estimating nomad or migratory tribes.'²⁸⁴ Regarding the Armenian figures, the same source noted, 'there has also been flagrant misrepresentation. Armenian ecclesiastical figures, though usually exaggerated, supply a useful maximum figure.'²⁸⁵

The most reliable statistics, according to the Foreign Office source, were those of Cuinet and Henry Lynch, a British traveller.²⁸⁶ The data provided by Lynch was not complete and covered three provinces and one *sanjak*: the provinces of Erzurum (in 1887: 106,768 Armenians and 428,495 Muslims), Mamuret-ul-Aziz (in 1890: 93,000 Armenians and 182,000 Muslims), and Bitlis (in 1893: 97,184 Armenians and 145,454 Muslims), and the *sanjak* of Van in the Van province (in 1890: 75,644 Armenians and 52,229 Muslims).²⁸⁷

According to the official Ottoman statistics in 1894, there were total 27,208,683 people in the Empire, of whom 21,507,304 were Muslims (79%) and 994,065 were Armenians (3.6%).²⁸⁸ Since we do not possess the same information for the discussed period from the Armenian Istanbul Patriarch and European sources, they are not referred to in the section, but pre-1914 statistics from different sources will be discussed in Chapter 5.

²⁸⁴ FO 371/3405, 'Historical and Ethnological Notes on Armenians', p 7

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ *Sbornik diplomaticheskikh dogovorov*, pril 6, pp 273, 282, 284, 287

²⁸⁸ Karpas K, *Ottoman Population 1830-1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics*, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985, p 155

Table 3.1 Armenian and Muslim population in six eastern provinces: in figures²⁸⁹

Provinces	Armenian Istanbul Patriarch (1881)			Ottoman Ministry of Justice (1890)			Vital Cuinet, French geographer (1892)		
	Arm	Mus	Population in total	Arm	Mus	Population in total	Arm	Mus	Population in total
Erzurum	136,147	196,269	333, 731	109,819	441,671	555, 159	134,967	500,782	645,702
Sivas	243,515	694,030	942,686	118,085	735, 489	892,201	170,433	839,514	1,086,015
Diyarbakyr	-	-	-	55,614	240, 574	312, 444	79,129	328, 644	471,462
Mamuret-ul-Aziz	107,059	169,364	276, 423	80,611	300,194	381,350	69,718	504,946	575,314
Bitlis	130,460	21,121	151, 581	107,804	167,054	276,998	131,390	254,000	398, 625
Van	133,859	107, 726	337, 111	71,582	282,582	418, 494	79,998	241,000	430,000
Total	751,040	1,188,510	2,041,532	543,515	2,167,564	2,836,646	665,635	2,668,886	3,607,118

Table 3.2 Armenian and Muslim population in six eastern provinces: in percentages

Provinces	Armenian Istanbul Patriarch (1881)			Ottoman Ministry of Justice (1890)			Vital Cuinet (1892)		
	Arm	Mus	Population in total	Arm	Mus	Population in total	Arm	Mus	Population in total
Erzurum	41%	59%	333, 731	20%	79.5%	555, 159	21%	77.5%	645,702
Sivas	26%	74%	942,686	13%	82.5%	892,201	16%	77.5%	1,086,015
Diyarbakyr	-	-	-	18%	77%	312, 444	17%	70%	471,462
Mamuret-ul-Aziz	38.7%	61.3%	276, 423	21%	79%	381,350	12%	88%	575,314
Bitlis	86%	14%	151, 581	39 %	60.5%	276,998	33%	64%	398, 625
Van	40%	32%	337, 111	17%	67.5%	418, 494	19%	56%	430,000
Total	37%	58%	2,041,532	19%	76.5%	2,836,646	18.5%	74%	3,607,118

²⁸⁹ *Sbornik diplomaticheskikh dogovorov. Reformy v Armenii (26 noyabrya 1912 goda-10 maya 1914 goda)*, Petrograd: Gosudarstvennaya tipografiya, 1915, pril 6, pp 273-287; FO 371/3405, 'Historical and Ethnological Notes on Armenians', p 8; Note: The tables include only the Armenian and Muslim population of the six provinces and exclude other peoples.

Berlin Treaty signatories and the Armenian project

The minority situation of the Armenian population in Eastern Anatolia was admitted by the Armenian Istanbul Patriarch in his meeting with British Ambassador in March 1878.²⁹⁰ However, the Patriarch still favoured the creation of Armenian autonomy there. In his opinion, Armenian autonomy would be accepted by the Turkish population as well, as it would afford ‘protection for their lives and property’.²⁹¹

The British Ambassador Layard, reacting to the project of the Patriarch in his report of 18 March 1878 to the Earl of Derby, British Foreign Secretary, wrote that ‘an autonomous State, such as the “Armenia” of the Patriarch, could long preserve even its semi-independence, no one acquainted with the populations which inhabit the provinces it is proposed by sanguine Armenians to include within its boundaries, could for one moment believe. Autonomy must end in annexation to Russia, an event which the Patriarch evidently seemed to contemplate.’²⁹²

For the Ottoman Government, according to Kemal Karpāt, the aim of the Berlin Treaty reforms in the Armenian-populated provinces was the creation of an Armenian administrative autonomy, to be followed by independence. The Muslims in these provinces feared that the Armenians would embark on a drive ‘to exterminate them or force them to flee their ancestral homes’, the strategy which was used by the Russians and Bulgarians in 1877-1878 in order to secure a Christian majority in the autonomous principality of Bulgaria in advance of the San-Stefano and Berlin Treaties.²⁹³

The same concern was expressed in another report by Layard in 1880, where he wrote that ‘the Mussulmans of Asia Minor have learnt the fate of their brethren in the autonomous Christian provinces of European Turkey. They would not be disposed to submit to a similar

²⁹⁰ *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians. Volume I (1856-1880)*, no 64, p 160

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*

²⁹² *Ibid.*, no 64, p 161

²⁹³ Karpāt K, *The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith, and Community in the late Ottoman State*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, p 209

fate without resistance. A demand for autonomy in Armenia might lead to massacres, which would bring about the immediate interference of Russia, and its inevitable consequences.²⁹⁴

Here lay the problem of the realisation of the Armenian autonomy project: ‘annexation to Russia’ and British fear of this ‘annexation’. This fear made Britain active in 1880-1881 on the implementation of Article LXI of the Berlin Treaty.²⁹⁵ However, British failure to achieve six signatory power unanimity on the issue led to the postponement of its initiative in 1881, since the French and German Governments were of the opinion that the discussion of the Armenian issue might create problems for the negotiations on the settlement of the Greek borders.²⁹⁶

The second time, in 1881, again fear of Russian interference compelled Britain to return to the issue with its project on the reforms.²⁹⁷ During the joint work of British and Russian ambassadors on the project, some of the points underwent changes,²⁹⁸ and on 9 February 1882, the final project was presented to other ambassadors, unanimously accepted and sent to the governments of these powers.²⁹⁹ This time the British failure to gain German and Austrian support brought another postponement of the issue. In his meeting with the British ambassador to Berlin, the German Prince Bismarck asked him to convey to Granville, the British Foreign Secretary, that Germany supported the British policy on Egypt and was ready to help the implementation of the Berlin Treaty, but in one issue it did not support Britain: the

²⁹⁴ *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians. Volume I (1856-1880)*, no 354, p 729

²⁹⁵ Note: It was on the initiative of Britain that the powers-signatories to the Berlin Treaty instructed their plenipotentiaries in Istanbul to send two collective notes to the Sultan on the implementation of the reforms stipulated in the Treaty on 11 June 1880 and 7 September 1880 (*British Documents on Ottoman Armenians. Volume II (1880-1890)*, no 13, pp 41-42; Uras E, *The Armenians in History and the Armenian Question*, Istanbul: Documentary Publications, 1988, p 539).

²⁹⁶ *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians. Volume II (1880-1890)*, no 49, p 178; no 50, p 179; no 51, p 180; no 57, p 187; no 54, p 182; no 55, p 183; no 61, p 195

²⁹⁷ Note: The project, as mentioned earlier, defined the ‘country inhabited by Armenians’ in the area of Erzurum, Van, Bitlis, Mamuret-ul-Aziz and Diyarbakyr (excluding Malatya county) provinces, as well as Sivas, Karahisar and Tokat counties of Sivas province, Marash county of Halep (Aleppo) province and part of Sis county of Adana province. It also touched upon the reforms on the administrative fields in this area such as the appointment of two Commissioners with full executive powers for three years; territorial readjustment of the ‘country’; appointment of Valis (Governor-Generals of *vilayets*) and *Mutasarrifs* (Lieutenant-Governors of *sanjaks*) by the Sultan, *Kaymakams* (Governors of *kazas* (districts)) to be appointed by the *Valis* (if the majority of the *kaza* population are Christians, then the *Kaymakam* to be a Christian, if minority – a Muslim); *Mudirs* (Administrators of *nahiyes* (curcuits)) to be elected by the *Mukhtars* (Headmen of *kariyes* (village communes)); *Mukhtars* of *kariyes* and *mahalles* (quarters of towns) to be elected by villagers or town dwellers and so on (Ibid., no 124, p 337; no 105, pp 298-302).

²⁹⁸ Note: For example: on the fifth point it was decided that the *valis* would be appointed for less than five years.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., no 124, pp 337-340; no 168, pp 401-402

‘Armenian question’. Germany called on Britain not to press the Ottoman Government regularly, since such pressure might again open the way for Russian ambitions in the East. He also added that Russia was passive on this issue at the moment, but encouragement of Armenian nationalist aspirations could incite it to return to active politics, including the use of military power.³⁰⁰ Austria did not have direct interest in the issue, since it would not gain any political dividend from it, except for irritating the Ottoman Sultan, which it did not want to do without good reason.³⁰¹

With the refusal of the Ottoman Empire to sign the treaty on the legalisation of the British seizure of the Nile basin after the occupation of Egypt in 1882,³⁰² Britain changed its position towards its traditional ally and started encouraging the Armenian nationalists against the Ottoman Empire.³⁰³ According to Gerard Libaridian, in 1883 Russia lost interest in the Armenians and sought an accommodation with the Ottoman Empire.³⁰⁴ This can be explained by the evidence the Russian authorities had vis-à-vis Armenian revolutionary activities in Russia, which were also supported by Britain.³⁰⁵ Despite its claims on the reforms in the areas populated by the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, Russia sought the prevention of the construction of railways in Eastern Anatolia, which impeded the development of the region, including the welfare of the Armenians, after it became the target of the Armenian revolutionaries itself.³⁰⁶ The change towards the Armenians was also connected with the assassination of the Russian Tsar Alexander II by the Russian terrorist organisation, *Narodnaya volya* (People’s will), which included, among others, Armenian revolutionaries.³⁰⁷ As for Britain, its aim in supporting Armenian nationalist ideas in both Empires was to make

³⁰⁰ Ibid., no 204, p 461

³⁰¹ Ibid., no 224, p 490

³⁰² Gurko-Kryazhin B, ‘Armyanskiy vopros’, *Bol’shaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya*, tom 3, Moscow: Izdatel’stvo ‘Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya’, 1926, p 437

³⁰³ Note: Cambon, the French envoy in Istanbul, describing the state of the ‘Armenian question’ in early 1894 and partly predicting the consequences of the events, wrote that ‘Armenians have found in London the better reception: the Gladstone cabinet gathered dissatisfied and grouped them, disciplined and promised his support. Since that day the committee of propaganda has been established in London and received here proper indoctrinations. It was necessary to insert into the masses of the Armenian population two very simple ideas: those of nationalism and freedom’ (Mayewski V, *Les Massacres d’Arménie*, pp 12, 14).

³⁰⁴ Libaridian G, *op cit.*, p 186

³⁰⁵ Kanadpev I, *Ocherki Zakavkazskoy zhizni*, Baku: Glavnaya redaktsiya Azerbaydzhanskoy Sovetskoy Entsiklopedii, 1990, p 8; *Armyano-tatarskaya smuta na Kavkaze, kak odin iz fazisov armyanskogo voprosa*, Tiflis: Tipografiya Shtaba Kavkazskago Voennago Okruga, 1915, p 23

³⁰⁶ *Memories of a Turkish Statesman – 1913-1919: by Djemal Pasha*, New York: George H.Doran Company, 1922, p 248

³⁰⁷ Nalbandian L, *op cit.*, pp 137, 139, 152, 153

the Ottoman Sultan dependent on Britain on the one hand, and to keep Russia busy against nationalism within its own Empire on the other. In 1895, convinced that the Armenian issue was not a matter of strong enough interest for Russia to cause another Ottoman-Russian war, Britain lost interest in the Armenian issue as well³⁰⁸ as did Russia until the Balkan war of 1912.

Thus, Great Power politics in the Armenian issue were related to the location and extent of the area claimed by Armenians from the Mediterranean to the Russian borders, with the following interests of the major powers-signatories of the Berlin Treaty:

- Russia wanted to occupy Eastern Anatolia in order to expand its territory to the Mediterranean. This posed a challenge to the economic and strategic interests of Britain, France and Germany. In the face of international opposition Russia's ambition in the region was left in suspension after 1883, and only in 1912 was it reactivated.
- Britain was interested in preventing Russia from penetrating into Eastern Anatolia, since it was of economic and strategic importance on its way to Mesopotamia, Persia and British India, which were rich with natural resources, especially oil, cotton and grain.
- France had economic interests in Cilicia, as an agricultural region suitable for cotton cultivation, in order to decrease the dependence of its textile industry on the cotton of the USA and the British Empire. Cilicia was regarded by France as the northern part of Syria, which was of strategic importance at the crossroads of the major trade roads connecting Europe, Asia and Africa.
- Germany was looking for concessions from the Ottoman Sultan for the construction of a Konya-Baghdad-Basra railway through Cilicia.³⁰⁹

The region was also important for the Ottoman Empire as it constituted a great portion of its territories in Anatolia. Support of any of the Great Powers for the Armenian project would bring an immediate clash of interests, which Abdulhamid II (1876-1908) realised and used to prevent the construction of Armenian autonomy in the region. Moreover, Abdulhamid II tried

³⁰⁸ Mayewski V, *op cit.*, p 30

³⁰⁹ *Razdel Aziatskoy Turtsii (po sekretnym dokumentam b.ministerstva inostrannykh del pod redaktsiey E.A.Adamova)*, Moscow: Izdanie Litizdata NKID, 1924, pp 18-20, 32-33

to achieve internal unity among Ottoman Muslims with his 'Islamism' ideology. In his opinion, this would prevent the further dismemberment of the Empire into national states. While he preferred to maintain peace at all costs, as he thought that the integration of the Muslim population and Empire's territorial integrity were dependent on peace, at the same time he used the threat of *jihad* (Muslim holy war) to prevent the interference of the powers with Muslim colonies in the domestic affairs of the Empire. Being aware of the real intentions of the powers-signatories of the Berlin Treaty, he balanced the ambitions of one signatory power against another.³¹⁰ The manoeuvres of Abdulhamid II after the Berlin Treaty prevented the further dismemberment of the Empire for several decades and deprived the powers-signatories of active political involvement in Eastern Anatolia under the disguise of Armenian reforms.

Armenian revolutionary organisations and the Armenian project

The aims of the major Armenian revolutionary organisations, *Hnchak* and *Dashnaktsutiun*, were declared to be the improvement of the conditions of Eastern Anatolian Armenians,³¹¹ which they believed could be achieved through the construction of an 'Armenian homeland' in the large area where Armenians constituted a minority. Both parties were aware that the achievement of this uneasy goal would be impossible without Great Power help, so they were ready to resort to various means, including terror tactics modelled after the Russian revolutionary organisation, *Narodnaya volya* (People's will),³¹² to obtain this intervention.

The view is supported by Dr Cyrus Hamlin, the founder and first president of Robert College in Istanbul. In his letter of 23 December 1894 to the 'Congregationalist' of Boston in the US, Dr Hamlin wrote that the *Hnchak* bands, organised all over the Empire, 'will watch their opportunities to kill Turks and Kurds, set fire to their villages, and then make their escape into

³¹⁰ Karpat K, *op cit.*, pp 187, 308

³¹¹ Note: The *Hnchak* party's programme described the conditions of the Armenians in Asiatic Turkey and explained the need to concentrate in this area. It included the exploitation of the Armenians by the government, aristocracy and capitalists through high taxes, land seizure, and deprivation of the fruits of labour. The people were shorn of their political rights and were forced to remain silent in their position as slaves of their parasitic overlords. They were not free to worship as they pleased and lived in fear of marauding tribesman. In order to save the Armenians from this slavery, the party proposed to work toward their immediate objective, the freedom of so-called Turkish Armenia (Nalbandian, *op cit.*, pp 108-109); *Dashnaktsutiun* also described similar conditions and compared the Armenians' position with that of the helots under Spartan rule (*Ibid.*, pp 166-167).

³¹² Nalbandian L, *op cit.*, pp 110, 168, 182

the mountains. The enraged Moslems will then rise and fall upon defenceless Armenians, and slaughter them with such barbarities that Russia will enter in the name of humanity and Christian civilization and take possession.’³¹³

This passage suggests that the Ottoman Armenians did not have serious insecurity problems, as was stipulated in the Berlin Treaty and the programmes of the Armenian political parties, otherwise they would be no need to artificially create ‘already existing’ insecurity by setting Muslims against Armenians. The aim of the Armenian nationalists in inciting Muslims against Armenians was not only aimed at gaining the intervention of the Great Powers by creating evidence of their sufferings under the ‘barbaric’ Muslims. Another problem was the lack of mobilisation of the Armenian nationalists’ own people around the ideas they promoted. If there was indeed strong enmity between Armenians and Muslims, there would be no need for Armenian armed provocations, since this enmity would have already existed, to be easily used by the Armenian nationalists. It was the lack of this enmity that concerned the Armenian nationalists.

Testimony is provided by the words of Grigor Artsruni, *Dashnaktsutiun* member and founder of *Mshak* (Labourer), the first major periodical in Armenian in Tiflis. In 1872, Artsruni appealed through the pages of his journal to Ottoman Armenians to rebel. Not being able to get the expected result, he protested that ‘there should be external influence, external power’ to increase the spiritual mood of Armenians and to ‘liberate’ them.³¹⁴

The indifference or opposition of the Armenians to the Armenian revolutionary movement compelled the nationalists to shed the blood of their own people as well. The Russian Consul-General in Van and Erzurum Mayewski, who himself visited the Van, Bitlis, Erzurum, Diyarbakyr and Mosul provinces in 1895-1897, testified that Armenian revolutionary organisations shed so much of their own people’s blood and demonstrated so much barbarity

³¹³ *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians. Volume III (1891-1895)*, Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu Basimevi, 1989, no 220, pp 321-322; The same evidence was presented by different sources, including the letter addressed by Currie, British ambassador to Istanbul, to Camberley, British Foreign Secretary (Ibid., no 26, p 334), and by Mayewski V, *Les massacres d’Armenie*, St.Petersburg, 1916; *Armyano-tatarskaya smuta na Kavkaze, kak odin iz fazisov armyanskogo voprosa*, Tiflis: Tipografiya Shtaba Kavkazskago Voennago Okruga, 1915

³¹⁴ Borian B, *op cit.*, pp 223-224

and cruelty that he doubted their possession of any human feelings.³¹⁵ One victim was the Armenian bishop in Van. He was murdered by Armenian nationalists in 1896 for warning Van youth against the harmful methods of revolutionaries.³¹⁶ Mayewski testified to the prayers of Armenian villagers to rid them of the attacks of 'cruel and heartless *Dashnaktsutiun*'.³¹⁷

The Russian Consul-General added that the Christians of the Ottoman Empire had one very clear idea, i.e. the creation of anarchy to provoke the intervention of foreign powers. They tried their best to present Turks as torturers of Christian, in which one of the leading roles belonged to the imaginations of a daily press full of false and wrong interpretations about Muslims, including Turks. He asked how, if Christians had indeed suffered under Muslim rule, had they survived so many centuries until the birth of the nationalist movement? If this was the case, then why was the elimination of the anarchy created by these political provocateurs followed not by continuous disturbances and chaos, but by peace for many years until new provocations commenced?³¹⁸

The fact that the idea of Armenian autonomy proceeded chiefly from Armenian committees abroad, Armenian press and influential Armenians of the diaspora in Russia, Europe and Istanbul was supported, among others, by the British Ambassador to Istanbul in his report to the British Foreign Secretary in 1880. However, the ambassador warned that 'any attempt to their realisation, under present circumstances, might lead to very grave consequences and to disasters to the Armenians themselves. It must not be forgotten that they form the minority, and in many districts the very small minority, of the population.'³¹⁹

The Berlin Treaty Article on the Armenian reforms in Eastern Anatolia and the activities of the Armenian revolutionary organisations indeed aroused the suspicions of the Muslims with regard to the aims for Armenian autonomy on the territories, where the majority of the population was Muslim. The examples of Balkan separatism compelled the Muslims to believe that their territories were going to be included in an autonomous Armenia, and, as in

³¹⁵ *Armyano-tatarskaya smuta na Kavkaze, kak odin iz fazisov armyanskogo voprosa*, part III

³¹⁶ Mayewski V, *op cit.*, p 34

³¹⁷ *Armyano-tatarskaya smuta na Kavkaze, kak odin iz fazisov armyanskogo voprosa*, *loc cit.*

³¹⁸ Mayewski V, *op cit.*, pp 70, 72

³¹⁹ *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians. Volume I (1856-1880)*, no 354, p 729

the case of the separated Balkan countries, the Muslim population would face the danger of being expelled from their own territories to create a homogenous Armenian state. The Berlin Treaty preference for one more Christian people against Muslims and negotiations with the Ottoman Government on the reforms in Eastern Anatolia, including the six signatory powers' note of 7 September 1880 strengthened these suspicions. In reply to the initiative of the Ottoman Government of applying the Berlin Treaty reforms to all parts of the Empire, the powers expressed their special concern about the Berlin Treaty reforms for Armenians. The powers considered it indispensable that the communes and administrative groups in Eastern Anatolia should be divided so as to unite as many homogenous elements as possible, 'the Armenians, or, when necessary, the Armenians and the Osmanlis [Turks – I.K.], being grouped together to the exclusion of the Kurds'.³²⁰ Moreover, the powers suggested that the nomadic Kurdish element 'should not be included in the census by which the majority of the inhabitants of each village will be determined'.³²¹

The implementation of the Berlin Treaty in the suggested form, on one hand, would exacerbate Armenian-Kurdish relations, and on the other hand, would pave the way for Kurdish enmity against the Ottoman Government, and subsequent Kurdish separatism. This intention is very clearly read from the abovementioned note of the six powers. The negative consequences of this project were assessed correctly by Abdulhamid II. The Ottoman Government had already encountered problems with the centralisation of the Ottoman Empire and subjection of different Kurdish tribes to the Centre. If Abdulhamid II implemented the Berlin Treaty reforms as suggested by the powers, it would undermine further the already weak government control over the Kurdish populated areas, with anarchy and turmoil in the border areas with Russia, who would use it as a pretext to intervene. In order not to allow this to happen, resorting to the help of the 'Islamism' ideology, Abdulhamid II co-opted the Kurdish tribal chiefs and in 1891 created the *Hamidiye alaylary* (Hamidian cavalry), named after himself, which he used to secure the border with Russia following the example of the Cossacks. In return for promises of allegiance, the Sultan gave the Kurdish tribal leaders

³²⁰ Ibid., *Volume II (1880-1890)*, no 32, p 120

³²¹ Ibid.

ranks, orders, money and guns. The *Hamidian* cavalry was also used against the Armenian rebellion organised by *Hnchak* in Sasun district of the Bitlis province in 1894.³²²

Abdulhamid II's use of the clash of Great Power interests was also instrumental in the failure of the Armenian autonomy project. The growing lack of Great Power interest in the Armenian project fuelled the disturbances created by Armenian revolutionary organisations in the Ottoman Empire. They resorted to desperate methods to attract the Great Powers' attention. The *Hnchak* leaders tried to justify their actions, which resulted in the bloodshed of Armenians and Muslims, declaring that it was because of the demonstration in the Armenian Cathedral in Istanbul in 1890, Sasun rebellion in 1894 and demonstration in Bab Ali in 1895 that the Great Powers, especially Britain and Russia, again turned their attention to the 'Armenian question'.³²³ The *Dashnaktsutun* believed that the Ottoman system would soon collapse as a result of the revolutionary assault from within and European pressure from without, since the foundations of the system were weak.³²⁴ This did not happen, and the Armenian revolutionary methods did not result in Armenian autonomy, nor did they bring about the collapse of the Empire.

However, the revolutionary movement of *Ittihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti* (The Committee of Union and Progress – CUP), known as the Young Turks, brought about the restoration of the Ottoman Constitution, which Abdulhamid II had suspended in 1878, in 1908. The CUP also overthrew Abdulhamid II in 1909. The main aim of the CUP was the achievement of 'Ottomanism', i.e. the unity of all religious and ethnic communities of the Empire, and simultaneous decentralisation of administration. The latter signified 'administrative local autonomy in a single "Ottoman Empire" for the various parts inhabited by the different national elements.' In the view of the CUP, this would prevent the dismemberment of the Empire.³²⁵

³²² Reynolds M, 'Abdürrezzak Bedirhan: Ottoman Kurd and Russophile in the Twilight of Empire', *Kritika: Exploration in Russian and Eurasian History*, vol 12, no 2, 2011 (New Series), pp 419-420; Astourian S, *op cit.*, p 64; Hovannisian R, 'The Armenian Question in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1914' in Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Volume II, p 219; Nalbandian L, *op cit.*, p 121

³²³ Nalbandian L, *op cit.*, pp 118-126

³²⁴ Libaridian G, *op cit.*, p 191

³²⁵ *Memories of a Turkish Statesman – 1913-1919: by Djemal Pasha*, p 249

The Ottomanism and administrative decentralisation aim of the CUP was not accepted by different revolutionary committees, including Armenian ones, since they advocated the system of political decentralisation without the recognition of Ottomanism.³²⁶ In the words of Jemal Pasha, a member of the CUP and Ottoman statesman, in accordance with the Act of the Ottoman Constitution, the CUP expressed a desire to form the country's different revolutionary committees into one 'Political Committee of Ottoman Unity'. In August 1908, the CUP opened negotiations with *Dashnaktsutiun*. During these talks, the CUP explained the drawbacks of political decentralisation for the Ottoman Empire. After uneasy negotiations, the *Dashnaktsutiun* proposed that it would work hand in hand with the CUP 'to safeguard the constitution in the Ottoman Empire, but otherwise each Committee retains full freedom of action both as to the realisation of its main programme and the choice of means'.³²⁷ This meant that the *Dashnaktsutiun* would maintain its revolutionary organisation in the country openly as a political committee and its members would work in public. This proposal was accepted by the CUP.³²⁸ The other Armenian revolutionary organisations, *Hnchak* and *Reformed Hnchak*, refused to enter into negotiations with the CUP and their leaders in Istanbul entered into open relations with the Russian Embassy.³²⁹

According to Michael Reynolds, the new Unionist government launched a comprehensive crackdown on lawbreakers in Eastern Anatolia, appointing aggressive administrators to Eastern Anatolia and arresting known bandits, including *Hamidiye* commanders. The new regime permitted Armenians to carry arms and in 1909 made them eligible for conscription. This idea offended many Kurds and further aggravated their relations with the government. Still worse, he wrote, was the demand of the Armenians for the return of confiscated lands. The state's strong assertion of its own power and its defence of the legal rights of the Armenians offended the Kurdish tribal elites, as, in their opinion, it backed the assertive Armenian community.³³⁰ However, the cooperation between the CUP, whose aim was the recognition of Ottoman unity by all of the elements of the Empire, and the *Dashnaktsutiun*, whose aim was autonomy, did not last long.

³²⁶ Ibid., p 249

³²⁷ Ibid., pp 252-253

³²⁸ Ibid., p 253

³²⁹ Ibid., p 254

³³⁰ Reynolds M, *op cit.*, pp 424-425

Razmik Panossian tried to connect the failure of CUP-*Dashnaktsutiun* relations with a change in the CUP ideology. In his opinion, by 1911, the CUP had shifted from the concept of 'Ottomanisation' to "'Turkification" of all the subjects and the inherent superiority of the Muslims,' and that 'consequently Armenians realised that even their minimal demands could not be met by the Porte'.³³¹

Jemal Pasha wrote that 'to those who reproach us with having pursued a "purely Turkish policy", I reply emphatically that our policy was not a "Turkish" policy, but the policy of Ottoman unity'.³³² Jemal Pasha asked, 'can it be said that the "Turkification" of the nations was involved in the demand that the Turkish language should be the official tongue in the Ottoman Empire?'³³³ He added that 'just after the inauguration of the constitution a number of national committees were established in Constantinople, committees such as the "Arab Union" [...] the "Albanian Club", and many others. Then why is it said that the foundation of the "Ottoman Home" proves that the Unionist Government had "Turkification" designs?'³³⁴ He explained, 'I am primarily Ottoman, but I do not forget that I am a Turk, and nothing can shake my belief that the Turkish race is the foundation-stone of the Ottoman Empire'.³³⁵

As for the concept of 'Turkism', according to Karpas, from 1912-1913, efforts were made to transform the Ottoman-Muslim nation, which consisted of different ethno-linguistic groups, into an ethnic Turkish nation, as the Young Turks needed to base the state on a new political community anchored in a core ethnic group identified with and entirely loyal to the state. Ethnic Turks had to be the foundation of the nation. The principal exponents of Turkism, Yusuf Akchura and Ziya Gökalp, believed that ethnic Turkishness should define the identity

³³¹ Panossian R, *The Armenians: From Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars*, pp 224-225

³³² *Memories of a Turkish Statesman – 1913-1919: by Djemal Pasha*, pp 250-251; Note: Jemal Pasha argued that 'if we had accepted decentralisation principle, the Committee would, indeed, have had to pursue a "Turkish" policy for we should have had to demand the same local autonomy for vilayets inhabited solely by Turks as for the other provinces. So those who confess themselves "Turks" only are really advocates of "decentralisation", for in effect they are simply following a purely Turkish policy. We, on the other hand, whose policy was Ottoman unity, had accepted as a fundamental principle that the influence of the Central Government on the vilayets should not be diminished, though the local administration should be granted the most extensive powers, always provided that the unity of army organisation should not be prejudiced.' (Ibid., p 251)

³³³ *Memories of a Turkish Statesman – 1913-1919: by Djemal Pasha*, pp 250-251

³³⁴ Ibid., p 251

³³⁵ Ibid., pp 251-252

of the nation and that Turkism was the ideology necessary to create and disseminate this identity.³³⁶

Karpat's explanation of the essence of Turkism shows that it was aimed at the transformation of different Muslim peoples of the Empire, who were previously classified as Ottoman *millet*, into a Turkish nation. This ideology did not intend the Turkisation of non-Muslims, including Armenians.

Feroz Ahmad wrote that 'it is conventional wisdom that Turkism (and even pan-Turkism) had become a key element in Unionist circles, especially after 1912.'³³⁷ He argued that in early 1914 Turkism was far from dominant and the prevailing ideology was Ottomanism.³³⁸ If this is true, then even the Turkisation of the Muslim peoples of the Empire, least of all non-Muslims, was not a dominant trend until early 1914.

The reality was that, be it 'Ottomanism' or 'Turkism', these conceptions excluded separatism. As the main goals of CUP and *Dashnaktsutiun* clashed, it was predictable that their relationship would not work or would last until there was any hope of achieving the Armenian aims. This hope constituted Russia's active politics in Eastern Anatolia with its renewed interest in the Armenian issue in 1912 with the start of the Balkan war and increase in the number of its consulates, establishing them at Diyarbakyr, Sivas, Mamuret-ul-Aziz and Mosul.³³⁹

In Panossian's words, Armenians were encouraged by the facts that 'Russia had once again taken up the Armenian cause' and 'Balkan Christian nations were continuing to succeed in their liberation struggles against the Ottomans'.³⁴⁰ Here Panossian contradicted himself and showed that the real reason for the failure of CUP-*Dashnaktsutiun* relationship was not Turkism.

³³⁶ Karpat K, *op cit.*, p 402

³³⁷ Ahmad F, *From Empire to Republic: Essays on the late Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Volume II, p 105

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, *loc cit.*

³³⁹ Ahmad F, 'Unionist Relations with the Greek, Armenian, and Jewish Communities of the Ottoman Empire' in Braude and Lewis (ed.), *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society. Volume I, The Central Lands*, New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982, p 433, note 83

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p 225

The main provisions of the Russian Armenian project of 8 June 1913 were the creation of one province consisting of Erzurum, Van, Bitlis, Diyarbakyr, Mamuret-ul-Aziz and Sivas (excluding portions of its suburbs and north-west area) and appointment of a Christian general-governor to this province – either an Ottoman subject or, preferably, a European, for a five year term with the consent of the powers. The condition of Armenians outside this province, especially in Cilicia, was also on the list of reforms.³⁴¹ The project was accepted by the two other countries of the Triple Entente, Britain and France, with minor changes.³⁴²

In its note of 25 June 1913, addressed to Triple Alliance members, Germany, Austria and Italy, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs noted that the preservation of Ottoman territorial integrity depended upon the restoration of peace and security in the above-mentioned projected province. Peace and security, according to the note, depended on the implementation of the necessary reforms without delay. The Russian Foreign Ministry, connecting the ‘Armenian question’ with the Russian administration in the South Caucasus, warned that Russia could not tolerate continual disorders and anarchy in the areas near its Ottoman frontiers. This might lead to events to which Russia could not remain indifferent and could be prevented only by the immediate adoption of a united collective stance by the Great Powers.³⁴³

The real Russian intention behind the ‘implementation’ of the Berlin Treaty is obvious from this note. The project would have to end in the annexation of the above-mentioned projected province by Russia. In order to realise this plan, Russia was ‘using the Kurds to destabilise the region and make intervention possible’.³⁴⁴ Russian propaganda among the Kurds against the Ottoman Government was also confirmed in the letter of Nicolas Girs, Russian ambassador to Istanbul, to Sergey Sazonov, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, dated 2 June 1913. The letter mentioned Russian propaganda against the Ottoman Government among the Kurds and the related Ottoman fear of Kurdish rebellion.³⁴⁵

³⁴¹ *Sbornik diplomaticheskikh dogovorov*, dok 50, pp 51, 61

³⁴² *Ibid.*, dok 50, pp 51, 61

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, dok 57, pp 74-75; Uras E, *The Armenians in History and the Armenian Question*, p 648

³⁴⁴ Reynolds M, *op cit.*, note 111, pp 441-442

³⁴⁵ *Sbornik diplomaticheskikh dogovorov*, dok 30, p 38

Although the Ottoman Government was against the Russian project on Armenian reform, the Kurds of Eastern Anatolia were of a different opinion. They thought that the government 'consented that the six vilayets should be sacrificed to the benefit of Armenians under the name of Armenian reforms'. Their concern was that the six provinces would be named 'Armenia' and Armenians would enjoy 'special privileges'.³⁴⁶ They thought that Assyrians also, despite being Christians, 'will never consent that privileges should be given to Armenians, and that the Kurds and Assyrians be left uncared for'. They urged turning out all the Ottoman officials of the provinces, districts and villages by force of arms for this alleged consent to the project.³⁴⁷

The Russian aim behind the project was also recognised by Germany, which objected with its note of 26 June 1913. It argued that under this project, six Armenian provinces would be united under the European General-Governor appointed by the Sultan, which would constitute a separate province from the Empire in military and administrative terms. If realised, Armenia would cover half of Anatolia, with a very weak connection with the Ottoman Empire. It would be difficult to object to other Ottoman regions demanding the same privileges, which would lead to the factual dismemberment of the Empire. Germany expressed its wish that the desires of the Ottoman Government should also be taken into account.³⁴⁸ The German State-Secretary for Foreign Affairs warned of the danger of the further partition of the Ottoman Empire, this time in Anatolia, and declared that Germany wished to avoid this partition. He added that in most Armenian centres, Armenians did not exceed 42% of the population and consequently were a minority. For that reason, he considered it reasonable to focus on more optimal reform project which would be acceptable to the Ottoman Empire.³⁴⁹

Finally, after continuous diplomatic negotiations, on 8 February 1914, agreement on the reforms in the areas populated by Armenians was signed between Russia and the Ottoman Empire. The main points stated that two foreign general inspectors would be appointed to two sectors of Eastern Anatolia: the provinces of Erzurum, Trabzon and Sivas; and the provinces of Van, Bitlis, Mamuret-ul-Aziz and Diyarbakyr. They would control administration, justice,

³⁴⁶ Reynolds M, *op cit.*, p 440

³⁴⁷ Ibid., pp 440-441

³⁴⁸ *Sbornik diplomaticheskikh dogovorov*, dok 58, pp 76-77

³⁴⁹ Ibid., dok 63, p 81; dok 69, p 85

and policing in their sections. The reforms would allow laws, orders and government news to be announced in each section in the local languages. The local languages would have the right to be used in contact with the administration, if the general-inspector found this to be possible.³⁵⁰

The general inspectors, one from the Netherlands and another from Norway, initialled their contracts with Talat Pasha, the Ottoman Interior Minister, on 23 May 1914.³⁵¹ However, with the outbreak of the First World War, the Ottoman Empire officially annulled its decision on the issue on 31 December 1914.³⁵² Thus, the last Russian attempt at occupation of Ottoman territories using Armenians via the Berlin Treaty failed. The reason was again the clash of interests of the powers-signatories.

Conclusion

Based on the academic conceptions on the formation of the Armenian people, the chapter has argued that the Armenian ‘historical homeland’ was in Eastern Anatolia. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the notion of the ‘Armenian homeland’, to include Erzurum, Van, Bitlis, Mamuret-ul-Aziz, Diyarbakyr and Sivas provinces of the Ottoman Empire, which were involved in the formation of the Armenian people, as well as parts of Adana and Halep provinces on the Mediterranean Sea, which were not connected with the formation of the Armenian people, was constructed by the Armenian nationalists with political aims to provide access to the sea. These primordialist conceptions, which claimed that the Armenian people was formed by the second century BC in Eastern Anatolia, revealed a gap in the explanation of the connection between the Armenians of Eastern Anatolia and Garabagh, since they did not include the latter in the area of formation of the Armenian people.

Armenian nationalism was a diaspora nationalism and contained all of Hroch’s features of nationalist movements in Central and Eastern European countries. However, it did not pass through all three phases in chronological order, and the phases were not strictly separated, which means that his theory is only partly applicable to the Armenian case. But the typology

³⁵⁰ Ibid., dok 146, p 158; dok 147, pp 162-163

³⁵¹ Ibid., dok 159, p 180

³⁵² Gürün K, *Ermeni dosyası*, Ankara: ‘Rüstem’ Yayın Evi, 2001, p 250

of nationalist movements in Europe offered by Hroch proved itself in the Armenian case, since national movement indeed acquired a mass character under the old regime, which produced armed insurrections.

The complaints of the Ottoman Armenians about legal, social and economic discrimination were common for the entire population of the Empire, including Muslims and the situation of the Armenians was better than that of the Muslims. The satisfaction of the cultural rights of the Armenians was the duty of the Armenian Istanbul Patriarch, who as the head of the Armenian *millet* enjoyed complete jurisdiction over religious, charitable and educational institutions of his flock, and even had his own court and prison. The change of the positive position of the Armenian nationalist leaders with regard to the Ottoman Government was related to the gradual decay of the Empire, accompanied by its defeats in the frequent wars, and to the success of the nationalist movements of the Balkan Christians and the increase in Armenian national and political awareness. These factors were instrumental in the increase of the self-confidence of the Armenian nationalists with regard to controlling the destiny of their people and constructing a national homeland in Eastern Anatolia, where they constituted a dispersed minority, with Great Power help. The chance sought by the Armenian nationalist leaders was provided by the Russian success in the 1877-1878 Ottoman-Russian war and the inclusion of an article on the Armenians in the Berlin Treaty of 1878.

The encouragement of Armenian nationalist ideas started with Russia, which wanted to use the disturbances in Eastern Anatolia as a pretext for intervention in Ottoman territories. After the signing of the Berlin Treaty in 1878 until the early 1880s, when the Ottoman Sultan refused to satisfy the British demands on the Nile project, Britain sided with the Ottoman Government and was interested in keeping Russia away from the region, which was of strategic importance on its way to British India. However, after the deterioration of Ottoman-British relations, Britain started encouraging Armenian nationalists both in the Ottoman and Russian Empires: to make the Ottoman Sultan dependent on Britain and to keep Russia busy with separatism within its own borders. After being sure that Russia was not interested for the time being in the project, Britain abandoned its support of the Armenian revolutionary movement.

The Ottoman Sultan Abdulhamid II sought to prevent the further dismemberment of his Empire for several decades and deprive the powers-signatories of Berlin Treaty of the active political involvement in Eastern Anatolia, making use of the clash of Great Power interests and the 'Islamism' ideology, with the help of which he tried to achieve internal unity among Ottoman Muslims. The successful manoeuvres of the Ottoman Sultan were instrumental in the lack of interest of the Great Powers in the Armenian project, which in turn gave rise to the Armenian nationalist belief in the achievement of their cause through revolutionary methods, including terror. The methods, although attracting the temporary attention of Great Powers, did not give the expected result.

The revolutionary movement of the Committee of Union and Progress restored the Ottoman Constitution in 1908 and paved the way for the working relationship between the CUP and *Dashnaktsutiun*, which did not last long because the CUP sought political centralisation, and *Dashnaktsutiun* political decentralisation. The failure of this relationship was connected with the renewed Russian interest in the Armenian question after the Balkan War of 1912. The latter resulted in the new project in 1913, which suggested the creation of one Armenian province out of six Eastern Anatolian provinces, and was replaced with a new project on the interference of Germany. The last project envisaged the establishment of two sectors in Eastern Anatolia: one made from three provinces and another from four provinces, with two foreign general inspectors for each. The project failed because of the outbreak of the First World War. Thus, the 'Armenian homeland' project, which started with the Russian success in the 1877-1878 Ottoman-Russian war, could not be realised until the First World War because of the Armenian minority distribution over the claimed area and the absence of Great Power sponsorship.

Chapter 4: Construction of the Ethnic Armenian Identity

The chapter explores the process of the construction of the ethnic Armenian identity as one of the most important factors in the reconstruction of the notion of the 'Armenian homeland'. The examination of the issue is especially important for understanding the factors instrumental in the construction of the Armenian Republic in the South Caucasus and its territorial claims. It necessitates discussion of the rewriting of the Armenian history, the settlement of the Armenians in the South Caucasus and the Armenianisation of the monophysite Albanians living between the Kur and Araz Rivers. The chapter also compares the Armenian case with the Azerbaijani and Georgian ones and applies existing theories to these cases.

4.1 Reconstruction of the notion of the 'Armenian homeland'

For the Armenian political nationalist movement, the notion of the 'Armenian homeland' did not have the same meaning in the twentieth century as it had in the nineteenth century. This change is evident when comparing programmes of the main Armenian political party *Dashnaktsutiun* from 1892 and 1907. In the first programme, attention was directed at so-called Turkish Armenia, whilst its second programme also included the South Caucasus. Apart from local Armenian autonomy within an Ottoman federation, the second programme also aimed at the creation of a South Caucasian democratic republic within a Russian Federation. The republic was to be divided into ethnic autonomous cantons.³⁵³

The inclusion of the South Caucasus in the *Dashnaktsutiun* programme was a clear modification to the Armenian political agenda, the realisation of which was projected in the region through the construction of autonomous Armenian cantons. This in itself was a sign of reconstruction of the notion of the 'Armenian homeland', expanding its area from Eastern

³⁵³*Dashnaki (Iz materialov departamenta politicii)*, Baku: Izdatel'stvo 'Kommunist', 1990, pp 28-29; Kazemzadeh F, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia (1917-1921)*, New York: Philosophical Library, 1951, p 9; Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967, p 22; Libaridian G, 'Revolution and Liberation in the 1892 and 1907 Programs of the Dashnaktsutiun' in Suny (ed.), *Transcaucasia: Nationalism and Social Change*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983, p 196; Suny R, *Looking toward Ararat: Armenia in Modern History*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993, p 100

Anatolia to the juncture of the Kur and Araz Rivers in the South Caucasus. The appearance of the South Caucasus in this programme in the early twentieth century was the result of a long process which had started in the late eighteenth century.

Emergence of modern ‘national’ history of Armenians

The basis of the reconstruction of the notion of the ‘Armenian homeland’ with the construction of the Armenian national territory from the Mediterranean to the juncture of the Kur and Araz Rivers was laid down in the Armenian history written by Mik’ayel Ch’amch’yants’ (1738-1823), an Armenian Catholic monk from a Mekhitarist congregation. Ch’amch’yants’ was the author of the first work on the history of Armenians from ancient times to the eighteenth century, published in three volumes in 1784-1786 and in an abridged version in 1811, the latter being translated into English and Turkish (in Armenian characters).³⁵⁴

In the words of Johannes Avdall, author of the preface to the English translation of Ch’amch’yants’ work in 1827 in Calcutta, the aim of the translation was to ‘excite in the breasts of Christians of every denomination a feeling of sympathy for the fate of my oppressed country, and rouse the dormant embers of patriotism in the bosoms of my expatriated countrymen to exert all their power for the regeneration of Armenia [...] once a great and happy land’.³⁵⁵ The ‘greatness’ of Armenia was demonstrated with the ‘Map of Armenia’, placed at the very beginning of the book, the area of which extended from the Mediterranean to the juncture of the Kur and Araz Rivers in the South Caucasus (see Map 4).

The methodological approach of Ch’amch’yants’ was typical for his period. As noted by Gevork Bardakjian, he ‘made no distinction between primary and secondary sources’, ‘used the accounts of later historians to reconstruct the history of earlier periods’, and ‘did not question the authenticity of some of his sources, and frequently accepted sheer legends as

³⁵⁴ Bardakjian K, *The Mekhitarist Contributions to Armenian Culture and Scholarship*. Notes to accompany an exhibit of Armenian printed books in the Widener Library displayed on the 300th anniversary of Mekhitar of Sebastia, 1676-1749, Boston: Middle Eastern Department, Harvard College Library, p 17

³⁵⁵ Ch’amch’yants’ M, *History of Armenia: From B.C. 2247 to the Year of Christ 1780 or 1229 of the Armenian Era* (translated from the original Armenian text by Johannes Avdall), Volume II, Calcutta: Bishop’s College Press, 1827, p LXI

solid facts'.³⁵⁶ Nevertheless, it was the most popular Armenian history for almost a century, enhancing 'national consciousness' and stirring a 'desperately needed sense of unity' among Armenians.³⁵⁷

Similar methodological deficiencies were evident in the geographical source Ch'amch'yants' used for his history. This source, which was first published in 1683 in Armenian in Marseilles, France, was first translated into Latin in 1736 by the Whiston brothers, translators of the 'History' by Moisey Khorenski, 'father' of Armenian history. The translation, together with its Armenian text, was placed at the end of the translation of the 'History' as the 'Mosis Chorenensis Geographia'. The date of this 'geographical' source was debated between the fifth and the tenth centuries.³⁵⁸ According to the British scholar on ancient Armenian studies, Robert Thomson, the original of this work 'remains a matter of dispute', as 'not only are there numerous interpolations in the printed editions, absent from the earliest manuscripts (which in turn only date from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries), the picture is further complicated by the existence of two recensions, a longer and shorter (LR and SR). Both of these recensions share corrupted readings.'³⁵⁹

According to this geography, ancient Armenia, consisting of 'Minor' or 'Lesser' and 'Major' or 'Greater' Armenia, covered an area from the Mediterranean to the juncture of the Kur and Araz Rivers in the South Caucasus, as in Ch'amch'yants's map³⁶⁰ (see Map 4). One very important point on Ch'amch'yants's map is related to the localisation of 'Ararat' province, which sheds light on the issue of the 'expansion' of Armenia into the South Caucasus. 'Ararat' province on this map was localised on both banks of the Araz River. When the Armenian history of Ch'amch'yants' was published in 1784-1786, this area covered parts of the territories of the Ottoman Empire in Eastern Anatolia and Iravan (Erevan) khanate, which was *de facto* independent but *de jure* part of Persia (compare Maps 4 and 6).

³⁵⁶ Bardakjian K, *loc cit.*

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ *Armyanskaya geografiya VII veka po R.Kh. (pripisyvavshayasya Moiseyu Khorenskomu)* (perevod s drevnearmyanskogo i kommentarii K.P.Patkanova), Saint Petersburg: Tipografiya Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk, 1877, pp III-VI

³⁵⁹ Khorenats'i M, *History of the Armenians* (translation and commentary on the literary sources by Robert Thomson), Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978, p 52

³⁶⁰ *Istoriya Armenii Moiseya Khorenskago* (noviy perevod N.O.Emina s primechaniyami i prilozheniyami), Moscow: Tipografiya V.A.Gattsuk', 1893, pp 290-294; *Armyanskaya geografiya VII veka po R.Kh. (pripisyvavshayasya Moiseyu Khorenskomu)* (perevod s drevnearmyanskogo i kommentarii K.P.Patkanova), pp 33-35, 42-54

In order to address this question, it is first necessary to study the issue of the ‘localisation’ of the ‘Ararat’ Mountains. According to Lloyd Bailey, scholar of the Old Testament, at least eight landing places were pinpointed for Noah’s ark on the ‘Ararat’ Mountains by ancient traditions.³⁶¹ Among them, ‘the one associated with Ağrı Dağı [Turkish and Azerbaijani name for the modern ‘Ararat’ Mountains in the border of Eastern Anatolia and the South Caucasus, which the Armenians call *Masis* – I.K.] seems to be very late – likely the latest, since it dates to the eleventh/twelfth centuries C.E. at the earliest’.³⁶² Bailey noted that ‘there is no evidence in Armenian literature that it was thought to be the ark’s landing place prior to the 11th-12th centuries’.³⁶³

Mardiros Ananikian, in his work on Armenian mythology, wrote that the name *Masis* which the Armenians use for the mountains on the border of Eastern Anatolia and the South Caucasus ‘seems to have been unknown to the old Urartians. It may be an Armenian importation, if not a later Northern echo of the Massios, which was in Assyrian times the name of the great mountain in the plain of Diyarbekir. According to Nicholas of Damascus (see Josephus, *Ant.* I.iii, 6) this mountain was known also by the name of Baris.’³⁶⁴ According to the Armenian historian, Kevork Aslan, there were *Massios* Mountains on the north of Nisibis,³⁶⁵ seemingly the place mentioned by Ananikian on the border of modern Turkey and Syria.

It can be suggested that Masis, Massios, Baris, Gordian (Qardu)³⁶⁶ and Korduk³⁶⁷ were different ancient names given to the mountains in the border area of modern Turkey, Syria

³⁶¹ Bailey L, ‘Wood from “Mount Ararat”: Noah’s Ark?’, *The Biblical Archaeologist*, vol 40, no 4, 1977, pp 137-138

³⁶² Bailey L, *Noah: The Person and the Story in History and Tradition*, Columbia: University of South Carolina, 1989, p 81

³⁶³ Bailey L, ‘Wood from “Mount Ararat”: Noah’s Ark?’, p 138

³⁶⁴ Ananikian M, *Armenian Mythology: Stories of Armenian Gods and Goddesses, Heroes and Heroines, Hells and Heavens, Folklore and Fairy Tales*, Los Angeles: Indo-European Publisher, 2010, p 67

³⁶⁵ Aslan K, *Armenia and the Armenians: From the Earliest Times until the Great War (1914)* (translated from the French by Pierre Crabites), New York: The Macmillan Company, 1920, p 2

³⁶⁶ Note: The German scholar, Johann Hübschmann, in 1901 also argued that ‘the Armenian literature of the fifth through the tenth centuries knows nothing of Masis as the mountain of the ark’ and that ‘the older Armenian writers all understood the Gordian (Qardu) Mountains [now Hakkari Mountains on the border between Turkey and Iraq – I.K.] to be the ark’s landing place’ (Cited in Bailey L, *Noah: The Person and the Story in History and Tradition*, pp 194, 76).

³⁶⁷ Note: Robert Thomson in 1976 also noted that Armenian writers as late as the twelfth century were unaware of the precise mountain on which Noah’s ark had come to rest, although they considered it to have been in the

and Iraq. The area was populated by different peoples of Semitic and Iranian origins. One could also argue that the Armenians' transfer of the Assyrian *Massios* further north, to name the mountains on the border of Eastern Anatolia and the South Caucasus as *Masis* dates back to the period after the 11th-12th centuries. This in turn suggests that the localisation of the 'Ararat' province on both banks of the Araz River by Ch'amch'yants' on his map of 'ancient Armenia' could have been related to the later 'transfer' of the 'Ararat' Mountains of the Bible further north after the 11th-12th centuries and the establishment of the Echmiadzin Catholicosate in 1441 closer to these mountains, in the area to the north of the Araz River in the South Caucasus by the Armenian churchmen headed by Tomas Metsopetsi from Van.³⁶⁸ The 'localisation' of 'Vagarshabad' (see Map 4), the residence of the first Armenian Catholicos of the fourth century, in the area where the Echmiadzin Catholicosate was established in the fifteenth century could have been guided by political and economic intentions to turn Echmiadzin into the sacred place for all Armenians and guarantee its supremacy over other Armenian Catholicosates.³⁶⁹

The map of ancient Armenia by Ch'amch'yants' also inspired Armenian nationalists to search for 'Armavir', as a 'capital' of ancient 'Armenia', in the area closer to Echmiadzin (see Map 4). According to the Russian scholar, Mikhail Nikol'skiy, the Blur hills, which contained the ruins of ancient constructions located twenty-five *versts* (about 27 kilometres or 16.5 miles) from Echmiadzin, and Tapadibi village on the foothills of Blur were regarded by Armenians as 'Armavir, ancient mythic capital of Armenia, founded, according to Moisey Khorenski, by

Korduk Mountains (*Agathangelos: History of the Armenians* (translation and commentary by R.W.Thomson), Albany: State University of New York Press, 1976, note 1, p 454).

³⁶⁸ Note: For the account of the establishment of the Echmiadzin Catholicosate see Metsopetsi T, *Pamyatnaya zapis'* (perevod s drevnearmyanskogo, predislovie i kommentarii K.S.Ter-Davtian), Erevan: Nairi, 2007

³⁶⁹ Note: For the conflicting explanations of the reasons behind the aim of some Armenian clerics to establish a new Catholicosate in the South Caucasus see Metsopetsi T, *op cit.*, pp 17-24; Erevantsi S, *Dzhambr. Pamyatnaya kniga, zertsalo i sbornik vseh obstoyatel'stv Svyatogo prestola Echmiadzina i okrestnykh monastyrey* (perevod s drevnearmyanskogo S.Malkhasiantsa pod redaktsiey i s predisloviem P.Arutyuniana), p 6; Ormanian M, *The Church of Armenia: Her History, Doctrine, Rule, Discipline, Liturgy, Literature, and Existing Condition* (translated from the French edition by Gregory Marcar Gregory and edited by Terenig Poladian), second revised edition, London: Mowbray, 1955, pp 56-59; Kouymjian D, 'Armenia from the Fall of the Cilician Kingdom (1375) to the Forced Emigration under Shah Abbas (1604)' in Richard Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Volume II, New York: St.Martin Press, 2004, pp 35-40; Grigorian G, *Ocherki istorii Syunika (IX-XV vv.)*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, 1990, pp 276-285; Mamedova (Mammadova) F, *Kavkazskaya Albaniya i albany*, Baku: Tsentr Issledovaniy Kavkazskoy Albanii, 2005, pp 560-562, 650-652

Armais, the grandson of Hayk in 2000 BC and destroyed in the first century BC.³⁷⁰ In 1880, he continued, the Moscow Preparatory Committee of the Fifth Archaeological Congress, to be held in 1881, decided to organise excavations at the supposed site of Armavir, which were realised in October 1881 by Earls Aleksey Uvarov and Praskov'ya Uvarova. Based on the archaeological investigations in Blur and the surrounding area and the neighbouring hills, as well as in the graves, it was concluded that the constructions and the graves in the area were not later than the third century AD and could not be connected with the Armenian Armavir, if it ever existed.³⁷¹

Nikol'skiy noted that neither Archbishop Mesrop Sumbatians³⁷² nor Professor Kerop Patkanov from Saint Petersburg University were satisfied with the outcome of the excavations and insisted on their continuation.³⁷³ He explained their insistence by the 'erroneous opinion on the character and origins of the cuneiforms and understandable interest of Armenian scholars in finding the ancient capital of Armenia.' In the opinion of Nikol'skiy, on another bank of the Araz River, in the territory of present-day Turkey, there was indeed a residence of Van satraps, 'the memories of which created the legend about the Armenian capital which existed in this area in several millennia BC'.³⁷⁴ As for the 'understandable interest of Armenian scholars' mentioned by Nikol'skiy, this can be explained by the Armenian nationalist movement and its nation-building aims.

Analysis of official nineteenth century Russian maps revealed that none contained the names 'Armavir' or 'Artashat', another 'capital' city related to ancient Armenian history, which was

³⁷⁰ Nikol'skiy M (ed.), *Drevnosti Vostochniya. Trudy Vostochnoy Komissii Imperatorskago Moskovskago Arkheologicheskago Obshchestva*, tom I, vyp 1, Moscow, 1889, p 381

³⁷¹ Note: Nikol'skiy wrote that 'both Blur and the surrounding area and the neighbouring hills, as well as the graves on the east of this hill were dug up in the most careful manner, and in most places down to the foundations. The excavations, which lasted seven days, gave a negative result. According to Earl [Uvarov]'s careful investigation, the constructions and artefacts of the graves go back no earlier than the third century AD and subsequently have nothing to do with a suggested ancient town, like Armavir. Apparently, the cuneiforms found up until, during and after the excavations served only as building materials for later constructions and had been brought from another place, possibly from somewhere closer to Blur. As it appeared later, the cuneiform inscriptions are not of Midian origin, as suggested by Kossovich, but from Van, and their language has nothing to do with Armenian, so they cannot have any connection with the Armenian Armavir, if it indeed existed.' (Ibid.)

³⁷² Note: Archbishop Mesrop Sumbatians in the early 1860s, after reading in the works of the Catholic Mekhitarists that there were cuneiform inscriptions in the places where Armenians lived, started collecting them, suggesting that they were closely related to the ancient history of Armenia (Ibid., p 378).

³⁷³ Ibid., pp 381-382

³⁷⁴ Ibid., p 382

localised by Ch'amch'yants' closer to 'Armavir' (see Map 4). Only on late nineteenth century Russian maps can one see the name 'Vagarshabad' to the east of Echmiadzin, but no 'Armavir' or 'Artashat'. This suggests that 'Vagarshabad' found its way onto official maps only after the Armenian nationalist movement,³⁷⁵ although still in 1958 Varazdat Arutyunian wrote that the 'exact location of the citadel and approximate size of the area of ancient Vagarshabad were not yet defined, but it is suggested that it occupied nearly the identical plain as that on which Echmiadzin is located now'.³⁷⁶ This means that the localisation of Vagarshabad was based on 'suggestions', which, as it appears from Arutyunian's paper, relied on Armenian historical narratives.³⁷⁷

Here it should be noted that it was in 1888, that the Russian historian Nikolay Marr, of mixed Scottish-Georgian origins, was offered a specialisation in Armenian studies by the above-mentioned Keropé Patkanov, Professor and Chair of Armenian Studies at Saint Petersburg University. According to Nadezhda Platonova, this almost certainly implied that Marr would inherit the Chair. The Armenian diaspora of Saint Petersburg was dissatisfied with this decision and a group of wealthy Petersburg Armenians made a special visit to the Ministry of Education with the request "not to invite a non-Armenian to the Armenian Chair".³⁷⁸ As it appears from the study of Vasiliy Bartol'd, a Russian scholar of Oriental studies, until Marr, the agenda of Armenian research in Russia was defined by Armenian scholars.³⁷⁹

In 1892, Marr initiated archaeological excavations in Ani. Being convinced that his Armenian studies would be an 'excellent tool' to promote 'Russia's unity as a multi-ethnic community', and also eliminating the concerns of the Russian administration in the Caucasus on the possible contribution of his research to the rise of separatism among the Armenians, in 1904

³⁷⁵ Note: Until then, it was called Echmiadzin. Turks and Azerbaijanis explain the word through 'Uchmuazzin'. In translation from Turkic 'uch' means 'three' and 'muazzin' with Arabic origins means 'a person calling to prayer,' i.e. three persons calling to prayer, whereas Armenians explain it through 'Ejmiatsin'. According to the Armenian sources, in translation from Armenian it means 'Where the Only Begotten Descended' (Erevantsi S, *Jambr (Archival Chamber)* (introduction and annotated translation by George A.Bournoutian), California: Mazda Publishers, Inc., 2009, note 2, p 52).

³⁷⁶ Arutyunian V, *Echmiadzin*, Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1958, p 7

³⁷⁷ Ibid., pp 5-8, 13, 15-16, 18-19, 21-22

³⁷⁸ Platonova N, "'Bezzakonnaya kometa na nauchnom nebosklone'". N.Ya. Marr', *Znamenitiye universanty: Ocherki o pitomtsakh Sankt-Peterburgskogo universiteta*, tom 1, Saint Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo Sankt-Peterburgskogo universiteta, 2002, pp 160, 172-173

³⁷⁹ Bartol'd V, *Istoriya izucheniya Vostoka v Evrope i v Rossii: Lektsii chitanniya v Imp. S.-Peterburgskom Universitete*, Saint Petersburg: Tipografiya M.M.Stasyulevicha, 1911, p 255

Marr succeeded in creating a museum of artefacts found during the archaeological excavations in Ani.³⁸⁰ Marr's conclusions on Ani after the excavations in its ruins, which made a scholarly contribution to the study of the history of 10th-11th century 'Armenia',³⁸¹ faced 'ardent attacks' from Armenian nationalists who regarded his views on the mixed Armenian-Muslim nature of the culture of Ani and its economic prosperity under Muslim rule after the fall of the Armenian Bagratid dynasty as an attempt to 'take Ani from the Armenians and give it to the Russians'.³⁸² Marr criticised the subjection of the academic study of the Caucasus to nationalist agendas by Armenian scholars and accused his Armenian colleagues of 'being no different in their views from "rabid nationalists"' and of 'deliberately downplaying the impact of Islam on the Armenian culture and history', since it did not correspond to the nationalistic views on the history of culture held by the Armenian intelligentsia. He also criticised the 'biased European scholars' who, in his opinion, performed a "great sin" for being "completely indifferent to the historical fate of peoples of Caucasus without their own literacy [in the vernacular], the Caucasus' indigenous inhabitants"". ³⁸³

In contrast to their opposition to Uvarov's and Marr's conclusions on Armavir and Ani respectively, Armenian nationalist activists doubted the views of Raffi, ideological father of the Armenian nationalist movement, on the history of Garabagh, which he expressed after his visit to the region in 1881. Nationalist friends of Raffi regarded his stories about the 'Armenian counties' of Garabagh as a 'figment of the imagination'.³⁸⁴ Referring to Raffi, in 1991 the historian, Bagrat Ulubabian, in his preface to the Russian translation of Raffi's work, noted that until Raffi 'the ancient history and historical geography of Artsakh-Garabagh had not been studied by anyone intentionally' and that 'until him, scholars, and not only scholars, stated with an inexplicable insistence – and would maybe continue to state for a rather long time – that Armenian princedoms had ultimately ceased to exist as far back as the Tartar-Mongol rule [by 'Armenian princedoms' meaning the above-mentioned Cilician Kingdom on the Mediterranean – I.K.]'.³⁸⁵ The doubts of the Armenian nationalists were not only connected with the history of Garabagh presented by Raffi, but also with the territory in

³⁸⁰ Tolz V, *Russia's Own Orient: The Politics of Identity and Oriental Studies in the Late Imperial and Early Soviet Periods*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, pp 39, 40, 42-43

³⁸¹ Bartol'd V, *loc cit.*

³⁸² Platonova N, *op cit.*, p 167

³⁸³ Tolz V, *op cit.*, pp 95, 126-127; Platonova N, *loc cit.*

³⁸⁴ Raffi, *Melikstva Khamsy: 1600-1827. Materialy dlya novoy armyanskoy istorii*, Erevan: Nairi, 1991, p 188

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, pp 11, 6

which the first Armenian Republic was established in 1918, which, as mentioned earlier, Ottoman Armenian nationalists headed by Bogos Nubar Pasha did not consider to be the ‘historical lands of Armenia’.³⁸⁶

Interestingly enough, Avetis Aharonian, Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia at the Paris Peace Conference, in his statement at the meeting of the Council of Ten on 26 February 1919, attended also by Nubar Pasha, localised ‘nearly all capitals of the various dynasties of Great Armenia’ ‘within the territory of the Armenian Republic’ in the South Caucasus.³⁸⁷ Another interesting point is that the list, which contained the names of Armavir, Vagarshabad, Dvin, Artashat, Ervandakert, Ervandashat and Ani,³⁸⁸ to be discussed in Chapter 9, did not include any place name localised in either Nakhchyvan or Garabagh. Seemingly the border area of Eastern Anatolia and the South Caucasus was of more ‘historical’ importance to the Armenian nationalist leaders.

One more interesting point is that the archaeological expeditions of the Institute of Archaeology of the Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR in and after the 1960s in ‘Armavir’, as well as ‘Artashat’, which, in the words of Lori Khatchadourian, remained ‘largely untouched by scientific research’ in the nineteenth century,³⁸⁹ localised both places in the territory of Soviet Armenia, around its border with Turkey.³⁹⁰ Babken Arakelian, who led archaeological investigations in ‘Armavir’ in 1962, disagreed with Uvarov, writing that the latter misinterpreted the archaeological materials, as well as the remnants of the walls of the town citadel, concluding that these were not the ruins of ‘ancient Armavir, but those of some castle of the fourth century AD’.³⁹¹ Despite his disagreement with Uvarov, Arakelian’s paper on ‘some results of archaeological study of ancient Armavir’ could not convince that the place under investigation was indeed suggested Armavir, ‘capital’ of ancient ‘Armenian kingdom’. The major findings in the archaeological area of 60 ha (about 0.6 square kilometres or 0.2 square miles) such as the remnants of the defence system of the town citadel of 2 ha (about

³⁸⁶ Payaslian S, *The History of Armenia*, p 153

³⁸⁷ *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Paris Peace Conference, 1919*. Volume IV, Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1943, p 151

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

³⁸⁹ Khatchadourian L, ‘Making Nations from the Ground up: Traditions of Classical Archaeology in the South Caucasus’, *American Journal of Archaeology*, vol 112, no 2, 2008, p 257

³⁹⁰ Ibid., p 266; Arakelian B, ‘O nekotorykh rezul’tatakh arkheologicheskogo izucheniya drevnego Armavira’, *Istoriko-filologicheskii zhurnal*, Izdanie Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, no 4, 1969, pp 162-174

³⁹¹ Arakelian B, *op cit.*, p 159

0.02 square kilometres or 0.008 square miles), the foundations of a few buildings and artefacts from the 8th-1st centuries BC cited by Arakelian are not suggestive of a capital city of a kingdom, but of some small provincial centre or settlement.³⁹² Based on the cuneiform inscription discovered by the Armenian Archbishop Sumbatians in 1869, which contained a text about the Urartian town of Argishtikhinili, founded in the eighth century BC, Arakelian argued that the most ancient period of 'Armavir' was connected with Argishtikhinili. The archaeologist did not explain the connection between these two names in terms of writing, pronunciation and historical links.³⁹³

Khatchadourian wrote that excavations at 'Armavir' and 'Artashat' did not produce clear evidence for occupation in the 6th-5th centuries BC, and the 'archaeological record did not correspond to historical assertions of developed statehood. Evidence for bureaucracy and administration were (and still are) lacking for these centuries.'³⁹⁴ However, this did not prevent the localisation of these places by Soviet Armenian archaeologists where Ch'amch'yants' localised them on his map. This suggests that Ch'amch'yants's map of ancient Armenia played a crucial role in the localisation of these names and even pre-defined the outcome of the archaeological investigations in Soviet Armenia.

Thus, the 'localisation' of the 'Ararat' Mountains of Bible in the border of Eastern Anatolia and the South Caucasus after the 11th-12th centuries, the establishment of the Echmiadzin Catholicosate in the closer area of the territory of the South Caucasus in 1441 and the 'localisation' of Vagarshabad closer to Echmiadzin paved the way for the reconstruction of Armenian history by Ch'amch'yants'. These factors were instrumental in his construction of an Armenian national territory from the Mediterranean to Garabagh with 'Ararat' Mountains and province in the centre of this vast area which was later to be claimed by Armenian nationalist leaders as the 'historical homeland' of the Armenians from time immemorial.

The case of Ch'amch'yants' can be studied with the approach of Anthony Smith regarding how nationalist activists politicise cultural heritage through the cultivation of its poetic spaces and the commemoration of its golden ages. The cultivation of poetic spaces in the Armenian

³⁹² Ibid., pp 162-163, 172

³⁹³ Ibid., p 159

³⁹⁴ Khatchadourian L, *op cit.*, p 270

case is related to the ‘Ararat’ Mountains, which Armenians considered the ‘epicentre of their country’ and ‘a symbol of their national aspirations’,³⁹⁵ from where together with relocated Vagarshabad ‘the light of ethnic selection shone forth to consecrate the whole land’,³⁹⁶ both in Eastern Anatolia and the South Caucasus. As for commemoration of golden ages, this was best illustrated with the references of Ch’amch’yants’ and Armenian nationalists to Armenia as a ‘once great and happy land’ from the Mediterranean to Garabagh and the first country in the world to adopt Christianity.³⁹⁷

The Armenian history of Ch’amch’yants’ was also used by the Russian Tsar to refer to the ‘Ararat’ Mountains and ancient Armenia in his declaration of 21 March 1828 on the conclusion of the Turkmanchay Treaty between Russia and Persia. One of the predecessors of this reference was the Russian Imperial map titled ‘Map of the Caucasian lands with the part of Greater Armenia’ in 1823 before the second war with Persia in 1826-1828, on which the word ‘Armenia’ was placed on the area of Iravan (Erevan) and Nakhchyvan khanates. This map and the references to the ‘Ararat’ Mountains and ancient Armenia provided a kind of historical justification for the occupation of these khanates by the ‘protector of Christians’, the Russian Empire. Ch’amch’yants’ geography also offered historical justifications for the establishment of an Armenian *oblast* in 1828, where the number of Armenians was more than three or five times less than that of Muslims, which is discussed in the next sub-section.

These historical justifications, used by the Russian Empire for the occupation of two Muslim khanates and their subsequent reorganisation into an Armenian *oblast* on the one hand, and used by Armenian nationalist intellectuals and politicians later in the reconstruction of the notion of the ‘Armenian homeland’ on the other, confirm the opinion of Benedict Anderson on the role of maps in the construction of historical narratives of the realm by colonial states and their adoption and adaptation by the nation-states, which in the twentieth century became the colonial states’ legates.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁵ Nalbandian L, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement: The Development of Armenian Political Parties through the Nineteenth Century*, p 2

³⁹⁶ Smith A, *National identity*, p 127

³⁹⁷ Panossian R, *The Armenians: From Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars*, note 77, p 106

³⁹⁸ Anderson B, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso, 1983, pp 174-175

By applying Miroslav Hroch's typology, one could argue that Ch'amch'yants', himself a Catholic convert from monophysite confession, was the founder of Phase A, inquiring into and disseminating an 'Armenian awareness' of 'their' history, discovering his 'ethnic group' and thus laying the basis for the subsequent construction of a new Armenian identity.³⁹⁹ Ch'amch'yants's work also fits with Smith's argument that nationalists were interested, not in enquiring into 'their' past for its own sake, but in the reappropriation of a mythology of the territorialised past of 'their people': where history was deficient for the pursuit for their aims, it would have to be reconstructed and even invented.⁴⁰⁰ Smith explains the nationalists' appeal to history by the fact that they sought their "homeland", that is an historic territory which their people can feel is theirs by virtue of a convincing claim of possession and efflorescence sometime in the past'.⁴⁰¹

The emergence of 'Greater Armenia' towards the end of the eighteenth century in Ch'amch'yants's history was not accidental. It relied on several factors: the existence of Caucasian Albanians in the South Caucasus, who were monophysites like the Armenians; the aspirations of the Armenian Echmiadzin Catholicosate to subordinate the Albanian Catholicosate; and the expansionist plans of Russia as a great Christian power towards the South Caucasus and then towards the Mediterranean. The realisation of Ch'amch'yants's history by Armenian nationalists depended on the success of the last two factors, discussed in the next sub-sections.

Settlement of Armenians in the South Caucasus as a factor in the reconstruction of the notion of the 'Armenian homeland'

After the occupation of the South Caucasus from the late 18th-early 19th centuries, one of the aims of Russia was to create a Christian buffer zone in its borders with the Muslim Ottoman Empire and Persia, which would separate the Muslims of the South Caucasus from their co-religionists in these countries. The settlement of the loyal Christian population among the

³⁹⁹ Hroch M, 'From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation: The Nation-Building Process in Europe' in Eley and Suny (ed.), *Becoming National: A Reader*, p 63

⁴⁰⁰ Smith A, *National identity*, p 127

⁴⁰¹ Smith A, *Myths and Memories of the Nation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, p 219

Muslims of the occupied territories would in turn disrupt their compact habitation in the region and create barriers for their future unity – geographical or political.

Within the framework of the annexation of Georgia to the Russian Empire, Emperor Paul, in his rescript dated 23 January 1801 to General-Lieutenant Carl Knorring, wrote about the reasonability of attracting Armenians to the Russian borders, which he considered one of the most reliable means of ‘establishing the numerical superiority of Christians’.⁴⁰² To that end, he assented to ‘patronise Araratian Patriarchal monastery of Echmiadzin and keep friendly relations with the head of this church’.⁴⁰³

Cossacks were also considered by the Russian authorities as suitable candidates as loyal Christians. In this regard, Ivan Enikolopov, using Georgian archival documents, wrote that the border with Persia, before the idea of the transfer of Armenians, had been planned to be settled with 80,000 Cossacks.⁴⁰⁴ Vardan Parsamian mentioned that, in his report of 5 January 1829, General Ivan Paskevich proposed to transfer 20,000 Cossack families to the Russian bank of the Araz River, the basin of the Sevan Lake and the border with the Ottomans, but this idea could not be realised, so it was decided to replace them with the loyal Armenian population. Although the historian noted that Nerses Ashtaraketsi, head of the Armenian diocese of Georgia and Imeretia, was one of the main organisers, and Lazar Lazarev, a Russian Colonel of Armenian origin, was the head of the settlement of Armenians,⁴⁰⁵ Alexander Griboedov, the Russian Ambassador to Persia during the settlement of Armenians from Persia, in his report to the Tsar, wrote that Lazarev considered himself to be the main initiator of this emigration.⁴⁰⁶

The Armenian clergy, headed by Archbishop Ashtaraketsi during the war with Persia in 1826-1828, tried to prove his diligence with all his powers, appealing to the Armenian people,

⁴⁰² Imranli K, *Chyornaya sud'ba Chyornogo Sada*, Moscow: Nauchno-izdatel'skiy tsentr 'Ladomir', 2006, p 39; the source cited by Imranli K: Ezov G, *Nachalo snosheniy Echmiadzinskogo patriarshego prestola s russkim pravitel'stvom. Istoricheskoe issledovanie po neizdannym dokumentam*, Tiflis: Skoropecthatnya M.Martirosiantsa, 1901, p CXVII

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁴ Enikolopov I, *Griboedov i Vostok* (vtoroe pererabotannoe izdanie), Erevan: Izdatel'stvo 'Ayastan', 1974, p 119

⁴⁰⁵ Parsamian V, *Istoriya armyanskogo naroda (1801-1900 gg.). Kniga pervaya*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo 'Hayastan', 1972, pp 65, 49-50

⁴⁰⁶ Griboedov A, *Sochineniya v dvukh tomakh*, tom 2, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'Pravda', 1971, p 339

providing necessary information on the enemy, etc.⁴⁰⁷ The ‘friendly relations’ of the Russian Government with the Armenian clergy brought about the realisation of the idea of the settlement of Armenians, which had found its final solution in the Treaty of Turkmanchay of 10 February 1828 between Russia and Persia. On the basis of Article XV, General Paskevich ordered the settlement of Armenians, especially in the former Iravan (Erevan) and Nakhchyvan khanates⁴⁰⁸ (see Map 6), which were reorganised into the Erevan and Nakhchyvan provinces of the Armenian *oblast*, established in 1828 (see Map 7) after the Russian occupation, and partly in Garabagh.⁴⁰⁹

According to the Russian official, Ivan Shopen, Head of the Department for Revenues and Government Properties of the Armenian *oblast*, after the conclusion of the Turkmanchay Treaty, most of the districts of Erevan and Nakhchyvan provinces (see Map 7) were left without inhabitants, who hid during the war either in the neighbouring Ottoman provinces or in the mountains. In 1828, when the Armenians from Persia obtained permission to settle in the territories occupied by Russia to the north of the Araz River, they seized empty villages occupying houses, lands, gardens, mills and other properties belonging to the local scattered population. After the conclusion of peace, from 1829, the scattered population started to return, and found their houses seized by Armenians. They had to ask the Armenians for small parts of the most unfavourable lands of their villages, where they built new houses. Others established new villages in the mountains. Thus, Shopen concluded, the best districts of the Armenian *oblast* were left to the Armenian settlers, who were given a six-year exemption from taxes and obligations.⁴¹⁰

⁴⁰⁷ *AKAK*, tom 7, Tiflis: Tipografiya Glavnago Upravleniya Namestnika Kavkazskago, 1878, dok 436, p 486; Note: For his ‘service to Russia during the war and as a sign of special goodwill to all Armenian nation’, Russian Emperor Nicolas I with his rescript of 25 January 1828 awarded Archbishop Nerses Ashtaraketsi the order of Saint Alexander Nevski (Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 40; the source cited by Imranli K: Ezov G, *op cit.*, pp CXXIX – CXXX).

⁴⁰⁸ Note: Iravan (Erevan) and Nakhchyvan khanates had emerged in the mid-eighteenth century and existed until 1828, when they came under the rule of Russia. Although these khanates were *de jure* part of Persia, they were *de facto* independent, and were ruled by khans of Turkic origin and Shi’a confession of Islam, i.e. present-day Azerbaijanis.

⁴⁰⁹ Enikolopov I, *loc cit.*

⁴¹⁰ Shopen I, *Istoricheskiy pamyatnik sostoyaniya Armyanskoy Oblasti v epokhu eya prisoedineniya k Rossiyskoy Imperii*, Saint Petersburg: Tipografiya Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk, 1852, p 1217

Griboedov wrote that the Armenians settled mostly on the lands of Muslim landowners, the majority of whom were in camps.⁴¹¹ He tried to disseminate the suspicions of the Muslims with regard to the permanent occupation of their lands by the Armenians, who were allowed there for the first time.⁴¹²

According to Shopen, 35,560 Armenians from Persia and 21,666 Armenians from the Ottoman Empire, i.e. a total of 57,226 Armenians were settled in the newly established Armenian *oblast* after the Russian-Persian war of 1826-1828 and Russian-Ottoman war of 1828-1829.⁴¹³ The settlement of Armenians in the South Caucasus was not limited to the newly established Armenian *oblast* and the period after these wars. In 1911, Nikolay Shavrov, an official directly involved in Russian colonial policy, wrote that apart from more than 40,000 Armenians from Persia and 84,000 Ottoman Armenians who were officially settled in the South Caucasus from 1828 to 1830 by Russia and were placed ‘in the best state lands in the *guberniyas* of Elizavetpol⁴¹⁴ and Erevan,⁴¹⁵ where the number of Armenians was insignificant’, and in the Borchaly, Akhaltsikh and Akhalkalaki *uezds* of the Tiflis *guberniya*,⁴¹⁶ ‘a great number of Armenians settled in the region unofficially, so

⁴¹¹ Griboedov A, *op cit.*, p 340

⁴¹² Ibid., p 341

⁴¹³ Shopen I, *op cit.*, pp 637-638

⁴¹⁴ Note: Elizavetpol *guberniya* was established in 1868 and consisted of Gazakh, Nukha, Elizavetpol, Shusha, and Zangazur *uezds*. In 1873, the borders of these *uezds* were readjusted. Nukha *uezd* was divided into two: Nukha and Arash *uezds*, and on the basis of Elizavetpol, Shusha and Zangazur *uezds*, two more *uezds* were established: Jabrayil and Javanshir. Thus, Elizavetpol *guberniya* had eight *uezds*: Nukha, Arash, Gazakh, Elizavetpol, Javanshir, Shusha, Jabrayil and Zangazur (Mil'man A, *op cit.*, pp 156-157). The territory of the Elizavetpol *guberniya* in 1911 almost corresponded to the combined territory of the Garabagh, Ganja and Shaki khanates and Gazakh and Shamshaddil sultanates (compare Maps 6 and 8), which were organised into Garabagh province, Elizavetpol *okrug*, Shaki province and Gazakh and Shamshaddil districts accordingly after the Russian occupation of these regions in the early nineteenth century.

⁴¹⁵ Note: Erevan *guberniya* was established in 1849 and consisted of five *uezds*: Erevan, Alexandropol, New Bayazid, Nakhchyvan and Ordubad. In 1873, it was divided into seven *uezds*: Alexandropol, Echmiadzin, Erevan, New Bayazid, Surmali, Sharur-Daralayaz and Nakhchyvan (*Kavkazskiy kalendar' na 1858*, Tiflis: Tipografiya Kantselyarii Namestnika Kavkazskago, 1857, pp 23-24; *Geograficheskoye-statisticheskoye slovar' Rossiyskoy Imperii*, tom 5, Saint Petersburg: Tipografiya 'V.Bezobrazov i Kompaniya', 1885, p 857). The territory of the Erevan *guberniya* in 1911 almost corresponded to the combined territory of Nakhchyvan and Iravan (Erevan) khanates, which were organised into Nakhchyvan and Erevan provinces of the Armenian *oblast* in 1828 (compare Maps 6, 7 and 8).

⁴¹⁶ Note: Tiflis *guberniya* was created in 1846 and consisted of Tiflis, Gori, Telavi, Signakh, Elizavetpol, Erevan, Nakhchyvan and Alexandropol *uezds*. When Erevan *guberniya* was established in 1849, Erevan, Nakhchyvan and Alexandropol *uezds* were excluded from the *guberniya* in favour of the new *guberniya*. In 1862, the Lori steppe, i.e. all northern parts of the former Pambak *okrug*, was included in Tiflis *guberniya* (*Sbornik statisticheskikh svedeniy o Kavkaze*, tom 1, otdel I, chast' III, p 3; *Geograficheskoye-statisticheskoye slovar' Rossiyskoy Imperii*, tom 5, p 857).

the total number of settlers considerably exceeded 200,000'.⁴¹⁷ He went on to report that the Russian-Ottoman war of 1877-1878 brought about 50,000 Armenians and 40,000 Greeks to the Kars *oblast*. Moreover, General Tergukasov brought 35,000 Ottoman Armenians to Surmali *uezd* of Erevan *guberniya*, after which a 'continuous flow of Armenians from Asia Minor started', both individuals and families. During the Armenian disturbances in the Ottoman Empire in 1893-1894, they 'moved on an even larger scale', and by 1897, the number of settled Armenians was about 90,000. From 1896 to 1908, he noted, Russia settled more than 300,000 Armenians in the South Caucasus. In general, he concluded, from 1828 to 1911 more than 1,000,000 Armenians were settled in the region by the Russian Government.⁴¹⁸

The next stage of the Armenian settlement in the South Caucasus was during the First World War. According to *Istoriya armyanskogo naroda* (History of the Armenian people), about 350,000 Armenians were settled in the South Caucasus in 1914-1916,⁴¹⁹ whereas according to Avetis Aharonian, Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia at the Paris Peace Conference, 'within the territory of the Armenian Republic, there are at present from 400,000 to 500,000 Turkish Armenians who have escaped massacres by the Turks during the war'.⁴²⁰

As seen from the above-mentioned official accounts on the settlement of Armenians, the process, launched officially in 1828 by Russia, continued in various stages in different periods up until the establishment of the Armenian Republic in 1918. These settlements can be characterised as results of the Russian policy of creating a Christian buffer zone at its borders with its Muslim neighbours, its wars with Persia and the Ottoman Empire, as well as voluntary settlements in the territory of Russia.

The acquisition of lands is considered by Gellner to be the main problem for diaspora nationalism. This was the problem in the Jewish case, where it was necessary to create a 'few

⁴¹⁷ Shavrov N, *Novaya ugroza russkomu delu v Zakavkaz'ye: predstoyashchaya rasprodazha Mugani inorodtsam*, Saint Petersburg: Tipografiya Redaktsii periodicheskikh izdaniy Ministerstva Finansov, 1911, p 59

⁴¹⁸ Ibid., pp 59-60

⁴¹⁹ *Istoriya armyanskogo naroda*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Yerevanskogo Universiteta, 1980, p 268

⁴²⁰ *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Paris Peace Conference, 1919*. Volume IV, p 151

surrogate peasants' from urban Jews to effectively settle the land.⁴²¹ According to Shopen, Armenian settlers from Persia were more inclined towards trade and craft than agriculture, whereas those from the Ottoman Empire were more inclined towards agriculture (arable farming) and cattle-breeding than craft and trade.⁴²² Unlike the Jewish case, the Armenian case did not go 'counter to the global trend', as there was no need to create a 'peasantry', considered a very powerful claim to territory. The possession of Muslim lands by Armenian settlers meant that the main problem for diaspora nationalism started to be solved in the Armenian case in 1828 and was already not an issue by the early twentieth century, as this power had already existed through their settlement in the South Caucasus throughout the 19th-early 20th centuries.

Comparison of the statistics provided by Shopen for 1829-1832 and *Kavkazskiy kalendar'* (Caucasian calendar), the Russian official source, for 1916 shows that the Armenian population in Erevan *guberniya*, the area of which, with about 23,195 square *versts* (about 26,396 square kilometres or 10,192 square miles)⁴²³ corresponded almost to the area of the former Nakhchivan and Iravan (Erevan) khanates, organised into the Armenian *oblast* in 1828 with about 24,000 square *versts* (about 27,312 square kilometres or 10,545 square miles),⁴²⁴ significantly increased from 25,151⁴²⁵ local Armenians⁴²⁶ in 1828 to 669,871 in

⁴²¹ Gellner E, *Nations and Nationalism* (introduction by John Breuilly – 2nd ed.), Oxford: Blackwell, 2006, p 103

⁴²² Shopen I, *op cit.*, p 708

⁴²³ *Kavkazskiy kalendar' na 1917 god*, Tiflis: Tipografiya Kantselyarii Namestnika Y.I.V. na Kavkaze, 1916, p 218

⁴²⁴ Shopen I, *op cit.*, p 353; Note: Richard Hovannisian, based on Art. Abegian, wrote that the area of the Armenian *oblast* was 8,000 square miles (about 20,720 square kilometres) (Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, p 10).

⁴²⁵ Note: According to the survey of 1829-1832 of Shopen, the number of local Armenians in the newly established Armenian *oblast*, was 25,151 and that of Muslims, consisting of Tartars (Azerbaijanis) and Kurds, 81,749 (Shopen I, *op cit.*, pp 639-640). However, according to George Bournoutian's calculations, the number of Muslims was 117,000 (Bournoutian G, 'The Ethnic Composition and the Socio-Economic Condition of Eastern Armenia in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century' in Suny (ed.), *Transcaucasia: Nationalism and Social Change*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983, pp 70-71).

⁴²⁶ Note: Shopen wrote that Armenians found in the Armenian *oblast* before the settlement of 1828 were immigrants 'moved here in different times and under different circumstances'. According to him, 'real local Armenians' were only in Echmiadzin, Gulpi and Ordubad *okrug* (Shopen I, *op cit.*, pp 706-707). Although one can agree with Shopen's view on Echmiadzin and Gulpi, the latter being in the territory of present-day Turkey, with regard to Ordubad *okrug* one can argue that among other sources, Arakel Davrizhetsi, the Armenian historian and contemporary of the deportations of Shah Abbas in the early seventeenth century, identified Ordubad in the 'country of Albania' (Davrizhetsi A, *Kniga istoriy* (perevod s armyanskogo, predislavie i kommentariy L.A.Khanlarian), Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'Nauka', 1973, pp 46-47). According to Shopen, there were 20,073 Armenians in the Erevan province of the Armenian *oblast*. The places with higher distribution of 'local' Armenians were Surmali (5,892), Karpibasar (5,290), Sardarabad (3,214) and Gyrkhbulag (1,396) districts, and Erevan town (2,369). In the rest of the districts of the province, the number of Armenians varied

1916⁴²⁷ (a 26.6 times increase). The number of Muslims in the *guberniya* increased from 81,749⁴²⁸ (or 117,000⁴²⁹) in 1828 to 373,582 in 1916⁴³⁰ – a mere 4.6 times increase by Shopen's figures or 3.2 times by those of George Bournoutian. This was without any settlement from abroad and was due to their gradual exodus to Muslim Persia and the Ottoman Empire. The number of Armenians in the *guberniya* in 1916 was about twice that of Muslims, although before Armenian settlement in the region in 1828, the number of Muslims was more than three times (or about five times according to Bournoutian) more than that of Armenians.

According to the Russian statistics of 1810, Garabagh consisted of 79% Muslims (9,500 families) and 21% (2,500 families) 'Armenians'.⁴³¹ However, owing to the settlement of Armenians from abroad and the exodus of Muslims from Garabagh to Persia, the ratio of Armenians in Garabagh increased from 21% in 1810 to 42% in 1916, whereas that of Muslims decreased from 79% in 1810 to 56% in 1916.⁴³²

Makar Barkhudariants, one of the Echmiadzin bishops, gave information in his *Artsakh* on the Armenian settlers from abroad. According to him, about twenty-four villages in Garabagh had settlers from Persia, with about 900 families.⁴³³ In addition to this, he mentioned 640 more Armenian settlers in some villages.⁴³⁴ As for the settlement of Armenians in other places apart from Garabagh, Nakhchivan and Erevan, again according to Barkhudariants, at least 15,480

between 603 and 5. Except for the most Armenian-populated Surmali district, in the territory of present-day Turkey, the other districts had been settled by Armenians in different periods beginning from the first half of the fifteenth century onwards (Shopen I, *op cit.*, pp 635-636; Erevantsi S, *Dzhambr*, Chapter 13; Papazian A, *Agrarniye otnosheniya v Vostochnoy Armenii v XVI-XVII vekakh*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, 1972, pp 114-115; Papazian A, *Persidskie, arabskie i turetskie ofitsialniye dokumenty Matenadarana XIV-XIX vekov i ikh znachenie dlya izucheniya sotsial'no-ekonomicheskoy zhizni stran Blizhnego Vostoka*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo vostochnoy literatury, 1960, p 14).

⁴²⁷ *Kavkazskiy kalendar' na 1917 god*, p 219

⁴²⁸ Shopen I, *op cit.*, pp 639-640

⁴²⁹ Bournoutian G, 'The Ethnic Composition and the Socio-Economic Condition of Eastern Armenia in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century' in Suny (ed.), *Transcaucasia: Nationalism and Social Change*, pp 70-71

⁴³⁰ *Kavkazskiy kalendar' na 1917 god*, pp 220-221; The number of Armenians in Erevan, the centre of the Erevan *guberniya*, increased from 2,369 in 1828 to 37,223 in 1916 (a 15.7 times increase), whereas the number of the Muslims increased from 7,331 in 1828 to 12,566 in 1916 (a mere 1.7 times increase) (Shopen I, *op cit.*, pp 635-636; *Kavkazskiy kalendar' na 1917 god*, pp 219-221).

⁴³¹ *AKAK*, tom 4, Tiflis: Tipografiya Glavnago Upravleniya Namestnika Kavkazskago, 1870, dok 37, pp 38-39

⁴³² Note: Compare the statistics of 1810 with that of 1916 for Javanshir, Shusha, Jabrayil and Zangazur *uezds* of Elizavetpol *guberniya* (*Kavkazskiy kalendar' na 1917 god*, pp 190-197).

⁴³³ Barkhudariants M, *Artsakh* (translation from Armenian into Russian by Yargulian in 1981), Baku: Scientific Archive of the Institute of History of the Azerbaijani Academy of Sciences, pp 38, 54, 62-65, 67-71, 83

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp 92, 110, 116, 117, 139, 143, 146

Ottoman Armenian families were settled in the territories of Gazakh, Shaki, Arash, Goychay and Guba *uezds* and Zagatala *okrug* by the time he visited these places in 1890-1893. The author noted that this figure was not the total of Armenian settlers from the Ottoman Empire.⁴³⁵ Taking into account the fact that the figures given by Barkhudariants covered the period until 1895 and that the settlement of the Ottoman Armenians accelerated after 1895, since more than 300,000 Ottoman Armenians were settled in the South Caucasus in 1896-1908,⁴³⁶ the ratio of Armenians originating from the Ottoman Empire and Persia in the total number of the South Caucasian Armenians increased.

The settlement factor, which was crucial in the future Armenian claims to South Caucasian territories, was also instrumental in the reconstruction of the notion of the 'Armenian homeland' to include the 'historical homeland' in Eastern Anatolia and the diaspora areas of Erevan, Tiflis and Elizavetpol *guberniyas* in the South Caucasus.

Liquidation of the Albanian Catholicosate as another factor in the reconstruction of the notion of the 'Armenian homeland'

The liquidation of the Albanian Catholicosate and the subsequent subordination of its dioceses to the Echmiadzin Catholicosate in the early nineteenth century brought about the change of the church identity of the Christian Albanians in the western part of the area which would be arranged into the Elizavetpol *guberniya* in 1868. The area of the *guberniya* corresponded to the area of Garabagh, Ganja and Shaki khanates, and Gazakh and Samshaddil sultanates, which existed until the early nineteenth century (compare Maps 6 and 8). The change in church identity became instrumental in the ethnic Armenianisation of these Albanians and construction of the new Armenian identity with the efforts of the Armenian nationalist activists. This in its turn facilitated the inclusion of the area populated by these Albanians in the reconstructed notion of the 'Armenian homeland'.

The argument about the existence of the Christian Albanian identity in Garabagh and Ganja khanates, as well as Gazakh and Shamshaddil sultanates in the 18th-early 19th centuries can be

⁴³⁵ Barkhudariants M, *Aghuanits erkir yev dratsik* (Albania and its neighbours) (translation from Armenian into Azerbaijani by Khalid Bayramov at the personal request of Kamala Imranli-Lowe in 2011), Tiflis, 1893, part 92

⁴³⁶ Shavrov N, *op cit.*, p 60

supported by evidence from primary sources. Thus, the Echmiadzin Catholicos, Simeon Erevantsi (1763-1780) in the 1760s, reacting to the election of Nerses as Albanian Catholicos in 1726, wrote that Nerses was accepted by '*nepostoyanniy, dikogo nrava agvanskiy narod*' (unstable and wild-tempered Albanian people).⁴³⁷ Another Albanian, Catholicos Israel, in a letter of 1765 to the Georgian Tsar Irakli II, who mediated between the Echmiadzin and Albanian Catholicoses around the attempts of Echmiadzin to subordinate the Albanian Catholicosate, argued that the Garabagh and Ganja Christians were not Armenians, but Albanians. The differences between Armenians and Albanians Israel paralleled those of the Samaritans and Jews, and he wrote that, like them, Albanians and Armenians were also separate.⁴³⁸

The liquidation of the Albanian Catholicosate was long sought by Armenian Catholicoses, especially by Simeon Erevantsi in the second half of the eighteenth century. For Erevantsi, to be Armenian meant to belong to the Echmiadzin Church and accept its divine right as the sacral centre of the Armenian nation.⁴³⁹ This means that with his efforts to liquidate the Albanian Catholicosate, Erevantsi intended the Armenianisation of the monophysite Albanians.⁴⁴⁰

In 1901, Gerasim Ezov wrote that the area of jurisdiction of the former Albanian Catholicosate corresponded to the Elizavetpol *guberniya* and the Caspian shore.⁴⁴¹ Elizavetpol

⁴³⁷ Erevantsi S, *Dzhambr*, p 155; Note: This passage has been translated into English by Bournoutian as 'the changeable and wild-tempered people of Caucasian Albania' (Erevantsi S, *Jambr (Archival Chamber)* (introduction and annotated translation by George A. Bournoutian), p 176). The absence of the Armenian text of this work does not allow us to give an exact translation of the passage. However, it is certain that Erevantsi did not use the word 'Caucasian' before 'Albania'. Moreover, it is hardly believable that Erevantsi would call his own Armenians 'unstable and wild-tempered'. The analysis of both translations of this work suggests that here the author referred to ethnic Albanians, not ethnic Armenians, which Bournoutian tried to imply with his translation.

⁴³⁸ Erevantsi S, *Dzhambr*, p 15; Erevantsi S, *Jambr (Archival Chamber)*, p 14; *Divan Hayots Patmutiun (Archives of Armenian history)*, Volume III (translation of the cited document from Armenian into Azerbaijani by Sarlan Hasanov at the personal request of Kamala Imranli-Lowe in 2011), Tiflis: Tipografiya M. Sharadze, 1894, p 414

⁴³⁹ Aslanian S, *Dispersion history and the polycentric nation: the role of Simeon Erevantsi's Girk or Koci Partavcar in the 18th century national revival*, Venice: S. Lazarus, 2004, p 46

⁴⁴⁰ Note: A majority of the Caucasian Albanians adopted Islam in different periods from the seventh century to the first half of the eighteenth century and are today known as Azerbaijanis. A small part of the Albanian population adhered to Christianity, some of whom were later Armenianised and some Georgianised. Since the Islamisation and Georgianisation are not directly connected with the topic of the current thesis, they will not be discussed in this section.

⁴⁴¹ Ezov G, *Nachalo snosheniy Echmiadzinskogo patriarshego prestola s russkim pravitel'stvom. Istoricheskoe issledovanie po neizdannym dokumentam*, Tiflis: Skoropechatnya M. Martirosiantsa, 1901, pp 1-2

guberniya included Shusha, Zangazur, Jabrayil, Javanshir, Nukha (Shaki), Arash, Elizavetpol and Gazakh *uezds*. In other words, according to Ezov, the area of jurisdiction of the Albanian Catholicosate in the late 18th-early 19th centuries corresponded to the area of Garabagh, Ganja, Shaki and Baku khanates, and Gazakh and Shamshaddil sultanates (see Maps 6 and 8). The Russian publicist and public official, Vasiliy Velichko, in his work dedicated to Caucasus in 1904, also touched upon the issue of the area of jurisdiction of the former Albanian Catholicosate. He wrote that the Albanian Catholicosate, which existed until the early nineteenth century, included the ‘present-day Elizavetpol *guberniya*, parts of Tiflis *guberniya* and Dagestan’.⁴⁴²

It was not until after the Russian occupation of Ganja⁴⁴³ and Garabagh khanates in 1804 and 1805 respectively (see Map 6) that the aim of the liquidation of the Albanian Catholicosate could come closer to its realisation. In 1808, Hovannes, Echmiadzin Archbishop in Georgia, asked the Russian authorities to implement the promise of purchasing from the Russian Emperor submission of the dioceses of the Albanian Catholicosate in the territories recently occupied by Russia to Echmiadzin.⁴⁴⁴ It should be noted that the Ganja diocese of the Albanian Catholicosate had already been subordinated to Echmiadzin after the occupation of Ganja khanate in 1804,⁴⁴⁵ but the Ganja Albanians did not want to implement this decision and about five hundred Albanians gathered at the Ganja monastery and threw stones at the Echmiadzin bishop Minas.⁴⁴⁶ When the Albanian Catholicos asked the reason for this subordination of Ganja diocese to Echmiadzin, the Russian authorities justified it by the ‘efforts and loyalty to the imperial throne of His Imperial Majesty’ of the Armenian Archbishop Hovannes.⁴⁴⁷

It was not only due to the loyalty and efforts of the Echmiadzin Catholicosate, since the Christian Albanian leaders from the times of Peter the Great had also striven to bring

⁴⁴² Velichko V, *Kavkaz. Russkoe delo i mezhduplemenniye voprosy*. Polnoe sobranie publisisticheskikh sochineniy, vol I, Saint Petersburg: Tipografiya Arteli Pechatnogo Dela, 1904, p 88

⁴⁴³ Note: After the occupation of the Ganja khanate by Russia in 1804, the name Ganja was changed to Elizavetpol. The khanate was turned into a *uezd* and was included in the Georgian *guberniya* (Mil'man A, *op cit.*, pp 62-63).

⁴⁴⁴ *AKAK*, tom 3, Tiflis: Tipografiya Glavnago Upravleniya Namestnika Kavkazskago, 1869, dok 152, p 81

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, dok 149, p 80

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, dok 151, p 80

⁴⁴⁷ Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 35; the source cited by Imranli K: *Prisoedinenie Vostochnoy Armenii k Rossii. Sbornik dokumentov, tom 1 (1801-1813)*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, 1972, dok 323, p 388

Christian Russian rule to the region. A convincing reply to the question of the Albanian Catholicos would be found almost one hundred years later in the report of the Russian Interior Minister of 15 October 1903, which explained the prerogatives given to the Echmiadzin church with the ‘lack of information on the historical past of the Armenian church and the influence of the temporary political considerations, which was determined to seek assistance of the supreme Armenian hierarchy to extend our influence to Turkey’.⁴⁴⁸ That was the only difference between Christian Albanians and Armenians for the Russian authorities, as the former did not have their brethren in the Ottoman Empire to realise Russia’s plans for the occupation of the Ottoman territories, while the Armenians had, and the help of the Armenian clergy in the realisation of these plans was very much needed.

As is apparent from the letter of the Echmiadzin Patriarch Efrem to Russian General Nikolay Rtishchev on 18 February 1814, Echmiadzin did not have any success in the subordination of the Albanian dioceses in Ganja (Elizavetpol after 1804), Garabagh, Shaki and others.⁴⁴⁹ One of the reasons was that Sarkis continued to act as an Albanian Catholicos and refused to submit to Echmiadzin. General Rtishchev, in his letter to Prince Orbeliani on 19 October 1813, instructed the latter to call Sarkis and tell him not to call himself Garabagh Patriarch, but Garabagh Archbishop, and that the Russian Emperor recognised only Echmiadzin Patriarch Efrem.⁴⁵⁰ The instruction was implemented, as can be seen from Orbeliani’s report.⁴⁵¹ However, in 1815, according to Efrem’s letter of 31 January 1815, Sarkis continued to act as Patriarch.⁴⁵² According to Raffi, one of the Armenian nationalist leaders, in 1815 Echmiadzin, with the help of the Russian authorities, compelled Sarkis to give up the title of Catholicos and accept the title of Metropolitan with the rights of Archbishop,⁴⁵³ whereas for Makar Barkhudariants, one of the Echmiadzin bishops, this was in 1828.⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁴⁸ *STsIA*, fn 12, l 11, fl 175, p 2op

⁴⁴⁹ *AKAK*, tom 5, Tiflis: Tipografiya Glavnago Upravleniya Namestnika Kavkazskago, 1873, dok 519, p 439

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, dok 518, p 437

⁴⁵¹ *STsIA*, fn 2, l 1, fl 386, pp 2-2op

⁴⁵² *AKAK*, tom 5, dok 522, p 443; *STsIA*, fn 2, l 1, fl 386, p 12op

⁴⁵³ Raffi, *Melikstva Khamsy: 1600-1827. Materialy dlya novoy armyanskoy istorii*, Erevan: Nairi, 1991, p 155

⁴⁵⁴ Barkhudariants M, *Artsakh* (sost. i podgot. teksta B.A.Grigorian, B.G.Grigoriana), Saint Petersburg: Nauka, 2009, p 6; Note: In 1890, Makar Barkhudariants travelled throughout the territories which had once belonged to Caucasian Albania to fulfil the instruction of writing the area’s history. The product of this research became three books: *Aghuanits erkir yev dratsik* (Albania and its neighbours) (1893), *Artsakh* (Artsakh) (1895) and *Patmutiun Aghuanits* (History of Albania) in two volumes (1902 and 1907). These books, among others, contain information from inscriptions on castles, monasteries, churches, and temples and gravestones, which mentioned ‘Albania’, ‘Albanians’, ‘Albanian Catholicosate’ and ‘Albanian Catholicoses’ (Barkhudariants M, *Artsakh* (sost. i podgot. teksta B.A.Grigorian, B.G.Grigoriana), pp 50, 54-55, 57, 79, 100, 107, 132, 134, 151, 153, 167-168,

After the Russian occupation and subsequent liquidation of the Albanian Catholicosate, church schools, which were under the supervision of Echmiadzin, started indoctrinating the Armenian identity among the former flock of the Albanian Catholicosate. The process of obliterating Albanian traces was also facilitated by the transfer of the documents of the Albanian Catholicosate to Echmiadzin in 1836.⁴⁵⁵ According to Kerpe Patkanov, the ancient text of the work of the Caucasian Albanian historian, Moisey Kalankatuyski, on Albanian history, which was in the library of Echmiadzin in the 1850s, was not there anymore when he visited it in 1877.⁴⁵⁶ This gives reason to suspect that ancient manuscripts related to the history of the Albanians were eliminated by the Armenian Catholicosate to obliterate Albanian traces.

The church activities were followed by those of the Armenian nationalist societies at the end of the nineteenth century, one of which emerged in the 1880s in Shusha, Garabagh. Its main aim included elements of Phase B, i.e. to familiarise its members with Armenian history, language and culture.⁴⁵⁷ As mentioned earlier, Raffi visited Garabagh in 1881 with the aim of writing a history of Garabagh of the 16th-early 19th centuries and presenting it as the last refuge of the Armenian national idea. Although the author tried to interpret the history of Albanian *melikates* (counties) of the 15th-18th centuries in Garabagh as that of Armenian counties, he failed, since his evidence demonstrated their Albanian origins.⁴⁵⁸ Further evidence was found in an unpublished brochure of Sarkis Jalal from the dynasty of the Albanian Catholicosates, with which Raffi became acquainted in Garabagh. This source, called 'History of Albania', was about the above-mentioned counties of Garabagh. Raffi did not hide his surprise as to why the author did not call their *meliks* (counts) either *Hayk* or *Aram*, which was applicable to ethnic Armenians; for that reason, he did not use this source.⁴⁵⁹ Sebouh Aslanian, in his work dedicated to the role of Simeon Erevantsi in the eighteenth-century national revival of Armenians, cited one letter of 1776 from two Armenians of India to

190, 194, 209, 215, 217, 258, 261, 270; Barkhudariants M, *Artsakh* (translation from Armenian into Russian by Yargulian in 1981), pp 39, 44, 46, 61, 66, 71, 73-75, 86, 89, 104-107, 130, 134, 136, 155-157, 159, 170

⁴⁵⁵Papazian A (ed.), *Persidskie dokumenty Matenadarana, I, Ukazy*, vyp 1 (XV-XVI vv.), Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, 1956, p 137

⁴⁵⁶ Patkanov K, *Bibliograficheskiy ocherk armyanskoy istoricheskoy literatury*, Saint Petersburg: Tipografiya brat'yev Panteleyevykh, 1880, pp 18-19

⁴⁵⁷ Nalbandian L, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement: The Development of Armenian Political Parties through the Nineteenth Century*, pp 139-140

⁴⁵⁸ Raffi, *op cit.*, pp 18-25

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid., pp 198-199

Erevantsi, who counselled latter ‘to mediate a pact between King Heraclius of Georgia and the “princes of Alowank [Albania – I.K.]” (i.e. the meliks of Gharabagh)’.⁴⁶⁰ This evidence also shows that the counts of Garabagh were Albanian.⁴⁶¹

Apart from history, language was another problem in the realisation of Armenian nationalist ideas, especially in Garabagh. Touching upon the need for a standardised and commonly understandable Armenian language in the nineteenth century, Razmik Panossian wrote that while some Armenians spoke a form of vernacular Armenian, the rest of the population spoke ‘either Turkish or various Armenian-based but often mutually incomprehensible dialects’, which continues up to the modern period. He referred to Garabagh as ‘the most notable case’, adding that it is ‘incomprehensible to other Armenians; a sort of “secret code” of communication’.⁴⁶²

Pavel Florenski, the philosopher and famous churchman from the dynasty of Malik-Baylarovs and one of the above-mentioned Garabagh counts, from his mother’s side, in a letter to his family of 20 September 1916 wrote that ‘Garabagh Armenians are not Armenians, but a distinct tribe of Udis [...] in the ancient times they were called Albanians, whom Armenians called Akhavans [...] Garabagh Armenians preserved distinct dialect and traditions.’⁴⁶³ The Armenians also considered themselves ethnically distinct from the

⁴⁶⁰ Aslanian S, *op cit.*, p 72

⁴⁶¹ Note: It should be mentioned that even before their church and ethnic Armenianisation, the pre-nineteenth and nineteenth century sources presented the monophysite Albanians as both Armenians and Albanians. Even those Albanians-Udis on the left bank of the Kur River who escaped Armenianisation and still live in the Gabala and Oghuz districts of Azerbaijan were sometimes presented as Armenians and sometimes Udis in the Russian Imperial statistic publications. This can be explained by the fact that the Albanians shared the monophysite confession with Armenians. In this regard, the Ottoman Empire can be given as an example: monophysite Armenians, Jacobites, Copts and Nestorians were included in the Armenian *millet* (Armenian nation) in the Empire, whereas the ethnic Armenians, who were Catholics and Protestants, were included in the Catholic and Protestant nations respectively (Artinian V, *The Armenian Constitutional System in the Ottoman Empire (1839-1863): A Study of its Historical Development*, pp 11, 37; Barsoumian H, ‘The Eastern Question and the Tanzimat Era’ in Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Volume II, pp 184, 188). Even the scholarly publications used ‘Armenian’ and ‘monophysite’ as almost synonymous notions. For example, Anatoliy Yanovskiy, while referring to the dyophysite confession as the ‘Christianity of the Greek Church’, called the monophysite confession the ‘Armenian Christianity’ (Yanovskiy A, ‘O Drevney Kavkazskoy Albanii’, *Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnago Prosveshcheniya*, chast’ LII, Saint Petersburg: Tipografiya Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk, 1846, p 167). Vladimir Minorsky considered the monophysite confession the ‘Armenian form of Christianity’ (Minorsky V, ‘Caucasica IV’, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol 15, no 3, 1953, p 504).

⁴⁶² Panossian R, *The Armenians: From Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars*, p 134; note 7, p 134

⁴⁶³ Imranli K, *Chyornaya sud'ba Chyornogo Sada*, p 47; the source cited by Imranli K: Florenskiy P, *Detyam moim. Vospominaniya proshlykh dney. Genealogicheskie issledovaniya. Iz Solovetskikh pisem. Zaveschchanie*, Moscow: Moskovskiy rabochiy, 1992, p 376

Albanians. Armenians originating from the Ottoman Empire and Persia still call the Garabagh Armenians '*shurtvats hayer*', or 'converted Armenians'. This expression in itself is proof of the continuing antithesis.

Thus, the liquidation of the Albanian Catholicosate and the subsequent Armenianisation of the Albanians in the western part of the Elizavetpol *guberniya* played an important role in the reconstruction of the notion of an 'Armenian homeland' and the Armenian nationalist claims to the area, which, among others, included Garabagh region, to be discussed later in the thesis.

4.2 Identity construction: The Armenian, Azerbaijani and Georgian cases

When the Armenians in Eastern Anatolia were in Hroch's mixed A, B and C Phases in the second half of the nineteenth century, Azerbaijanis had just started Phase A on the Muslim-Turkic basis. One of the reasons for this late national 'awakening' was Islam, which did not accept division based on anything other than religion. Another reason was that, unlike Armenians, they did not have a diaspora, especially in Europe or European-influenced countries, through which they would be 'awakened' to nationalist ideas. It was not without reason that all phases of the Armenian national movement started in the Armenian diaspora, either in Europe or British India.

The factors instrumental in the construction of the Azerbaijani identity can be summarised as follows:

- The occupation of Muslim-populated territories of the South Caucasus by Russia in the nineteenth century, which had both positive (Muslims became acquainted with Western European political and cultural values through Russia) and negative (national policy pursued by Russia, which excluded Muslims from the list of privileged peoples and had implications on their political-legal status within the Empire) consequences. Muslims were deprived of higher civil and military posts and admission was restricted to educational organisations and service. The notions of '*inoverets*' (person

of alien or non-Christian religion) and *'busurman'* (Muslim) were added to that of *'inorodtsy'* (alien or non-Slav peoples).⁴⁶⁴

- Enlightenment activities of the second half of the 19th-early 20th centuries, which included the creation of literature, theatre and periodicals in vernacular Turkic (the language of Ottoman Turks was called *Osmanly* (Ottoman) at that time) which aimed at the 'awakening' of local Muslims; works on the Turkic language and efforts on its purification from Persian and Ottoman borrowings and their replacement with vernacular Turkic elements; translations from Persian and Russian into Turkic; opening of schools on the initiative of Muslim intelligentsia at their own expense, which apart from the Koran and Turkic, taught various technical subjects. These activities can be placed within Phases A and B.
- The oil boom of the 1870s, which played an enormous role in the formation of a national bourgeoisie in the early twentieth century, who supported the development of national enlightenment, including financing the education of Muslim youth abroad, opening schools (including those for girls) and theatres, and issuing periodicals. On the other hand, the oil boom attracted a great number of Armenians from different places to Baku. As a result, their number in Baku increased from 55 in 1810 of total 2,235 people⁴⁶⁵, i.e. 2.5% to 77,256 of total 405,829 in 1916,⁴⁶⁶ i.e. 19%.
- The increase of nationally 'awakened' Armenians in the South Caucasus, including in Baku, which had its impact on the identification of the Muslims against the others, especially Armenians, who were favoured by the Russian Government, excluding short periods of persecution because of their nationalist activities. The religious and cultural differences between Muslims and Armenians were deepened with the domination of the latter in politics and economics, especially in Baku after the oil boom. The Armenian nationalist movement and subsequent deterioration of Muslim-Armenian relations in both the Ottoman Empire and the South Caucasus, especially after the Armenian-Tartar conflict of 1905-1907, were instrumental in strengthening enmity and 'them-us' antithesis.

⁴⁶⁴ Guseynov M, *Tyurkskaya Demokraticheskaya Partiya Federalistov 'Musavat' v proshlom i v nastoyashchem*, Tiflis: Izdatel'stvo 'Zakniga', 1927, p 18; Bagirova I, 'Rol' politicheskikh partiy v formirovanii natsional'nogo samosoznaniya azerbaydzhintsev v nachale XX veka', *Milli özünü dərkətmə: Beynəlxalq elmi kollokviumun tezisləri, 21-24 aprel 1999*, Baku, 1999, pp 120-122

⁴⁶⁵ *AKAK*, tom 4, Tiflis: Tipografiya Glavnago Upravleniya Namestnika Kavkazskago, 1870, dok 37, p 37

⁴⁶⁶ *Kavkazskiy kalendar' na 1917 god*, pp 183, 185

- Search for identity in the late 19th-early 20th centuries until the February Revolution of 1917 which included discussions on identity in journals and newspapers in Turkic, Ottoman and Russian. It was in the late nineteenth century that the present-day ethnic term ‘Azerbaijani’ was considered by some Muslim intellectuals to be more appropriate to refer to the people who were called ‘Muslims’ and ‘Tartars’ at that time. The process of an identity search also included the consideration of the ideas of Islamism (unification of all Muslims), unification of Caucasian Muslims (which found its reflection also in the programmes and proclamations of the Muslim political parties that emerged in 1905-1907), pan-Turkism (unification of all Turks around the Ottoman Empire, which was abandoned after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkan War of 1912) and Azerbaijani Turkism. These ideas, initiated by some members of the Muslim intelligentsia, were not widespread, and in this period ancestors of present-day Azerbaijanis mostly identified themselves on the basis of Islam and region⁴⁶⁷ (for example: from Garabagh, Iravan (Erevan), Shirvan, Shaki and so on). This period contained features of Phases A and B.
- The February and October revolutions of 1917 in Russia, followed by the autonomy demand for Azerbaijan by the leading Muslim and Tartar political party of *Musavat* (Equality) in its draft programme of June 1917 and adopted programme of October 1917.⁴⁶⁸ Winning support for this programme necessitated efforts containing elements of Phases A, B and C. Since the Azerbaijani national movement started with the ‘awakening’ of Turkic-speaking Caucasian Muslims with works in Azerbaijani Turkic passed through Islamism and Turkism ideas and their propaganda, and ended in activities for territorial autonomy for Azerbaijan, it can be concluded that Hroch’s theory of phases of national movements in Central and Eastern countries is applicable to the Azerbaijani case.
- Establishment of the Azerbaijan Republic in May 1918, when real steps were made in constructing an Azerbaijani identity on the basis of Turkic, Dagestani and Iranian-speaking Muslims.

⁴⁶⁷ Balaev A, *Azerbaydzhanskii tyurki: protsessy formirovaniya natsii i natsional'noy identichnosti na rubezhe XIX-XX vv.*, Baku: Ganun, 2010, pp 140-217

⁴⁶⁸ Guseynov M, *op cit.*, p 80; *ARDA*, fn 894, l 10, fl 176, p 4

- Sovietisation of Azerbaijan in 1920, after which the Azerbaijani identity started consolidating, and restoration of Azerbaijani independence in 1991, which has further consolidated the Azerbaijani identity.

As for Georgians, as adherents of the Georgian church, they identified themselves as Georgians (*Kartvelian* in Georgian). However, *Kartvelians* of the late eighteenth century, when Kartli voluntarily joined Russia, and those of the twentieth century were not the same. It is enough to compare the Russian Imperial censuses of the mentioned periods to discover that some of the peoples who had non-Georgian identities in the early nineteenth century were identified as Georgians in the early twentieth century. This means that construction of Georgian identity also had its origins in Russian rule, which brought kin peoples under one political rule. The process was further consolidated after the establishment of the first Georgian Republic and Soviet Georgia, when Pshavs, Khevsurs, Tushins, Gurians, Svans, Imeretians and Mingrelians ended up being identified as Georgians. According to Ronald Suny, apart from the introduction of Western education to the Georgian elite after the Russian occupation, increased contact with Armenians, who dominated Georgian urban centres and had a different language, church and values, had its impact on the self-definition of Georgians.⁴⁶⁹

Comparing the Armenian, Azerbaijani and Georgian cases, it can be argued that the diaspora nationalism of Armenians was one of the factors influencing the construction of the three national identities. The diaspora nationalism and scattered distribution necessitated the Armenian need for land, which they tried to solve with the construction of 'homelands' both in Eastern Anatolia and the South Caucasus. The land claims of Armenian nationalists in the South Caucasus, stimulated by the February Revolution of 1917 in Russia, were instrumental in the territorial autonomy 'awakening' of Tartars and Georgians. The latter two peoples, unlike Armenians, had compact distribution in the South Caucasus, living there for many centuries, so did not need to pay attention to the issue until they were 'awakened' by the Armenian nationalist 'threat' to their lands. Passing a difficult road through one more revolution in October and other political and military developments, this 'awakening' ended

⁴⁶⁹ Suny R, 'The Emergence of Political Society in Georgia' in Suny (ed.), *Transcaucasia: Nationalism and Social Change*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983

with the declaration of three republics in the South Caucasus with implications for the construction of the Georgian and Azerbaijani national identities.

The Armenian case demonstrated that the construction of a new Armenian identity preceded the construction of the Armenian Republic in 1918, since it was due to the Armenian church, i.e. religion and confession, not the Armenian state, that the new people was added to the composition of the Armenians. The confessional identity of the Christian Albanians turned them into followers of the Armenian church, and the new church identity, owing to the efforts of the Armenian nationalists, became their new ethnic identity. If not for the Armenian Echmiadzin Church, Christian Albanians living in Garabagh were unlikely to be converted into Armenians, since, despite the efforts of the Armenian nationalists, Garabagh could not be included in the first Armenian Republic, nor was it included in the second Armenian Republic, i.e. Soviet Armenia in 1921. But the Armenians could use the existing church identity for the construction of the new Armenian ethnic identity. The latter would turn into Armenian national identity after 1918 for some of the Armenians, as many of them, including those in Garabagh, would live outside the Armenian Republic.

The primordial approach is not helpful for understanding the Armenian case, since the evidence suggests that the Armenians of the second half of the first millennium BC were not the Armenians of the late nineteenth century. No nationality is ever ethnically homogenous, and those, including Armenian nationalist leaders of the 19th-early 20th centuries who claimed purity of the Armenian people existing from time immemorial, to be discussed in Chapter 8, and scholars who have been claiming the existence of such homogeneity extending from the second century BC to the present have been influenced by nationalist approaches to historical research, which crystallised in the nineteenth century. The approaches of modernist scholars, including Eric Hobsbawm, who wrote that ‘nations do not make state and nationalism but the other way round’,⁴⁷⁰ or Valeriy Tishkov, who noted that ‘nations are constructs, created by people, by the efforts of intellectuals and by the political will of the state’,⁴⁷¹ also do not apply to the Armenian case. Both scholars would appear to be right, if Azerbaijanis, the major

⁴⁷⁰ Hobsbawm E, *Nations and Nationalism since 1870: Programme, Myth, Reality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp 9-10

⁴⁷¹ Tishkov V, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union: The Mind Aflame*, London: SAGE, 1997, p 21

minority people in the first Armenian Republic, and other minorities in Armenia accepted the Armenian state identity as their national identity, but this did not happen and none of these minorities identified themselves as Armenians. This was also the case in the first Azerbaijan Republic, where the state identity did not turn out to be the national identity of its Armenian citizens, although it brought about the adoption of the Azerbaijani identity by some of its Muslim citizens. The Georgian case was also different from the Armenian case and similar to the Azerbaijani one, as neither Armenian nor Azerbaijani citizens of Georgia identified themselves as Georgians, whereas a number of kin peoples identified themselves as Georgians. These facts prove that the Armenian state did not result in the emergence of the new Armenian nation in terms of its ethnic composition. Simply, after the Armenian Republic came into being, part of the constructed Armenian ethnic community became the Armenian nation.

The approaches of ethno-symbolist scholars such as Anthony Smith, Miroslav Hroch and John Hutchinson, who, unlike the modernists, did not disregard the ethnic factor in the formation of nations, apply to the Armenian case. For Smith, nation is a 'named population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members'.⁴⁷² Bearing in mind Smith's view that nationalists could reconstruct, even 'invent', history when it was deficient⁴⁷³ and applying his definition of nation to the Armenian case, it can be concluded that it was the presence of constructed historic territory, common myths and historical memories that brought about the construction of the Armenian ethnic community in the nineteenth century and its transformation into the Armenian nation after the emergence of the Armenian Republic in 1918. On the other hand, it was because of the absence of 'a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members' that the Armenians who were not citizens of the Armenian Republic could not be part of the Armenian nation. On the contrary, the lack of common myths and historical memories made the perception of the minorities of the Armenian Republic as belonging to the Armenian nation impossible.

⁴⁷² Smith A, *National identity*, p 40

⁴⁷³ Ibid., p 126

Hroch regarded nation as a large social group integrated by a combination of economic, political, linguistic, cultural, religious, geographical, historical relationships, and their subjective reflection in the collective consciousness.⁴⁷⁴ It was the absence of some of these components, namely linguistic, cultural and religious factors, that meant that non-Armenian peoples of the Armenian state did not identify themselves as part of the Armenian nation. On the other hand, it was due to the absence of economic and political relationships within one state that the ethnic Armenians outside Armenia could not be regarded as part of the Armenian nation.

Conclusion

In the imagination of the Armenian political national movement, the notion of the ‘Armenian homeland’ was reconstructed in the early twentieth century, expanding from Eastern Anatolia to the juncture of the Kur and Araz Rivers in the South Caucasus. The basis of this reconstruction was laid down in the Armenian history by Ch’amch’yants’. His construction of Armenian national territory was further facilitated by three factors: the existence of monophysite Caucasian Albanians in the South Caucasus; the aim of the Armenian Echmiadzin Catholicosate to subordinate the Albanian Catholicosate; and the expansionist plans of Christian Russia towards the South Caucasus and the Mediterranean.

The realisation of Ch’amch’yants’ history and the reconstruction of the ‘Armenian homeland’ notion were further facilitated by the mass settlement of the Armenians from Persia and the Ottoman Empire in the South Caucasus in the 19th-early 20th centuries. This led to the emergence of compact Armenian masses in some parts of the region and became instrumental in the inclusion of the area of Erevan *guberniya*, the western half of Elizavetpol *guberniya* and southern parts of Tiflis *guberniya* in the reconstructed ‘Armenian homeland’. This settlement started solving the land problem in the diaspora by creating an Armenian ‘peasantry’, a powerful claim to territory, and in the early twentieth century, because of the significant increase in their numbers due to the extensive settlement, these lands and Armenian peasants turned into a tool of Armenian nationalism in the region.

⁴⁷⁴ Hroch M, *op cit.*, p 61

The Armenianisation of the monophysite Albanians in the western part of the Elizavetpol *guberniya* in the nineteenth century was another factor in the reconstruction of the 'Armenian homeland'. The liquidation of the Albanian Catholicosate and the subordination of its dioceses to Echmiadzin, with the help of Russia, led to a change in the Albanians' church identity, which turned into ethnic identity under the Armenian nationalist movement and further promoted the inclusion of the larger, western part of Elizavetpol *guberniya* in the reconstructed 'Armenian homeland'.

Comparing the Armenian, Azerbaijani and Georgian cases it was argued that unlike Armenians, the latter two peoples had compact distribution in the region, living there for many centuries, so they did not take the land issue into account until they were 'awakened' by the Armenian nationalism 'threat' to their lands. Under the influence of different factors, including the revolutions in Russia and other political and military developments in the region afterwards, this land 'awakening' ended with the declaration of three republics in the South Caucasus with implications for the construction of Georgian and Azerbaijani national identities.

The construction of the new Armenian identity preceded the construction of the Armenian Republic in 1918, since it was due to the Armenian church in the nineteenth century, not the Armenian state in 1918, that the new people was added to the composition of the Armenians. This in itself disproved the primordialist and modernist theories, making the ethno-symbolist theory applicable to the Armenian, as well as the Azerbaijani and Georgian, case.

Chapter 5: The First World War and the Armenian Homeland Project

Wars, including the collapse of empires, are conducive to realising the goals of nationalist movements. The Armenian nationalists held this view when Russia declared war on the Ottoman Empire on 2 November 1914, followed by Britain and France on 5 November 1914. The First World War created favourable conditions for the realisation of the ‘Armenian homeland’ project.

The chapter examines the expectations of the Armenian nationalist movement during the First World War and their results, up to the February Revolution in Russia in 1917.

5.1 The First World War and relocation of Armenians

Ovannes Kachaznuni, one of the founders and leaders of *Dashnaktsutiun* and the first premier of the Armenian Republic, in his report submitted to the conference of the foreign committees of *Dashnaktsutiun* in 1923, wrote that during autumn 1914, before the Ottoman Empire even entered the war, Armenian volunteer units had been organised with great energy in the South Caucasus. *Dashnaktsutiun* played an active role in both the organisation of volunteer units and military actions against the Ottoman Empire with the full belief that it would be defeated and dismembered. It was unconditionally orientated towards Russia and believed that thanks to the loyalty, efforts and help of the Armenians, the Tsarist Government would grant them autonomy in the ‘liberated Armenian provinces of Turkey and Transcaucasian Armenia’.⁴⁷⁵

During his speech to the Council of Ten on 26 February 1919, Avetis Aharonian, Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia at the Paris Peace Conference, stated, ‘at the beginning of the war, our nation not only forgot all grievances against Tsarist rule and rallied whole-heartedly to the Russian flag in support of the Allied cause, but our fellow-countrymen in Turkey and all over the world offered to the Government of the Tsar (the archives of the Russian Embassy at Paris prove this) to establish and support Armenian legions at their own expense to fight side by side with Russian troops under the command of Russian generals. The Tsar’s Government stated, through its Ambassador in Paris, that it would be preferable if

⁴⁷⁵ Kachaznuni Ov, *Dashnaktsutyun bol’she nechego delat’!*, Tiflis: Izdatel’stvo ‘Zakkniga’, 1927, p 12

individual Armenians enlisted in the Russian Army [...] Armenian volunteers from all parts of the world fought for the Allied cause side by side with their fellow-countrymen who were regulars in the Russian Army; more than 180,000 Armenians defended the freedom of nations, and this devotion to the common cause called down on the Armenian people the hatred of Ottomans and Young Turks, which gave rise to massacres lasting two years and laid waste all the Armenian vilayets of the Ottoman Empire.’⁴⁷⁶

Not all Ottoman Armenians and *Dashnaktsutiun* members were on the Russian side. Bagrat Borian explains that Shahrikian Efendi and Zorian, Ottoman Armenians and members of *Dashnaktsutiun*, were against the organisation of volunteer units and the activities of *Dashnaktsutiun* against Turks.⁴⁷⁷ The British author, Christopher Walker, also wrote that many Ottoman Armenians were enlisted in the Ottoman army and services were held in churches for an Ottoman victory, although this was not a universal loyalty. The *Hnchak* Party, quite influential at that time, pledged defiance of the Ottoman Empire. Leading *Dashnaktsutiun* member and Ottoman deputy, Garegin Pastymajian, fled to Tiflis to assist in the formation of Armenian volunteer units for operation against the Ottoman Empire before the latter entered the war.⁴⁷⁸ The Eastern Bureau and Istanbul Committee of *Dashnaktsutiun* decided to act on the order of the Russian diplomacy. According to the Russian military authorities’ plan, Armenian volunteer units were to penetrate the lines of the Ottoman army, and create anarchy, together with the rebels. This would help ensure the advancement of the Russian army and the occupation of Eastern Anatolia.⁴⁷⁹ When Andranik Ozanian, the Ottoman Armenian and head of one of the Armenian volunteer units, approached Van, Dashnak fighters had to take leave in the mountains and rebel there. The programme of the rebellion was realised in April 1915, and, the Armenian Echmiadzin Catholicos reported, ‘ten thousand armed fighters entered the battle’.⁴⁸⁰

⁴⁷⁶ *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Paris Peace Conference, 1919*. Volume IV, Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1943, pp 147-148

⁴⁷⁷ Borian B, *Armeniya, mezhdunarodnaya diplomatiya i SSSR*, chast’ I, Moscow-Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel’sтво, 1928, pp 361-362

⁴⁷⁸ Walker Ch, ‘World War I and the Armenian Genocide’ in Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Volume II, New York: St.Martin Press, 2004, p 245

⁴⁷⁹ Borian B, *op cit.*, pp 362, 360

⁴⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p 363

In the words of Kemal Oke, after the Ottoman Empire entered the war, the Ottoman Government kept receiving intelligence on the Armenian-Russian collaboration against the Ottoman Army and the uprisings which took place one after another in Anatolia, but avoided taking firm measures, thinking that events would eventually settle. Talat Pasha, the Ottoman Minister of the Interior, and Enver Pasha, the Ottoman Minister of War, asked the Armenian leaders to advise their people to be peaceful; otherwise the government would be forced to take strict measures.⁴⁸¹

According to Kamuran Gurun, the Armenian-Russian collaboration compelled the Ottoman Supreme Military Command to circulate instructions on 25 February 1915 on the demobilisation of Armenians from the Ottoman Army.⁴⁸² On 24 April 1915, the Ottoman Interior Ministry ordered the closure of the Armenian revolutionary committee centres, arrest of their leaders and confiscation of their documents. Based on this order, 235 Armenians were arrested in Istanbul. This day is commemorated as 'genocide day' by world Armenians. On 26 April, the Supreme Military Command sent a similar circular to its units on the trial of Armenian revolutionary leaders in military courts and the punishment of the guilty.⁴⁸³

On 26 May, the Supreme Military Command informed the Interior Ministry of its oral decision on the relocation of the Armenians from the Eastern Anatolian provinces, from Zeytun, and from areas densely populated by Armenians, to the south of the Diyarbakyr province, to the valley of the Euphrates, to the vicinity of Urfa and Suleymaniye. It suggested taking into account the following points in order to prevent the reappearance of rebellion nests:

- a) Armenians should not exceed 10% of the tribal and Muslim population in the areas where they were relocated.
- b) Any villages built by the Armenians in the places where they were relocated should not exceed fifty houses.

⁴⁸¹ Oke M, *The Armenian Question: 1914-1923*, Nicosia: K.Rustem & Brothers, 1988, p 129

⁴⁸² Gürün K, *Ermeni dosyası*, Ankara: 'Rüstem' Yayın Evi, 2001, p 276

⁴⁸³ Ibid., p 277

c) Relocated Armenian families should not be allowed to move closer to their former residences, even for travel or transport reasons.⁴⁸⁴

Between winter 1914 and summer 1915, the Ottoman Army suffered great territorial losses in Eastern Anatolia, which brought the area between the Russian-Ottoman border and the southern shore of Lake Van under Russian control. The Russian advance and Ottoman retreat, which started due to the uprising of Van Armenians in April, continued until the end of July, when Russian Special Forces together with the Armenian Legion attached to it advanced toward Bitlis. Here they met a strong Ottoman counter-offensive which compelled the Russian and Armenian divisions to retreat towards the Ottoman-Russian border. To avoid encirclement, the Russian Special Forces were commanded to withdraw to Van, but upon arriving they found Van province evacuated by the Fourth Corps of the Russian Caucasus Army on 31 July 1915. The retreating Russian divisions were followed by about 200,000 Armenians. According to Hovannisian, having repulsed the Russian-Armenian divisions, the Ottoman divisions ‘concentrated upon their internal foes’ and when Russian forces together with Armenian units reoccupied Van in September 1915 and advanced toward Bitlis in March 1916, ‘there remained no one to liberate’.⁴⁸⁵

Analysing the 1915 events, Kachaznuni reported that ‘angered and scared, we looked for the guilty and immediately found Russian Government with its insidious politics. With the inconsistency peculiar for immature and unstable people, we went from one extreme to the other. Our accusation of today was as blind and unfounded as was our belief of yesterday in the Russian Government. It was said that Russians [...] behaved so that to devastate Armenia and then to settle it with Cossacks to realise the well-known project of the Duke Lobanov-Rostovskiy: “Armenia without Armenians.” [...] We did not want to understand that in order to explain the politics of the Russian Government it was absolutely unnecessary to suppose that it had a project to have Armenia without Armenians. It was enough to know that its plans did not include the protection of the Turkish Armenians at any price [...] We, political party,

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid.; Oke M, *op cit.*, p 132

⁴⁸⁵ Arutyunian A, *Kavkazskiy front 1914-1917 gg.*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo ‘Ayastan’, 1971, p 179; Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, pp 48, 55-57

forgot that our issue was not of interest for Russians and for that reason when it was necessary, they could easily step over our dead bodies without hesitation.’⁴⁸⁶

When, with the active participation of the Armenian volunteer units and rebels, the Russian military was advancing in the Caucasian front in 1915, the Russian authorities were working on the expected correction of the Russian borders in the Caucasus by the annexation of Trabzon, Erzurum and Van provinces and part of Bitlis province. It was considered that most of this region was ‘above the sea level, distinguished by its relatively wild and healthy climate and quite suitable for the Russian settlers’.⁴⁸⁷ The Russian General, Nicolas Yudenits, in his report of 5 April 1915 to the Caucasian Viceroy, Illarion Vorontsov-Dashkov, wrote, ‘for the exploitation of the lands left by the Kurds and Turks, Armenians intend to settle there Armenian refugees. I consider this intention unacceptable, as it will be difficult to take the lands seized by Armenians back after the war or to prove that the seized lands do not belong to them.’⁴⁸⁸ For that reason, I find it to be extremely desirable to settle the border settlements with Russian elements. When Eleshkirt, Diyadin and Bayazyt enter the borders of the Russian Empire, it is necessary to settle these territories with settlers from the Kuban and Don, and thus to create border Cossacks.’⁴⁸⁹

Comparison of Kachaznuni’s report with that of Vorontsov-Dashkov shows that not only were Armenians deprived of their places, but also Muslims were turned into internally displaced people, in whose lands the Armenians wanted to settle Armenian refugees. The negative attitude of the Caucasian viceroy to this project demonstrated the change in Russian policy towards Armenian settlements. Chapter 4, discussing the settlement of the Armenians in the Russian Empire, mentioned that this was realised through the support of the Russian authorities who wanted to create a Christian buffer zone of loyal Armenian settlers in the border with the Muslim Ottoman Empire and Persia. However, after the accumulation of a considerable number of Armenians in the region, the Armenian nationalists directed their activities against Russia as well. For that reason, it would be naïve to think that Russia fought

⁴⁸⁶ Kachaznuni Ov, *op cit.*, pp 14-15

⁴⁸⁷ *Razdel Aziatskoy Turtsii (po sekretnym dokumentam b.ministerstva inostrannykh del pod redaktsiey E.A.Adamova)*, Moscow: Izdanie Litizdata NKID, 1924, pp 360-361

⁴⁸⁸ Note: The Armenian refugees also seized the property of the Muslims of the Kars *oblast*, who were exiled by the Russian Government in 1914, and did not want to return them after the war, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

⁴⁸⁹ Borian B, *op cit.*, p 356

in the war against the Ottoman Empire to construct an autonomous Armenia or settle these areas with the Armenians, whose loyalty was not trusted anymore, although as mentioned earlier, *Dashnaktsutiun* believed that for their ‘loyalty, efforts and help’ in the war against the Ottoman Empire, the Tsarist Government would grant them autonomy in the ‘liberated Armenian provinces of Turkey and Transcaucasian Armenia’.⁴⁹⁰ As seen from the above-mentioned evidences of the Russian officials, Russian plans with regard to the occupied Ottoman territories, not to mention the South Caucasus, were quite different from the Armenian expectations.

As for the Ottoman Government, on 26 May, after the Russian occupation of Van with Armenian help, the Interior Ministry sent a memorandum to the Cabinet of Ministers. The document stated that it considered necessary the removal of ‘harmful’ Armenian revolutionary elements from the area of operations, and the evacuation of villages which served as a base for the operations and refuge for the rebels against the Ottoman Empire. To that end, it had been decided to relocate the Armenians of the provinces of Van, Bitlis and Erzurum and the villages and settlements of the districts of Iskenderun, Beylan, Jisr-l Shughur and Antakya, with the exception of the towns of Adana, Sis and Mersin, to the *sanjaks* of Mosul and Zor, excluding the northern area of Mosul bordering Van province, to the southern part of Urfa, excluding Urfa town, to the eastern and south-eastern parts of the Halep province, and to settlements in the eastern part of Syria province.⁴⁹¹

On 27 May 1915, a provisional law on the measures to be taken by the military authorities against persons involved in anti-governmental activities, known as *Tehcir kanunu* (Relocation Law), was adopted, the main provisions of which were as follows:

1. In wartime, should the commanders of the Army, the Army Corps, or the divisions face any opposition, armed aggression, or resistance to operations and arrangements related to the decrees of the government, the defence of the country, and the maintenance of public order, they were authorised and compelled to immediately

⁴⁹⁰ Kachaznuni Ov, *op cit.*, p 12

⁴⁹¹ Gürün K, *op cit.*, pp 277-278; Bayur Y, *Türk İnkılabı Tarihi*, cilt III, kısım 3, Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1983, pp 37-38

implement punishment through the Armed Forces, and to suppress the aggression and resistance.

2. The commanders of the Army, Army Corps, and divisions may transfer and settle the inhabitants of villages and towns in other quarters, should they engage in spying or treason, or in view of military exigencies.⁴⁹²

On 30 May, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted the decision related to the memorandum of the Interior Ministry of 26 May, the main points of which can be summarised as follows:

- To ensure the security of persons and possessions of the people to be relocated until they reached their destination and to forbid any form of persecution
- To compensate the deportees with new property, land, and goods necessary for a comfortable life
- To permit Muslim refugees to inhabit the abandoned villages only after having officially recorded the value of the homes and land and making clear that the property still belonged to the legal owners
- To sell or rent those fields, properties, and goods not settled by Muslim refugees and to keep in the treasury, in the owner's name, an account of the derived income, after first deducting administrative expenses
- To authorise the finance minister to create special committees to supervise these transactions and to publish circulars pertaining to the compensations for the properties and their protection
- To oblige all officials to comply with the law and report to the government during the course of its fulfilment.⁴⁹³

The Ottoman Parliament passed the law on the relocation on 15 September 1915.⁴⁹⁴

According to the report submitted by the Interior Ministry to the Cabinet of Ministers on 7 December 1916, about 702,900 individuals were relocated. For that purpose, it had spent 25

⁴⁹² Oke M, *op cit.*, pp 132-133; Bayur Y, *op cit.*, p 40

⁴⁹³ Hovannisian R, *op cit.*, pp 50-51

⁴⁹⁴ Bayur Y, *op cit.*, p 40; Gürün K, *op cit.*, p 280. This was the first opportunity to pass the law, as the Ottoman Parliament was not in session until then.

million *kurush* in 1915 and 86 million *kurush* by the end of October 1916. They planned to spend 150 million *kurush* more until the end of 1916.⁴⁹⁵

5.2 Statistics on the deaths resulting from the Armenian relocations

The number of Armenians who suffered from the relocation is a very controversial topic. No figure has been agreed by Armenian, Turkish and other historians. This is also the case with different contemporary sources closer to the war.

The figure changes depending on several factors: different pre-war Ottoman population statistics; different numbers for relocated Armenians; whether this number includes only that of the Armenians killed or also those who died of starvation, disease and weather conditions because of the relocation; and whether the figure includes Armenians who perished not only during the relocation, but during the whole period of the war.

According to the statistics which the Armenian Istanbul Patriarch gave to the British in 1921, the number of Armenians who lived within the pre-Sevres Treaty Ottoman borders, i.e. pre-10 August 1920 borders, was 625,000. The figure included those who returned back after the relocation.⁴⁹⁶ Based on the Armenian Patriarchate statistics, the number of Ottoman Armenians in 1912 was 2,100,000.⁴⁹⁷ Then the number of Armenians who were absent from the Ottoman Empire, i.e. the Armenians who either died or left for other countries between 1912 and 1921, should have been 1,475,000, leaving uncertainty around the number of Armenians who died because of the 1915 events. There is no unanimity with regard to the number of the Armenian refugees in the South Caucasus either. According to *Istoriya armyanskogo naroda* (History of the Armenian people), published in 1980, the number was about 350,000,⁴⁹⁸ whereas according to the statement of Avetis Aharonian, Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia at the Paris Peace Conference, in the meeting of the Council of Ten on 26 February 1919, this figure was 400,000-500,000.⁴⁹⁹ In the first case, the

⁴⁹⁵ Gürün K, *op cit.*, p 290

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p 294

⁴⁹⁷ FO 371/3405, 'Historical and Ethnological Notes on the Armenians', p 7

⁴⁹⁸ *Istoriya armyanskogo naroda*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Yerevanskogo Universiteta, 1980, p 268

⁴⁹⁹ *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Paris Peace Conference, 1919*. Volume IV, p 151

number of absent Armenians should have been around 1,125,000, in the second case 975,000-1,075,000.

The Ottoman official statistics for the number of Armenians in the Empire in 1914 was around 1,300,000.⁵⁰⁰ Then the number of the Armenians who were absent in 1914-1921 was about 675,000. If we deduct 350,000 or 400,000-500,000 Armenian refugees in the South Caucasus from this number, then we get 325,000 or 175,000-275,000 Armenians absent.

The British Foreign Office number for the Ottoman Armenians in 1914 was 1,600,000. Then the figure of the absent Armenians in 1914-1921 was about 975,000. If we exclude from this 350,000 or 400,000-500,000 Armenian refugees in the South Caucasus, this would leave around 625,000 or 475,000-575,000 Armenians absent.

According to one of the British Foreign Office documents, at least 1,000,000 Armenians were deported during 1915 and 1916, and while exact numbers of those killed or dying through exposure and famine were not yet available, at least 700,000 to 800,000 must have lost their lives.⁵⁰¹

Arnold Toynbee, a British historian and a consultant of the British Government on international affairs related to the Middle East, estimated 1,600,000 Armenians in the Ottoman Empire in 1914, 600,000 of whom escaped deportation. According to his calculations, the number of refugees plus the populations of Izmir and Istanbul who escaped the deportations was 350,000, of which 182,000 refugees were in Russia and 4,200 in Egypt. He counted the number of Catholic and Protestant Armenians, converts to Islam and those who may have escaped in hiding as 250,000.⁵⁰² As mentioned earlier, the number of Armenian refugees in Russia, according to Armenian sources, was 350,000 or 400,000-500,000. This means that the number of those who escaped the deportations had to be 768,000 or 818,000-918,000. If we add to these figures 150,000 Armenians who returned to Cilicia in

⁵⁰⁰ Karpas K, *Ottoman Population 1830-1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics*, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985, p 188

⁵⁰¹ FO 608/77, p 502

⁵⁰² Melson R, 'Provocation or Nationalism: A Critical Inquiry into the Armenian Genocide of 1915' in Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian Genocide in Perspective*, New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 1991, pp 64-65

1919⁵⁰³ and 200,000-300,000 Armenian deportees who, according to the memorandum of the Armenian National Delegation on the Armenian question presented to Prof. Rendell Harris in Paris in June 1918, were alive in Northern Syria and Mesopotamia in 1918,⁵⁰⁴ we get 1,118,000-1,218,000 Armenians in 1918-1919. If we deduct them from 1,600,000 Ottoman Armenians in 1914, we get 382,000-482,000 Armenians who had died.

Alexander Khatisov, one of the Dashnak leaders and premier of the Republic of Armenia in 1919-1920, considered that 600,000 Armenians were killed.⁵⁰⁵ Vahan Cardashian, founder of the American Committee of the Independence of Armenia, in his paper of 1920 to substantiate the US Mandate for Armenia wrote that in 1914 there were 2,008,000 Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, one million of whom had possibly perished.⁵⁰⁶

Salahi Sonyel disputed the figures given in Western and Armenian sources, which put the number of the killed Armenians at over one million. In his opinion, this was based on the assumption that the pre-war Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire numbered 2,500,000, whereas the total number of Armenians in the Empire before the war was not more than 1,300,000. Sonyel claimed that about one million Ottoman Armenians were alive and accounted for at the end of the war, living in Turkey, the Caucasus, Middle Eastern countries, Europe, America or elsewhere. He assumed that the number of those who relocated was about 700,000, leaving around 300,000 Armenians who lost their lives.⁵⁰⁷

As seen from these figures, the number of the Armenians who suffered from the relocation varies and it is impossible to determine exact number. Taking into account the official Ottoman figure for the number of Armenians in the Empire in 1914 as 1,300,000 and the most accepted Turkish figure for the suffering Armenians as 300,000, it can be concluded that about 23% of the Ottoman Armenians lost their lives as a result of the relocation. If we take into account the Armenian Patriarchate figure for the number of the Ottoman Armenians in

⁵⁰³ Hovannisian R, 'The Armenian Genocide and Patterns of Denial' in Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian Genocide in Perspective*, New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 1991, p 34

⁵⁰⁴ *Memorandum on the Armenian question by the Armenian National Delegation presented to Prof. Rendell Harris*, Paris, June 1918, p 7

⁵⁰⁵ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie chetyvortoe*. Tiflis, 16 February 1918, p 26

⁵⁰⁶ FO 371/4156, p 43

⁵⁰⁷ Sonyel S, *The Ottoman Armenians: Victims of the Great Power Diplomacy*, pp 300-301

1912 as 2,100,000 and the minimum Armenian figure for the dead Armenians as 600,000, about 35% of Ottoman Armenians disappeared. But if we accept the number of the dead Armenians as about 1,000,000, about 50% of Ottoman Armenians perished.

Based on these approximate calculations it can be roughly concluded that according to Turkish figures about 23% Ottoman Armenians lost their lives because of the relocation, whereas based on Armenian sources, this ratio ranges between 35% and 50% and includes those who disappeared during the First World War, including the relocation. In general, the disappeared Armenians, based on Turkish figures, can be estimated to constitute about 7% of 4,470,000 world Armenians in 1914.⁵⁰⁸ The ratio would change to between 13.5% and 22.5% based on the Patriarchate and other Armenian sources. According to the Foreign Office document, the number of world Armenians in 1914 was 3,650,000.⁵⁰⁹ In this case, the above-mentioned ratio changes to 8% based on Turkish sources and 16.5% and 27.4% respectively based on Armenian sources.

The calculations made on the basis of the Toynbee's estimations, the Armenian statement of February 1919 at the Paris Peace Conference and the Armenian memorandum of June 1918 change this ratio to 24%-30% of the Ottoman Armenians. According to Bogos Nubar Pasha, Head of the Armenian National Delegation, representing Ottoman Armenians, at the Paris Peace Conference, the world Armenians numbered 4,500,000.⁵¹⁰ In this case, the dead Armenians would constitute 8.5%-10.7% of the world Armenians. Based on the Foreign Office count of world Armenians in 1914 as 3,650,000, the ratio would change to 10.5%-13%.

5.3 Legal implications of the relocation

The whole process of relocation is regarded as 'genocide' by Armenians. The notion of 'genocide' was first coined in 1944 by Raphael Lemkin⁵¹¹ and found its legal definition as a

⁵⁰⁸ FO 371/4156, 'Joint Mandate Scheme: A Turkish Empire under American Protection', p 52

⁵⁰⁹ FO 371/3405, 'Historical and Ethnological Notes on the Armenians', p 8

⁵¹⁰ *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Paris Peace Conference, 1919*. Volume IV, p 152

⁵¹¹ Note: According to Raphael Lemkin, genocide is 'a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups

crime under international law in the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which was adopted in 1948 and came into force in 1951.⁵¹² Of course the earlier absence of the term does not indicate the absence of the phenomenon itself.

‘Genocide’ as a concept did not exist in 1915 or until thirty three years afterwards, when it was adopted by the UN. According to Article 2 of the UN Convention, ‘genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.’⁵¹³

This definition of ‘genocide’ raises more questions than it solves, since under this definition one cannot find any war during which all of the above-mentioned activities were not committed by enemy sides against each other. Another question is what is meant under ‘in part’: whether this part is a minimum of two persons or more than that or what ratio of ‘a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such’ should be destroyed to be defined as ‘genocide’.

Leaving aside the questions arising from the definition of ‘genocide’, this section confines itself to the interpretation of the intentions of the CUP with regard to the Armenian relocations, to define whether there was a deliberate state policy of extermination of the Armenian people.

Answering the accusations on the intentions behind the relocation, Talat Pasha, according to Hovannisian, said ‘the Armenians were deported from the eastern provinces but not upon a premeditated plan of annihilation. The responsibility for their fate fell foremost upon the Armenians themselves, although it was true that the deportations were not carried out lawfully

themselves’ (Lemkin R, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation, Analysis of Government, Proposals for Redress* (New Introduction by Samantha Power), New Jersey: The Lawbook Exchange Ltd, 2005, p 79).

⁵¹² <http://www.un.org/millennium/law/iv-1.htm>

⁵¹³ [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=a/res/260\(III\)](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=a/res/260(III))

everywhere and that many innocent people suffered because some officials abused their authority.’⁵¹⁴ Talat claimed that those involved in atrocities against the Armenians during their relocation were either ‘common criminals and looters’ or those who believed that the ‘Armenians should be punished’ and that they acted ‘for the good of country’. Unlike the first group, he went on, it was not easy to deal with the second ones, since they were strong and numerous and any punishment would have caused great discontent among the Muslim masses “who favoured their acts”. It was necessary to avoid the division of the country and creation of anarchy in Anatolia when internal unity was most needed for the war effort.⁵¹⁵

According to Jemal Pasha, another member of the Young Turk triumvirate, who was Commander of the Fourth Ottoman Army in Syria at the time of the relocations, he did his best during the whole period of the deportation to give help to the Armenians, which has been confirmed by the Armenians themselves and by all impartial foreigners. The organisation of emigrants was exclusively the concern of the civil authorities and the Army had nothing to do with it. However, he noted that he gave stringent orders not to allow attacks on the emigrants in his military zone in Syria. He confessed that ‘he heard from time to time of deeds of violence against the emigrating Armenians in the vilayets of Mamuret-ul-Asis and Diarbekir’ and ‘was continually hearing complaints that the civil authorities in the sector between Bozanti and Aleppo were unable to provide emigrant columns with adequate supplies, and that the people in consequence were being found in a condition of the greatest distress along the route. I made a journey from Aleppo to Bozanti to view the situation personally, issued an order that bread was to be provided for the emigrants from the Army depots, and ordered the doctors on the lines of communication to look after the sick Armenians.’⁵¹⁶ He mentioned that the killings of Armenians ‘must be ascribed to seventy years of accumulated hatred between Turks, Kurds, and Armenians. The responsibility must lie with Muscovite policy which made mortal enemies of three nations who for centuries had lived together in peace. The crimes perpetrated during the deportations of 1915 justly roused the deepest horror, but those committed by the Armenians during their rising against the Turks and Kurds do not in any way fall short of them in cruelty and treachery [...] The Government regarded deportation as

⁵¹⁴ Hovannisian R, ‘The Armenian Genocide and Patterns of Denial’ in Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian Genocide in Perspective*, p 117

⁵¹⁵ Ibid., p 118

⁵¹⁶ *Memories of a Turkish Statesman – 1913-1919: by Djemal Pasha*, p 278

the most effective and speedy means of ensuring the safety of the Kurdish and Turkish population, the Army and the whole political existence of the Ottoman State. Yet, on the other hand, by these measures they opened the way for the crimes perpetrated by the Kurds and Turks.⁵¹⁷

Talat Pasha and Jemal Pasha admitted that crimes had been committed against the Armenians during the relocation process for different reasons: the basis of most was hatred against the Armenians which had accumulated during the decades after the Berlin Treaty because of the Armenian claims to Eastern Anatolia populated in main by the Muslims, and the Armenian collaboration with the enemy. If the CUP leaders had a premeditated intention of the destruction of the Armenian people, as argued by Armenian historians, they would already have conducted it, not waiting for the Ottoman retreat and would not have warned the Armenian leaders to advise their people to avoid supporting the enemy. Christopher Walker, one of the supporters of the thesis on the Turkish premeditated genocide of the Armenians, himself wrote that ‘at least until the middle of February [1915- I.K.], there was no outward display of hostility toward Ottoman Armenians. Indeed, in February Enver had publicly thanked the Armenians for their conduct during the Sarikamish campaign.’⁵¹⁸ This shows that until wide-scale provocations of the Ottoman Armenians against the Ottoman Empire and the betrayal of those who were on the side of the Ottoman state until the Ottoman failure, there were no hostile actions against Armenians. Even the demobilisation of the Armenians from the Ottoman Army started in the end of February 1915. If there was any premeditated Ottoman plan of extermination of the Armenians, its signs would have been seen before February 1915.

The chronological development of the events leading to the relocation clarifies the motive of the Ottoman Government as being the prevention of the occupation of a great portion of the Empire in Anatolia with Armenian help. The problem was to be solved by relocating the Armenians from the densely Armenian-populated areas in Anatolia to Mesopotamia. Moreover, as cited earlier, Armenians should not have constituted more than 10% of the local population in the new settlements, so as not to create compact ethnic masses, and their

⁵¹⁷ Ibid., p 280

⁵¹⁸ Walker Ch, ‘World War I and the Armenian Genocide’ in Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Volume II, New York: St.Martin Press, 2004, p 245

villages should not have had more than fifty houses. These arrangements suggest that the government was concerned that new disturbances and rebellions would occur if the Armenians constituted a compact majority in their new locations, which would jeopardise Anatolia from its southern border in the future. It seems that the CUP leaders did not want the Armenians to have compact settlements either in Anatolia or its borders because of the threat they posed and could pose in the future to the territorial integrity of the Ottoman state. The thesis on the premeditated extermination of the Armenians by the CUP leaders is also not convincing because even by exterminating those Armenians living in the whole Ottoman Empire, they would not be able to exterminate all of them, since it was generally agreed that more than half of the Armenian people lived outside the Ottoman Empire, especially in the South Caucasus. For that reason, it does not seem realistic that the Ottoman Government would aim at extermination of the Armenian people, being aware of the impossibility of its realisation.

According to Kamuran Gurun, a special investigation council was established at the Ministry of War to examine the violations of the Relocation Law and relevant instructions, which functioned until early 1918. As a result of these investigations, 1,397 individuals were found guilty, sent to the martial law courts and given different punishments, including execution.⁵¹⁹

After the resignation of the Talat Pasha Cabinet on 14 October 1918, a new government headed by Izzet Pasha adopted a programme on the return of the relocated people on 19 October. The programme stated that people who were relocated due to wartime considerations could return to their previous locations. Regarding the implementation of this programme, the Armenian Patriarch wrote that ‘the Armenians of Istanbul, Kutahya district and the Aydin province had not been required to relocate. The Armenians, who are now in the Izmit district, in Bursa, Kastamonu, Ankara and Konya, are those who had been relocated but now have returned. There are many Armenians in the Kayseri district, and in Sivas, Harput, Diyarbakyr, and especially in Cilicia and Istanbul, who have returned, but unable to go to their villages. The rest of the Armenians of Erzurum and Bitlis are in Cilicia.’⁵²⁰ A commission was established to find and gather children who were adopted and women who converted to

⁵¹⁹ Gürün K, *op cit.*, p 288

⁵²⁰ Ibid., pp 309, 312

Islam.⁵²¹ The relocated Armenians and Armenian refugees in the South Caucasus had also started returning to the parts of Eastern Anatolia occupied by Russia, i.e. Erzurum, Van, Bitlis and Trabzon provinces, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Tevfik Pasha, the new Ottoman Prime Minister who replaced Izzet Pasha from 18 November 1918 had a special court formed to try the individual CUP members who would be arrested as war criminals. On 30 January 1919, twenty-seven people were arrested,⁵²² the names of most of whom were provided by the British based on information from the Armenian Istanbul Patriarchate.⁵²³

Taking into account that Britain was one the Allied countries fighting against the Ottoman Empire, the impartiality of the investigation of the 1915 events under its supervision was doubted by the Ottoman Government. For that reason, on 18 February 1919, Reshit Bey, the Ottoman Minister of Foreign Affairs, sent a telegram to the governments of Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden, as neutral countries during the war, with the request that each of these states send two legal experts for the commission formed to investigate the relocation issue. The British tried to prevent the sending of these telegrams on the grounds of military censorship, then attempted to prevent the sending of these members to the commission.⁵²⁴ The British attempts to impede the investigation of the 1915 events with the involvement of the neutral countries demonstrate that they were not sure whether the investigation would give the expected results on the premeditated extermination of the Armenians. If the British were sure of its desired outcome, they would not prevent the neutral investigations. This means that Britain wanted to use the trial in its own interests. The forced resignation of Tevfik Pasha, initiator of the idea of neutral investigations of the relocation issue, who was replaced by the pro-British Ferid Pasha on 3 March 1919,⁵²⁵ strengthens this argument. The latter formed his new cabinet from the members of *Hurriyyet ve Itilaf Partisi* (Freedom and Accord Party) on 4 March and established the 'Nemrut Mustafa Pasha Martial Court'. On 10 March, sixty more

⁵²¹ Ibid., p 313

⁵²² Ibid., p 310

⁵²³ Note: According to Bilal Shimshir, between 160 and 200 persons were arrested in January 1919 by the Government of Tevfik Pasha under British pressure (Shimshir B, 'So-called Armenian Genocide: The Deportees of Malta and the Armenian Question', *Proceedings of Symposium on Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey (1912-1926)*, Istanbul: Bogazici University Publications, 1984 (<http://www.ataa.org/reference/deportees-simsir.html>)).

⁵²⁴ Gürün K, *op cit.*, p 311

⁵²⁵ Shimshir B, *loc cit.*

members of the CUP were arrested: their trial began on 27 April 1919. On 28 May, the British Military authorities took sixty-seven selected detainees to Malta. On 13 July 1919, the Court sentenced Talat Pasha, Enver Pasha, Jemal Pasha, and Dr Nazim Bey to death in absentia, as they had fled the country on 1 November, and Javit Bey and Mustafa Sharaf Bey to fifteen years' imprisonment. The Istanbul trial was thus concluded.⁵²⁶

Hovannisian wrote that Talat Pasha and Jemal Pasha were killed by Armenians in 1921 in Berlin and in 1922 in Tiflis respectively. Enver Pasha was ambushed and killed by a Soviet agent, supposedly of Armenian origin, in Central Asia in 1922.⁵²⁷ Regarding the assassination of Jemal Pasha by Armenians, Falih Refki wrote: 'Sad destiny! There are many who still love and miss Jemal Pasha in Syria, where he condemned to death prominent Arab leaders. Jemal Pasha was killed by the Armenians, among whom he had saved tens of thousands with his own hand.'⁵²⁸

As mentioned earlier, on 28 May, sixty-seven selected detainees in Istanbul were taken by the British to Malta.⁵²⁹ This act was opposed by the French Government, which was of the opinion that it was up to the Ottoman authorities to prosecute the detainees, and considered it an 'arbitrary revenge',⁵³⁰ indicating the absence of unanimity among the Allied countries on the trial, which can be explained by British-French rivalry over the partition of the Ottoman Empire territories among themselves. Despite French opposition, the British continued sending the Ottoman prisoners throughout the summer of 1919. In total, one hundred and forty-four prisoners were taken to Malta in 1919-1920, including about thirty important political prisoners, who were sent in March 1920. Following the latter, Mustafa Kemal Pasha, Leader of the Turkish National Movement, ordered, as a reprisal, the arrest of twenty British officers in Anatolia, including Colonel Alfred Rawlinson, the younger brother of General Henry Rawlinson.⁵³¹

⁵²⁶ Gürün K, *op cit.*, pp 311-312; Shimshir B, *loc cit.*

⁵²⁷ Hovannisian R, *The Republic of Armenia. Volume I*, note 11, p 420

⁵²⁸ Cited by Gürün K, *op cit.*, p 312

⁵²⁹ Shimshir B, *loc cit.*

⁵³⁰ Ibid.

⁵³¹ Ibid.

There is no unanimity on the number of Ottoman detainees in Malta. According to Bilal Shimshir, out of one hundred and forty-four detainees in Malta, fifty-six were selected by the British High Commissioner in Istanbul for prosecution.⁵³² But Kamuran Gurun wrote that one hundred and eighteen individuals were sent to Malta up until the end of 1920, fifty-five of whom were charged with respect to the relocation: sixteen with concrete accusations; seventeen for being in power during the relocation; and twenty-two deputies, whose connection with Armenian atrocities was hard to determine.⁵³³ The Maltese judge, Giovanni Bonello, was of the same opinion as Shimshir. Out of the fifty-five charged with war crimes, he wrote, forty-one were politicians, only 'half of whom had been considered responsible for the Armenian atrocities'.⁵³⁴ This figure differs from that of Gurun. As for the legal aspect of the problem, Bonello noted that there existed no law to regulate the matter, as the British military courts could try only three of seven offences⁵³⁵ (breach of armistice terms, hindering its execution, and ill-treatment of British POWs) in the occupied territories, not in Malta. All of the other offences, including Armenian-related ones, 'loomed large as legal no man's land and had best be left for determination in accordance with a future peace treaty'.⁵³⁶

An article proposed by the British Prosecutor was included in the Sevres Treaty to deal with crimes related to the relocation issue legally.⁵³⁷ According to Article 230, 'the Turkish Government undertakes to hand over to the Allied Powers the persons whose surrender may be required by the latter as being responsible for the massacres committed during the continuance of the state of war on territory which formed part of the Turkish Empire on August 1, 1914 [the name of the Empire was the Ottoman Empire, not the 'Turkish Empire' – I.K.].' Moreover, 'the Allied Powers reserve to themselves the right to designate the tribunal which shall try the persons so accused, and the Turkish Government undertakes to recognise such tribunal' and 'in the event of the League of Nations having created in sufficient time a tribunal competent to deal with the said massacres, the Allied Powers reserve to themselves

⁵³² Ibid.

⁵³³ Gürün K, *op cit.*, p 316

⁵³⁴ Micallef K, Turkey's EU Minister, Judge Giovanni Bonello and the Armenian Genocide – 'Claim about Malta Trials is nonsense', *The Malta Independent Online*, 19 April 2012, <http://www.independent.com.mt/news.asp?newsitemid=143007>

⁵³⁵ Note: The detainees were divided into seven groups: 1) failing to comply with the Armistice terms; 2) impeding the implementation of the Armistice terms; 3) insulting British commanders and officers; 4) ill-treating military prisoners; 5) committing atrocities to Armenians or other subject races; 6) participating in looting, destruction of property and so on; 7) others who violated war laws and regulations (Gürün K, *op cit.*, p 316).

⁵³⁶ Micallef K, *loc cit.*

⁵³⁷ Gürün K, *op cit.*, p 316; Shimshir B, *loc cit.*

the right to bring the accused persons mentioned above before such tribunal, and the Turkish Government undertakes equally to recognise such tribunal.⁵³⁸

On 16 March 1921, Sir Horace Rumbold, the British Ambassador to Istanbul, forwarded to the Foreign Office 'evidence' or 'details of charges' against each of the above-mentioned fifty-five or fifty-six detainees who were to be prosecuted. As it appears from this letter, very few witnesses were available, with the Armenian Patriarchate in Istanbul being the main source of information; none of the Allied, Associated or neutral governments had been asked to supply evidence. He found that 'under these circumstances the prosecution will find itself under grave disadvantage', with the hope that the US Government could supply 'a large amount of documentary information'. The British Embassy in Washington was instructed to that end.⁵³⁹

This shows that the British Government did not have strong evidence to prove the charges against the Ottoman detainees in Malta; otherwise there would be no need to ask the US to provide evidence. It also demonstrates the reason for the British prevention of the investigation of the issue by neutral countries in 1919.

On 13 July 1921, the British Ambassador to Washington replied, 'a member of my staff visited the State Department yesterday [...] in regard to the Turks who are at present being detained at Malta with a view to a trial... He was permitted to see a selection of reports from United States Consuls on the subject of the atrocities committed in Armenia during the recent war [...] I regret to inform Your Lordship that there was nothing therein which could be used as evidence against the Turks who are being detained for trial at Malta.'⁵⁴⁰

In view of lack of legal evidence, the Foreign Office decided to use political argument, writing to the British Procurator General's Department that from a political point of view 'it is highly desirable that proceedings should take place against all of these persons against whom

⁵³⁸ *Peace Treaties: Various Treaties and Agreements signed between the Allied and Associated Powers and the Serb-Croat-Slovene State, Roumania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Turkey*, Washington: Government Printing House, 1921, p 382

⁵³⁹ Shimshir B, *loc cit.*

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid.

there is a reasonable prospect of obtaining a conviction'.⁵⁴¹ However, on 29 July 1921, the British Procurator General's Department replied, 'it seems improbable that the charges made against some of the accused will be capable of legal proof in a Court of Law'.⁵⁴² Therefore, the Attorney General was 'not in a position to express any opinion' as to the prospect of success in any cases submitted for his consideration.⁵⁴³

This reply of the Procurator General's Department prompted Foreign Office to write that 'from this letter it appears that the chances of obtaining convictions are almost nil... The American Government, we ascertained, cannot help with any evidence... In addition to the absence of legal evidence there is the extreme unlikelihood that the French and Italians would agree to participate in constituting the course provided for in article 230 of the Treaty (of Sevres). On the other hand we certainly cannot release any Turks until our own prisoners are returned.'⁵⁴⁴

Despite Rumbold's suggestion to Lord Curzon, owing to the impossibility of obtaining proper evidence, to exchange all the Ottoman detainees, except the eight charged with cruelty to British prisoners, the British Government decided to exchange all of the Ottoman detainees, including the eight, with all of the British prisoners in Turkey.⁵⁴⁵ Thus, on 1 October 1921, all the Ottoman detainees in Malta were freed and sent to Turkey and all British prisoners in Turkey were handed over to their authorities.⁵⁴⁶

5.4 Failure of the 'Armenian homeland' project in 1914-1916

Analysis of the sources dealing with the Armenians' political aspirations after 1915 shows that there was no change in the Armenian vision of their homeland project. Armenian leaders thought that the minority position of the Armenian population in Eastern Anatolia should not be an obstacle in the way of the realisation of their project. Their argument was that if they could construct an 'Armenian homeland' with a Great Power mandate, Armenians, including

⁵⁴¹ Ibid.

⁵⁴² Ibid.

⁵⁴³ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid.

Armenian refugees in different parts of the world, would return to the projected area, where the number of Muslims also decreased during the First World War and the rest would be forced to leave the projected Armenia.⁵⁴⁷

In 1916, the Armenian calculations were strengthened by Russian military successes on the Caucasian front; however these did not coincide with the Russian vision of the future of the concerned area. In addition to the above-mentioned correspondence of the Russian officials, the agreement between France and Russia of 26 April 1916 supports this argument. Under this agreement, Russia would annex the provinces of Erzurum, Van, Bitlis and Trabzon up to a point on the Black Sea coast, to the west from Trabzon, which was to be defined (see Map 9), whereas the rest of the territory of the Armenian project, i.e. the rest of Sivas and Mamuret-ul-Aziz provinces, which were not under Russian occupation, and parts of Adana and Halep provinces, which the Armenians called Cilicia, would be left to France.⁵⁴⁸

The agreement meant that the area the Armenians called ‘Turkish Armenia’ in which since 1878 they had been projecting Armenian autonomy was divided between Russia and France. As for the Russian plans with regard to its portion of this area, on 5 June 1916, a temporary act, ‘On the administration of the Turkish provinces occupied by the right of war’, was adopted, which established a temporary military general-governorship. The act contained no word about the Armenian autonomy or the word ‘Armenian’.⁵⁴⁹

The correspondence between the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Sazonov, and Caucasian Viceroy, Nicolas Romanov, highlights the Russian official vision on the settlement of the ‘Armenian question’ in the occupied territories. Thus, the former wrote on 14 June 1916 that the settlement of the ‘Armenian question’ is usually set between two extremes: ‘one – the aspiration of the Armenian nationalists for full autonomy under the auspices of Russia in the

⁵⁴⁷ Note: The arguments of the Armenian leaders will be discussed in Chapter 7.

⁵⁴⁸ *Razdel Aziatskoy Turtsii (po sekretnym dokumentam b.ministerstva inostrannykh del pod redaktsiey E.A.Adamova)*, dok CIV, p 187

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid., dok CXL, note 1, p 208; *Rossiyskiy gosudarstvenniy voenno-istoricheskiy arkhiv: Putevoditel'*, chast' II, Moscow: Rossiyskaya politicheskaya entsiklopediya (ROSSPEN), 2007, p 88

spirit of the reforms of 1913 proposed by us, and another – just the opposite, which relegates the political importance of the Armenians to zero and tries to replace them with Muslims’.⁵⁵⁰

‘It seems to me,’ the Russian Foreign Minister continued, ‘the solution to this issue in one or another direction absolutely does not suit the Russian state interests from either internal or an external policy considerations. As for the issue of granting large autonomy to Armenians, one should not forget that in Greater Armenia, which is now occupied by Russia, the Armenians never constituted a majority,’ so ‘under these circumstances Armenian autonomy would in reality lead to the unfair exploitation of the majority by the minority.’⁵⁵¹ Guided by these considerations, he considered the best way out of the situation to be the organisation of the recently occupied provinces in the ‘strict guidance of law, justice and completely unbiased attitude to all multiethnic elements in the *krai* [territory in the meaning of ‘border country’ – I.K.], not setting them against each other and not showing the exceptional protection to any of the peoples to the prejudice of another. Thus it would be possible to grant the Armenians within limits a school and church independence, the right of use of their language, as well as urban and rural self-administration subject to the percentage ratios of the population in the elections.’⁵⁵²

With regard to the above-mentioned excerpts it should be noted that under the project of 1913 Russia had pressed for the creation of one province consisting of Erzurum, Van, Bitlis, Diyarbakyr, Mamurat-ul-Aziz and Sivas (excluding some parts of its suburbs and north-west) and the appointment of a Christian general-governor there, i.e. the creation of an Armenian autonomous province, despite the fact, which Sazonov also accepted in this letter, that in this area ‘Armenians never constituted a majority’.⁵⁵³ But when half of the very area came under Russian control, Russia considered ‘granting large autonomy to Armenians’ to be ‘unfair exploitation of the majority by the minority’ and found it to be unacceptable from both internal and external policy considerations. This once again shows that Russia’s aim in demanding Armenian reforms in the Ottoman Empire under the Berlin Treaty did not derive from its care about the Armenians, but from the extension of its area using Armenian reforms

⁵⁵⁰ *Razdel Aziatskoy Turtsii (po sekretnym dokumentam b.ministerstva inostrannykh del pod redaktsiey E.A.Adamova)*, dok CXL, p 208

⁵⁵¹ Ibid., p 209

⁵⁵² Ibid.

⁵⁵³ Ibid.

as a pretext for interfering in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire; otherwise it would provide the same 'reforms' to the Armenians when the area came under its control.

As for the reply of the Caucasian Viceroy to this letter on 3 July 1916: 'the Armenian question, to my unshakeable belief, is completely absent within the borders of the current Russian Empire, and one should not even allow reminder about it, since the Armenian subjects of Russia in the general-governorship are equal subjects of Russia like Muslims, Georgians and Russians'.⁵⁵⁴ The Viceroy shared the view of the Russian Foreign Minister that, not touching upon the issue of Armenian autonomy under the aegis of Russia, the Armenians could be granted administrative and cultural rights, including the use of the Armenian language, on condition that priority was given to the Russian language in all official cases.⁵⁵⁵

The Caucasian Viceroy's reply completely contradicts the Russian proposals together with those of other Allied Powers to the Ottoman Government during the Berlin reform projects, when they had insisted on marking the difference between Armenians and Muslims, especially Kurds. But when it came to Russia's turn, it was considered to be reasonable not to make any difference between the subjects of Russia. This meant that another Armenian hope for the realisation of the 'Armenian homeland' project in Eastern Anatolia faded away in 1914-1916.

Conclusion

On the basis of contemporary sources it was concluded that Armenian political organisations headed by *Dashnaktsutiun*, with the exception of some of its members, and the majority of the Armenian people, especially those in the South Caucasus and the border areas of the Ottoman Empire with Russia, sided with Russia in the First World War. With the help of Armenian volunteer units and the Van Armenians' rebellions, Russia occupied the Ottoman territories as far as Bitlis.

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid., dok CXLIV, p 211

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid., p 212

The collaboration of the Ottoman Armenians with Russia was regarded as treachery by the Ottoman Government and led to the forced demobilisation of Armenians from the Ottoman Army, the arrest and trial of Armenian nationalist leaders, and finally the relocation of Armenians from different parts of the Ottoman Empire to south-east Anatolia and Mesopotamia. The implementation of the relocation law by the Ottoman Government resulted in the killing of a great number of Armenians, as well as their deaths and other sufferings from starvation, illness and weather conditions. The number of Armenians who died as a result of the relocation is very controversial topic. The figures vary between 300,000 and more than 1,000,000.

The relocation is considered as an act of 'genocide' by the Armenians. At that time there was no such legal notion, even though the absence of the term does not indicate the absence of the phenomenon itself. As for the accusations around the premeditated plan of the CUP leaders to exterminate the Armenians, it was considered that the intention of the Ottoman Government was the relocation of the Armenians away from enemy powers' areas of interest, especially Russia, so as not to allow them to occupy Ottoman territories with Armenian help. It was also noted that Talat Pasha and Jemal Pasha, leading CUP figures, admitted the atrocities against the Armenians, explaining them with the accumulated hatred of the Ottoman Muslim masses against them since the Armenians started making claims to their territories at the end of the nineteenth century, strengthened by the Armenian collaboration with the enemy during the war.

After the resignation of the Talat Pasha Cabinet, the new Ottoman Government adopted a programme in October 1918 on the return of the relocated people. According to the decision of the Nemrut Mustafa Pasha Martial Court of 13 July 1919, Talat Pasha, Enver Pasha, Jemal Pasha, and Dr Nazim Bey were sentenced to death in absentia, as they had fled the country on 1 November 1918, and Javit Bey and Mustafa Sharaf Bey to fifteen years. The rest of the CUP members were also arrested by the Ottoman Government, but were sent to Malta by the British. Since there existed no law to regulate the matter, an article was included in the Sevres Treaty to deal with the crimes related to the relocation issue legally. But the lack of legal evidence and the necessity of releasing British prisoners kept by the Turks in 1920 compelled

the British to free the Turkish detainees in Malta in October 1921 in exchange for British prisoners.

It was noted that despite the Armenian hopes and support of Russia against the Ottoman Empire, Tsarist Russia had no plan to construct an Armenian state or grant political autonomy to the Armenians, in either the occupied territories of the Ottoman Empire or the South Caucasus. The First World War, regarded by the Armenian nationalists as an opportunity to realise their goals, did not fulfil their expectations in 1914-1916. The reasons were the 1915 events and the absence of Great Power sponsorship. However, the Armenians did not lose their hopes: the next emerged with the February Revolution in 1917, to be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 6: The ‘Armenian Homeland’ Project: From the February Revolution to the Ottoman-Transcaucasian War

This chapter examines Armenian expectations after the February Revolution of 1917 in Russia vis-à-vis constructing an ‘Armenian homeland’, both in the Russian-occupied territories of the Ottoman Empire and the South Caucasus. It analyses the Provisional Government’s act on ‘Turkish Armenia’ and the administrative-territorial readjustment project in the South Caucasus. It also explores the situation after the October Revolution in 1917 and the signing of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, the peace negotiations and the war between the Ottoman Empire and Transcaucasia.

6.1 The February Revolution and the ‘Armenian homeland’ project

Although Tsarist Russia had no intention of constructing an ‘Armenian homeland’ in the occupied Ottoman territories, the abdication of Tsar Nicolas II in the February Revolution in 1917 and the subsequent formation of the Provisional Government created new hopes for the realisation of Armenian political aspirations in the occupied Ottoman provinces and the South Caucasus. The negative attitude of the masses, including the soldiers, to the continuation of the annexationist war compelled the Provisional Government to decide on ways of keeping the occupied territories under its control that did not demonstrate imperialistic ambitions, i.e. in accordance with its declared democratic principles. On 26 April 1917 the government adopted an ‘Act on the arrangement of administration in the Russian-occupied parts of Turkish Armenia’, to be valid until the final settlement of the situation of ‘Turkish Armenia’ by the peace treaty⁵⁵⁶ (see Map 9).

On 15 May 1917, General-lieutenant Peter Aver’yanov was appointed ‘acting General-Commissioner of Turkish Armenia and other provinces occupied during the war’, with the Armenian, Yakob Zavriyev, as his ‘assistant on civil affairs of Turkish Armenia’.⁵⁵⁷ One of the instructions given to Aver’yanov was: ‘not foreclosing the issue on the future

⁵⁵⁶ Barsegov Yu (ed.), *Genotsid armyan. Otvetstvennost’ Turtsii i obyazatel’sstva mirovogo soobshchestva. Dokumenty i kommentariy*, tom 1, Moscow: Gardariki, 2002, dok 298, p 297

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid., dok 301, p 299

geographical and political borders of Armenia, out of the territories occupied in Asiatic Turkey by the right of war the Provisional Government considers Van, Bitlis and Erzurum to be historical Armenian provinces',⁵⁵⁸ so Van, Bitlis and Erzurum were considered 'Russian-occupied parts of Turkish Armenia'. This act and instruction aimed to create the necessary grounds for the future separation of the occupied territories from the Ottoman Empire, labelling them 'Turkish Armenia', and their possible annexation to Russia or bringing under its protectorate, depending on the course of political and military events.

The same session instructed Aver'yanov to adopt measures for the gradual return of the Armenians who had settled within Russia during the current war and previous years, and equally not to impede the settlement of these provinces by former Ottoman Armenians who wished to return. In contrast to the favourable attitude to the Armenians, he was instructed to disallow the return of Ottoman Muslims (Turks, Kurds and Lazes), who had left with the Ottoman troops, until a special order had been issued.⁵⁵⁹ Muslims from the occupied territories, and also Muslims from the neighbouring Kars *oblast* (see Map 8), who were exiled in 1914 by the Tsarist Government, could not return to their lands. Touching upon the issue of the Muslims of the Kars *oblast*, Alikhan Kantemirov, a member of the Muslim Socialist Bloc, in his speech at the session of the *Zakavkazskiy Seym* (Transcaucasian Diet) on 5 (18) March 1918, declared, 'in 1914, the entire local Muslim population of Ardahan was exiled and the mosque was destroyed; in other words, everything that happens during wartime happened there. However, later, when the Ardahan Muslims wanted to return to their semi-destroyed houses, they could not do so, since a bitter grievance befell them: Ardahan was already in the hands of other elements [Armenians – I.K.], who seized Muslim houses, Muslim property, and later wanted to rule the whole *okrug* by the right of strength.'⁵⁶⁰ He went on to state, 'in 1914, the whole population of Kars was exiled, and the Muslim houses and property were subjected to the same destiny: seizure by the newcomers [Armenians – I.K.]. The revolutionary powers did not take any steps to recover the injuries of the Muslim peasantry in the Kars *oblast*. Consequently, the Muslim peasantry has reason to distrust not only the

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁰ *Zakavkazskiy Seym*. *Stenograficheskiy otchyot*. *Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie chetyrnadtsatoe*. Tiflis, 5 March 1918, p 20

Tsarist autocracy, but also the revolutionary powers. The Government could not return the property and houses of the population of Ardahan and Kars *okrugs*.⁵⁶¹

The decrease in the Muslim population in the Kars *oblast* is also evident when comparing Maps 8 and 9. Map 8 is based on the official statistics of 1916, which did not take into account war-related Muslim exiles, whereas the statistical information on Kars and Kaghyzman *okrugs* of Kars *oblast* in the Provisional Government's administrative-territorial readjustment project of 21 July 1917 (see Map 9) took into account the government-arranged Muslim decrease in these areas. The project did not contain any statistical information on the pre-war Muslim-dominated Oltu and Ardahan *okrugs* of Kars *oblast*, the Muslim population of which was also decreased by the Tsarist Government at the start of the war. For that reason, the Provisional Government's territorial-administrative readjustment project, discussed later in the chapter and in the last two case study chapters, did not need to redraw the borders of the *okrugs* of Kars *oblast* as it did in the case of administrative units of Erevan *guberniya*, the bordering *uezds* of the Elizavetpol *guberniya* and southern *uezds* of the Tiflis *guberniya*, where he projected redrawing the borders of the necessary *uezds* in order to construct Armenian-dominated *uezds* (compare Maps 8 and 9).

Hovannisian wrote that about 150,000 Armenians had returned to Van, Bitlis, Erzurum and Trabzon by the end of winter 1917. The Armenians assumed most civil positions in the area, whilst the administration of Van and Bitlis was an Armenian monopoly. In his opinion, the revival of the occupied territories seemed at hand if the military front could be stabilised and the war advantageously concluded.⁵⁶²

The number of Armenian refugees in the South Caucasus in 1914-1916 was estimated at about 350,000 or 400,000-500,000.⁵⁶³ As for the Muslims, Jemal Pasha wrote that over one and a half million were killed or displaced by the Armenians when they marched into Bitlis, Van, Erzurum and Trabzon.⁵⁶⁴ Vahan Cardashian, founder of the American Committee of the

⁵⁶¹ Ibid.

⁵⁶² Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, pp 79- 80

⁵⁶³ *Istoriya armyanskogo naroda*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Yerevanskogo Universiteta, 1980, p 268; *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Paris Peace Conference, 1919*. Volume IV, p 151

⁵⁶⁴ *Memories of a Turkish Statesman – 1913-1919: by Djemal Pasha*, pp 280-281

Independence of Armenia, noted that in autumn 1917, only 96,000 Turks and Kurds were left in the provinces of Van, Bitlis and Erzurum out of about 551,000.⁵⁶⁵

According to the Ottoman census of 1914, there were 1,162,676 Muslims in Van, Bitlis and Erzurum provinces. The Russian sources did not provide figures for all three provinces: the Russian Council-General in Erzurum estimated 1,047,000 Muslims in Erzurum and Bitlis in 1912, whereas the Russian Vice-Consul in Van gave a figure of 520,000 in Van and Bitlis in 1912. According to the Armenian Istanbul Patriarch, there were 709,000 Muslims in the three provinces in 1913 (see Tables 6.1 and 6.2).

The statistics provided by the Ottoman, Russian and Armenian sources differ from each other. However, they demonstrate that the Muslims constituted a majority in Van, Bitlis and Erzurum provinces before the war. Cardashian's figure of 551,000 for the number of Muslims in these provinces before the war significantly differs from those in Table 6.1. His statistics on the number of Muslims in these provinces before the war and in 1917 may not be precise, but they are suggestive of some dramatic changes in their population. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, on 15 May 1917, the Provisional Government gave instructions not to allow the return of Muslims, including Lazs, who left with the Ottoman troops. This means that the Muslim population of the Trabzon province, populated, among other Muslims, by Lazs, also suffered from the occupation. According to the Ottoman census of 1914, the province, almost half of which would be occupied by Russia during the war, had a total population of 1,122,947, of whom 921,128 were Muslims and 40,237 were Armenians.⁵⁶⁶ Although it is impossible to give an exact number for the Muslims absent from Van, Bitlis, Erzurum and Trabzon provinces and to check the accuracy of the official Ottoman figures, as well as those provided by Cardashian and Jemal Pasha, it can be suggested that the number was significant.

⁵⁶⁵ FO 371/4156, p 44

⁵⁶⁶ Mutlu S, *op cit.*, p 33

Table 6.1 Muslim and Armenian population in ‘Turkish Armenia’ in figures

Provinces	Ottoman Census, 1914 ⁵⁶⁷			Russian Council-General, Erzurum, 1912 ⁵⁶⁸		Russian Vice-Consul Olphyorov, Van, 1912 ⁵⁶⁹		Armenian Patriarch, 1913 ⁵⁷⁰		
	Mus	Arm	Total	Mus	Arm	Mus	Arm	Mus	Arm	Total
Van	179,380	67,792	259,141	No data	No data	240,000	120,000	147,000 excl. Hakkari	185,000	350,000
Bitlis	309,999	119,132	437,479	497,000	150,000	280,000	180,000	162,000	180,000	382,000
Erzurum	673,297	136,618	815,432	550,000	200,000	No data	No data	400,000	215,000	630,000
Total	1,162,676	323,542	1,511,911	1,047,000	350,000	520,000	300,000	709,000	580,000	1,362,000

Table 6.2 Muslim and Armenian population in ‘Turkish Armenia’ in percentages

Provinces	Ottoman Census, 1914		Armenian Patriarch, 1913	
	Mus	Arm	Mus	Arm
Van	69%	26%	42%	53%
Bitlis	71%	27%	42.5%	47%
Erzurum	82.5%	16.7%	63.5%	34%
Total	77%	21.5%	52%	42.5%

⁵⁶⁷ Mutlu S, ‘Late Ottoman Population and its Ethnic Distribution’, *Nüfusbilim Dergisi/Turkish Journal of Population Studies*, vol 25, 2003, pp 32, 34

⁵⁶⁸ FO 371/3405, ‘Historical and Ethnological Notes on Armenians’, p 9

⁵⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁰ *Sbornik diplomaticheskikh dogovorov. Reformy v Armenii (26 noyabrya 1912 goda-10 maya 1914 goda)*, pril 6, pp 275, 286, 289

The drastic decrease in the majority Muslim population of the occupied provinces increased the hopes of the Armenian nationalists for the unification of Van, Bitlis and Erzurum provinces with the projected Alexandropol, Erevan and Gandzak *guberniyas* in the South Caucasus under the Provisional Government's above-mentioned administrative-territorial readjustment project of 21 July 1917 (see Map 9), and thus the construction of an 'Armenian homeland' from Van to Garabagh. The aim of neutralising the Muslim elements in the projected Armenia becomes clear when analysing the July project: to encircle the Muslim-dominated *uezds* of the projected Erevan *guberniya* from the east with the projected Armenian-dominated *uezds* of the projected Gandzak *guberniya*, from the north with the projected Armenian-dominated *uezds* of the projected Erevan *guberniya*, from the west with the projected Armenian-dominated *uezds* of the projected Alexandropol *guberniya* and from the south with the occupied Ottoman provinces of Erzurum, Van and Bitlis, whose Muslim population was decreased due to the war (compare Maps 8 and 9).

The method of redrawing the borders of the administrative units in the South Caucasus in this project together with the Provisional Government's impediment to the return of the Muslims to the Kars *oblast* and the areas occupied in Eastern Anatolia show the real intentions of the Russian Government regarding the future of the South Caucasus and the recently occupied territories, despite its stated democratic principles. The policy aimed at the minimisation of the Muslim presence in the occupied territories and the areas of the South Caucasus closer to the pre-war Ottoman-Russian border, encircling them with the projected Armenian-dominated units of the projected Alexandropol, Erevan and Gandzak *guberniyas*.

The Armenian National Congress, which met in Tiflis on 11-25 October 1917, was another important step towards constructing an 'Armenian homeland' in the South Caucasus. In its final session, the Congress selected a thirty-five member National Assembly, the legislative body of the Armenians of Russia, and fifteen member National Council, the executive body. Six of the fifteen places in the latter were allotted to *Dashnaktsutiun*, two seats each to *Hai Zhoghovrdakan Kusaktsutiun* (Armenian Populist Party),⁵⁷¹ Social Revolutionary

⁵⁷¹ Note: The party was created in March 1917 by Armenian middle-class representatives from the intellectual, professional and industrialist classes of Tiflis, who formerly belonged to the Russian Constitutional Democrat (Kadet) party or its Armenian affiliate. The party's initial manifesto of April 1917 pledged support to the Provisional Government; adopted general reforms of the Russian Kadet programme; recommended Armenian

(Armenian)⁵⁷² and Social Democrat (Armenian)⁵⁷³ parties, and three seats to non-partisans.⁵⁷⁴ Thus, the Armenian National Council, which would declare the independence of the Armenian Republic, emerged. This means that on the day of the October Revolution, the Armenians selected their National Council and entered the new period one step closer to homeland construction.

The comparison of Armenian autonomy aspirations with Tartar ones reveals that, unlike the Armenians, whose autonomy aims found their reflection in the 1887 *Hnchak* and the 1892 and 1907 *Dashnaktsutiun* programmes, the leading Tartar and Muslim political party, *Musavat* (Equality), came up with the idea of autonomy for Azerbaijan only in its draft programme of June 1917, which was adopted on 26 October 1917, one day after the October Revolution. It was only on 27 May 1918, after the dissolution of the Transcaucasian Federative Democratic Republic on 26 May 1918, that the emergency session of the former Muslim members of the former *Zakavkazskiy Seym* (Transcaucasian Diet), to be discussed later, unanimously decided to declare itself the Temporary National Council of the Muslims of Transcaucasia with a right of co-option proportional to the composition of every faction. Mahammad Amin Rasulzada, the leader of *Musavat*, was elected Chairman of the National Council. The executive body of nine people headed by *Musavatist* Fatali khan Khoyskiy was elected with four members from *Musavat*, two from the Muslim Socialist Bloc, one from *Hummat* (Muslim Social Democrats) and one from *Ittihad* (Unity of Muslims of Russia).⁵⁷⁵

The Georgians established their National Council on 22 November 1917 when the Georgian National Assembly convened. Georgian Social Democrat Menshevik Party members were

ethno-territorial autonomy within the Russian state; and the restoration of the independence of the Armenian Church (Hovannisian R, *op cit.*, pp 73-74).

⁵⁷² Note: The Armenian branch of the Social Revolutionary Party was formed in 1907 from members of *Dashnaktsutiun* who considered that the latter 'had failed to emphasize socialist goals and to participate sufficiently in the Russian revolutionary movement' (Ibid., p 278, note 133).

⁵⁷³ Note: Armenian Social Democrats consisted of Armenian Social Democrat Bolsheviks, Social Democrat Mensheviks and 'Specifists' (members of the Social Democratic Workers Armenian Organisation). The latter 'contended that the realities of the Armenian situation were quite different from those affecting the general proletariat and that, therefore, the 'specific' disparities warranted particular consideration'. The 'specifists' considered themselves 'as the only true spokesman for the Armenian toilers and advocated the principles of federative government, national-cultural self-determination, and within the Marxist government, regional party autonomy' (Ibid., p 19).

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid., p 90

⁵⁷⁵ *Zaqafqaziya Seyminin müsəlman fraksiyası və Azərbaycan Milli Şurası iclaslarının protokolları: 1918-ci il*, Baku: 'Adiloğlu' nəşriyyatı, 2006, dok 21; Balaev A, *Azerbaydzhanskoe natsional'no-demokraticeskoe dvizhenie. 1917-1920 gg.*, Baku: Elm, 1990, pp 26-27

elected to most places on the newly elected National Council, with Menshevik Noi Zhordania as its chairman. From now on, 'Menshevik' and 'Georgian' would remain synonymous.⁵⁷⁶

Thus, the three main peoples of the South Caucasus passed into the period after the October Revolution with territorial autonomy aspirations. Their territorial claims became especially clear during the discussions of *zemstvo* (local administrative council) issues in 1917. Since the current thesis discusses the territorial conflicts between Armenia and Azerbaijan, the *zemstvo* problems between Armenians and Tartars in 1917 will be examined in the last two case study chapters.

6.2 The October Revolution and the 'Armenian homeland' project

The October Revolution in 1917 and the establishment of the Bolshevik Government influenced the political life of the South Caucasus. Thus, on 11 (24) November 1917, *Osobiy Zakavkazskiy Komitet* (Special Transcaucasian Committee; *OZAKOM*), which had been formed for the administration of the South Caucasus on 22 March 1917, was replaced by *Zakavkazskiy Komissariat* (Transcaucasian Commissariat). The Commissariat was created 'with the agreement of all socialist parties and democratic revolutionary organizations' as a provisional regional power until the convocation of the All-Russian Constituent Assembly, and did not recognise the Bolshevik Government. It was a coalition of revolutionary, public, official and national organisations, and in fact, the first independent government of the South Caucasus. The temporary government, which was supposed to function until the All-Russian Constituent Assembly, had to deal with a great number of issues. The main ones from the point of view of the current chapter were: the maintenance of the Caucasian front and the conclusion of peace; the introduction of *zemstvo*; and the settlement of the national question in the South Caucasus.⁵⁷⁷ The commissariat covered the whole region, excluding Baku and its surroundings ruled by the Baku Soviets headed by Bolsheviks from 2 (15) November 1917,

⁵⁷⁶ Hovannisian R, *op cit.*, p 116

⁵⁷⁷ *Dokumenty i materialy po vneshney politike Zakavkaz'ya i Gruzii*, Tiflis: Tipografiya Pravitel'stva Gruzinskoy Respubliki, 1919, dok 5, pp 3-7; dok 7, pp 8-10; Avalov Z, *Nezavisimost' Gruzii v mezhdunarodnoy politike 1918-1921 gg. Vospominaniya. Ocherki*, Paris, 1924, pp 8, 27

and included eleven members, with three Tartars, three Armenians, two Georgians and three Russians.⁵⁷⁸

According to the results of the elections to the All-Russian Constituent Assembly, which were held in the Caucasus and along the Ottoman-Russian front throughout November 1917, more than two million votes were cast:

Social Democrats (Mensheviks) – 661,934⁵⁷⁹

Musavat – 615,816

Dashnaktsutiun – 558,440

Muslim Socialists – 159,770

Social Revolutionaries – 117,522

Social Democrats (Bolsheviks) – 93,581

Muslim Social Democrats (Hummat) – 84,748

Muslim Ittihadists – 66,504

Constitutional Democrats (Kadets) – 25,673

On the basis of one delegate per sixty thousand votes, the Mensheviks were allotted eleven, *Musavatists* ten and Armenian *Dashnakists* nine places, the rest being distributed among other parties.⁵⁸⁰

The majority of the peoples of the South Caucasus gave their votes to the parties with nationalist programmes, meaning that the majority supported national-territorial autonomy ideas. The votes given to *Musavat*, the leading Muslim and Tartar nationalist party, demonstrated the popularity the national-territorial autonomy ideas had gained by November 1917 among the Muslims of the region, whose national ‘awakening’ process had started only in the late 19th-early 20th centuries. The Armenian, Stephan Shaumian, who was a Bolshevik, but an Armenian nationalist by conviction, could not hide his surprise at the popularity of this

⁵⁷⁸ *Dokumenty i materialy po vneshney politike Zakavkaz'ya i Gruzii*, dok 6, pp 7-8

⁵⁷⁹ Note: According to another source, the votes given to Mensheviks were 569,362 out of 1,887,453 votes cast in the region (Hovannisian R, *op cit.*, p 288, note 10).

⁵⁸⁰ *Azərbaycan Xalq Cümhuriyyəti Ensiklopediyası*, cild II, Baku: ‘Lider Nəşriyyat’, 2005, p 446; Hovannisian R, *op cit.*, pp 108-109; Note: There are differences in the sources in the numbers of the seats allotted to different parties. However, these sources give the same number of seats to three leading parties of the region.

party, writing, ‘*Musavat*, the weakest political party in Transcaucasia from the very beginning, which was organised during this revolution and did not have any organisations, any party traditions, any power and did not play any role in the beginning of the revolution, by the start of the second year turned out to be the strongest political party in Transcaucasia’.⁵⁸¹

Another task of the Transcaucasian Commissariat was the conclusion of peace. The first major step was its entry into negotiations with the Ottomans on 21 November (4 December) 1917 to consider their armistice proposal on the Caucasian front, which was achieved on 5 (18) December 1917 in Erzinjan. The conditions of the armistice were elaborated by the Russian military leadership of the front. The demarcation lines between the warring parties were within Eastern Anatolia, from the Black Sea up to Van Lake.⁵⁸² The Erzinjan armistice was based on the Brest-Litovsk Armistice of 2 (15) December 1917, signed between the Soviets and the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire).⁵⁸³ The Soviet ‘Declaration of Peace’ of 26 October (8 November) 1917, which had proposed to all warring peoples and their governments to begin peace negotiations ‘without annexations (*i.e.* without seizure of foreign territory and the forcible annexation of foreign nationalities) and without indemnities’,⁵⁸⁴ had already become a signal for the desertion of soldiers from the Caucasian Army, which was formed of Siberians, Poles, West Russians, Finns and others, who had no strong personal motive to maintain the demarcation line, while Georgian and Armenian troops had fought on the European fronts.⁵⁸⁵ The situation compelled the Commander-in-Chief of the Caucasian front to order the formation of Armenian and Georgian army-corps in December to hold the front against the Ottomans: the Armenians held the left flank, the demarcation line from Van to Erzinjan and the Georgians the right one – along the Black Sea coast west of Trabzon.⁵⁸⁶

⁵⁸¹ Balaev A, *op cit.*, p 17

⁵⁸² *Zakavkazskiy Seym’. Stenograficheskiy otchyot’. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie vtoroe.* Tiflis, 13 February 1918; Kazemzadeh F, *op cit.*, p 82; *Dokumenty i materialy po vneshney politike Zakavkaz’ya i Gruzii*, dok 8, pp 11-13; dok 14, pp 18-23

⁵⁸³ Wheeler-Bennett J, *Brest-Litovsk, The Forgotten Peace, March 1918*, London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1939, pp 379-380

⁵⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p 375

⁵⁸⁵ FO 371/7729, p 308 (4)

⁵⁸⁶ Kazemzadeh F, *loc cit.*; Hovannisian R, ‘The Armenian Question in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1914’ in Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Volume II, New York: St.Martin Press, 2004, p 290

Meanwhile, peace negotiations between the Soviets and the Central Powers started at Brest-Litovsk, and at the first plenary session on 9 (22) December 1917, the Soviet delegation presented six main tenets, three of which are of particular importance for our topic: (1) the liberation of the occupied territories at the earliest moment; (2) political independence to those nationalities which had been deprived of it since the beginning of the war; and (3) nationalities not hitherto enjoying political independence to be allowed the right to decide by referendum whether they elect to be united to other nations or to acquire independence.⁵⁸⁷

On 16 (29) December 1917, Stephan Shaumian was appointed Plenipotentiary Commissar for Caucasian Affairs on the recommendation of Joseph Stalin at the session of Sovnarkom, the Soviet government.⁵⁸⁸ Shaumian's political line was also demonstrated during the Dashnak-Bolshevik negotiations. Referring to Ruben Ter-Minasian, one of the Dashnak leaders, Hovannisian wrote that Shaumian pledged to do everything in his power to reinforce the front with Russian troops, accepted the repartition of South Caucasus to create ethnic Armenian administrative units and authorised the use of Russian contingents to protect the Armenian provinces of the Caucasus and to support the Armenian units in the mountainous parts of Elizavetpol *guberniya*. Until the fulfilment of these terms, 'the Bolsheviks were not to incite any disturbances in western Transcaucasia and *Dashnaktsutiun* would continue its official anti-Communist activity and propaganda. When Sovnarkom completed its share of the bargain, *Dashnaktsutiun* would unite with the Bolsheviks to seize control of all Transcaucasia.'⁵⁸⁹

Further evidence of Bolshevik-Dashnak collaboration was a Soviet decree on 'Turkish Armenia' adopted on 29 December 1917 (11 January 1918) by Sovnarkom and confirmed on 15 (28) January 1918 by the Third All-Russian Conference of Soviets. It supported the right of the Armenians of 'Turkish Armenia' occupied by Russia to free self-determination up to full independence, the realisation of which was conditioned by a number of initial guarantees: withdrawal of troops from 'Turkish Armenia' and immediate organisation of an Armenian people's police; return of Armenian refugees, as well as Armenian emigrants to 'Turkish Armenia'; and unhindered return of Armenians who were forcefully deported within the

⁵⁸⁷ Wheeler-Bennett J, *op cit.*, p 117

⁵⁸⁸ Balaev A, *op cit.*, p 16

⁵⁸⁹ Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, pp 112-113

Ottoman Empire during the war to 'Turkish Armenia'. The boundaries of 'Turkish Armenia' were to be defined by 'democratically elected representatives of the Armenian people in agreement with the democratically elected representatives of the adjacent and disputed (Muslim and other) *okrugs*', together with Stephan Shaumian, Plenipotentiary Commissar for Caucasian Affairs.⁵⁹⁰

The real aim of this decree was to prepare the ground for the Soviet annexation of the Ottoman territories which had been occupied by Tsarist Russia in the war and had been reorganised into 'Turkish Armenia' by the Provisional Government. Soviet success in this task would make the establishment of Soviet rule in the South Caucasus easier and thus recreate Tsarist Russia in the form of Soviet Russia, which would include the occupied Ottoman territories and the South Caucasus. In other words, Tsarist Russia's expansion through occupation under the slogan of the defence of rights of Christian peoples turned into Soviet Russia's expansion under the slogan of the right to self-determination. The Armenians, as in the case of Tsarist Russia, were considered to be useful for the realisation of this aim.

The Ottoman Foreign Minister, Ahmet Nesimi Bey, as a member of the Ottoman delegation at the Brest-Litovsk negotiations, on 18 January 1918 protested against this decree to Leon Trotsky, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of Soviet Russia, and warned him of the responsibility of the Soviets for its negative consequences. He added that arming the population of the area which did not belong to Russia⁵⁹¹ and inciting and compelling them to declare independence, contradicted the tenets of the Russian revolution. In the opinion of Nesimi Bey, by arming the Armenians of Eastern Anatolia, Soviet Russia was pursuing a hostile policy against the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁹²

In order to prevent the realisation of the Soviet policy, the Ottomans advanced a counter-policy of separating the projected areas from Russia through the anti-Bolshevik Transcaucasian Commissariat. The Ottomans established contact with the Commissariat. The

⁵⁹⁰ *Dokumenty vneshney politiki SSSR*, tom 1, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoy literatury, 1957, dok 43, pp 74-75

⁵⁹¹ Note: Here 'arming' means the point on the organisation of the Armenian police in the occupied territories after the withdrawal of Russian troops in the decree on 'Turkish Armenia'.

⁵⁹² Şahin E, *Diplomasi ve sınır: Gümrü görüşmeleri ve protokolleri – 1918*, Istanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2005, p 32

latter was informed by the former that the representatives of the Central Powers at the Brest-Litovsk peace conference were ready to recognise a Transcaucasian government, which could send its delegates to Brest. The Transcaucasian Commissariat promised to give its reply to this proposal within three weeks, as it needed to coordinate its position with other autonomous areas of Russia. The Commissariat set up a conference date for 1 (14) February with Ukraine and the South-Eastern Union, who had immediate interests in peace with the Ottomans, to decide about the Ottoman proposal and to give a final reply. However, Ukraine did not give any reply, whereas the South-Eastern Union sympathised with the idea of the conference but did not send representatives or provide a written reply. Under these circumstances, on 3 (16) February, the Commissariat sent the Ottomans its consent to start preliminary negotiations on peace. It was decided to conduct the negotiations in Trabzon.⁵⁹³

6.3 The *de facto* Transcaucasian government and peace negotiations with the Ottoman Empire in Trabzon

On 5 (18) January 1918, the Bolsheviks dispersed the All-Russian Constituent Assembly on the day of its opening because of its strong anti-Bolshevik composition. The deputies from the South Caucasus on 10 (23) February 1918 convened *Zakavkazskiy Seym* (Transcaucasian Diet), the supreme regional government, representing the South Caucasian peoples. The main seats in the body, which were defined on the basis of twenty thousand votes per delegate according to the results of the elections to the All-Russian Constituent Assembly, belonged to three main party factions: the Menshevik Social Democrats, *Musavat* and *Dashnaktsutiun*. Although the sources are unanimous with regard to the numbers of the seats belonging to *Musavat* (together with the Muslim Non-partisan Bloc) and *Dashnaktsutiun* being thirty and twenty-seven respectively, they differ over the seats of Mensheviks being thirty, thirty-two and thirty-three (out of which twenty-six were Georgians).⁵⁹⁴ At its second meeting on 13 (26) February, the first session of the Transcaucasian Diet dissolved the Transcaucasian

⁵⁹³ *Zakavkazskiy Seym*. *Stenograficheskiy otchyot*. *Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie vtoroe*. Tiflis, 13 February 1918, p 4

⁵⁹⁴ Kazemzadeh F, *op cit.*, p 87; *Azərbaycan Xalq Cümhuriyyəti Ensiklopediyası*, cild II, p 447; Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, p 126

Commissariat and all power was transferred to the Diet until the formation of a new government on 13 (26) March 1918.⁵⁹⁵

The vision of the future of the South Caucasus was reflected in the declarations of the main political factions of the Diet at its 15 (28) February session. For the leading Muslim faction, *Musavat*, the most immediate tasks were the conclusion of peace and the practical implementation of national-territorial autonomy in Azerbaijan.⁵⁹⁶ For the leading Armenian faction, *Dashnaktsutiun*, the main issues were the conclusion of peace which would bring about the 'establishment of autonomy of Turkish Armenia' and 'correct' territorial division of the South Caucasus into ethnic cantons and their unification into a common Transcaucasian federation.⁵⁹⁷ For the Menshevik Georgians, the most important issues were again the conclusion of peace and national-territorial autonomy in the South Caucasus.⁵⁹⁸

At its 16 February (1 March) session, the Diet decided to conduct peace negotiations with the Ottomans in Trabzon based on the pre-1914 Ottoman-Russian border. Moreover, the delegation would strive to secure the right of self-determination for Eastern Anatolia, in particular 'autonomy of Turkish Armenia within Turkish statehood'.⁵⁹⁹ According to the position of a senior representative of *Dashnaktsutiun* at an official session of the Diet Commission on peace with the Ottoman Empire on 15 (28) February, which was revealed the next day by Yuriy Semyonov from the Constitutional Democratic Party, 'it will be possible to establish good neighbourly relations with Turkey after the departure of the Russian troops. Consequently, it will be possible to build good relations with the Kurds as well.'⁶⁰⁰

This view expressed by a senior representative of the leading Armenian political party suggests the optimism of *Dashnaktsutiun* members in February 1918 regarding Armenian-Ottoman relations after the departure of the Russian troops, against the background of all that

⁵⁹⁵ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie vtoroe*. Tiflis, 13 February 1918, p 10; *Dokumenty i materialy po vneshney politike Zakavkaz'ya i Gruzii*, dok 55, p 114; Note: The new government was formed on 13 (26) March 1918 and had sixteen members (*Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie semnadtsatoe*. Tiflis, 13 March 1918, p 29).

⁵⁹⁶ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie tret'ye*. Tiflis, 15 February 1918, p 12

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp 15-17

⁵⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp 6-7

⁵⁹⁹ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie chetyvortoe*. Tiflis, 16 February 1918, p 35

⁶⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p 14

had happened between the Armenians and the Ottoman Muslims, including the Kurds, over the last forty years. This also suggests that in mid-February 1918, *Dashnaktsutiun* did not consider the withdrawal of Russian military forces from the occupied Ottoman lands to imply negative implications for the Armenians. This optimism gives rise to a question on the attitude of the Armenian nationalists towards the Ottoman Empire after the 1915 events in the sense that, at least in February 1918, *Dashnaktsutiun* did not consider that the *Ittihadist* Government had had a premeditated plan to exterminate the Armenian people in 1915; otherwise the senior representative of the leading Armenian nationalist party would not have had reason to be optimistic on the ‘autonomy of Turkish Armenia within Turkish statehood’ and good neighbourly relations with the Ottoman Empire, which was headed at that time by the same *Ittihadists*.

At its fifth meeting of 17 February (2 March), the session adopted the list of the delegates for the Trabzon peace negotiations comprising five Tartars, four Georgians and two Armenians.⁶⁰¹ The same day, the Diet received a telegram from Lev Karakhan, himself an Armenian and the secretary of the Soviet delegation at the Brest-Litovsk peace negotiations, that the Soviets had decided to sign the Brest-Litovsk Treaty and concede Kars, Ardahan and Batumi.⁶⁰² The same day, the Diet sent a telegram to the Brest-Litovsk conference protesting against this decision. It noted that the ‘Transcaucasian Government, according to the decision of the Diet, considers any treaty on Transcaucasia and its borders, which was signed without its knowledge and approval, to be of no international importance and obligatory for itself’.⁶⁰³ It also notified that the Diet had already elected a peace delegation to leave for Trabzon to sign a final peace with the Ottoman Empire.⁶⁰⁴ On 19 February (4 March), Vladimir Lenin, Chairman of Sovnarkom, sent a radio telegram to Berlin on the Sovnarkom’s decision to

⁶⁰¹ *Dokumenty i materialy po vneshney politike Zakavkaz'ya i Gruzii*, dok 54, p 107; Note: Members of the South Caucasian delegation: Tartars: M.Hajynskiy (*Musavat*), Kh.Khasmammadov (*Musavat*), I.Heydarov (Muslim Socialist Bloc); M.Mehdiyev (*Ittihad*), A.Sheykh-ul-Islamov (*Hummat*); Georgians: G.Abashidze (Social Democrat), G.Gvazava (Georgian National Democrat), G.Laskishvili (Social Federalist), A.Chkhenkeli (Social Democrat) as a head of the delegation; and Armenians: Ov.Kachaznuni (*Dashnaktsutiun*), A.Khatsov (*Dashnaktsutiun*)

⁶⁰² *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie shestoe*. Tiflis, 18 February 1918, pp 1-2

⁶⁰³ *Ibid.*, p 2

⁶⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

accept the conditions proposed by the Central Powers at Brest-Litovsk, which was realised on 3 (16) March with the signing of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty.⁶⁰⁵

According to Article IV of the Treaty, Russia was committed to ‘do all within her power to ensure the immediate evacuation of the provinces of Eastern Anatolia and their lawful return to Turkey’.⁶⁰⁶ Moreover, ‘the districts of Ardahan, Kars, and Batumi will be likewise and without delay cleared of Russian troops. Russia will not interfere in the reorganisation of the national and international relations of these districts, but leave it to the population of these districts to carry out this reorganisation in agreement with the neighbouring States, especially Turkey.’⁶⁰⁷

A supplementary agreement between Russia and the Ottoman Empire regulated the execution of this provision: Russia was forbidden to concentrate more than one division, even for drill purposes, on the borders of the above-mentioned three districts or in the Caucasus without prior notice to the Central Powers, until the conclusion of a general peace. In contrast, the Ottoman Empire was permitted to keep its army on a war footing.⁶⁰⁸

News of the Soviet acceptance of the demands of the Central Powers led to the delay of the departure of the South Caucasian delegation to Trabzon. Finally, on 1 (14) March 1918, the Trabzon peace conference opened. The principles guiding the South Caucasian delegation did not change under the influence of the Soviet decision and were the same as those declared on 16 February (1 March).

At the first session of the conference on 1 (14) March, the Ottoman delegation, headed by Rauf Bey, asked the South Caucasians, headed by Akakiy Chkhenkeli, to make exact declarations on the nature, form, political and administrative organisation of the republic which was in the process of formation in the South Caucasus and whether it implemented the

⁶⁰⁵ *Istoriya vneshney politiki SSSR*, tom 1, 1917-1945 gg., Moscow: ‘Nauka’, 1986, pp 58-61; Ratifications were exchanged between Germany and Russia on 29 March, between the Ottoman Empire and Russia on 12 July, between Austria-Hungary and Russia on 4 July, and between Bulgaria and Russia on 9 July. All ratifications took place at Berlin (Wheeler-Bennett J, *Brest-Litovsk, The Forgotten Peace, March 1918*, p 403).

⁶⁰⁶ *Dokumenty vneshney politiki SSSR*, tom 1, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel’stvo politicheskoy literatury, 1957, dok 78, p 121; Wheeler-Bennett J, *op cit.*, p 405

⁶⁰⁷ *Dokumenty vneshney politiki SSSR*, tom 1, *loc cit.*; Wheeler-Bennett J, *op cit.*, pp 405-406

⁶⁰⁸ Wheeler-Bennett J, *op cit.*, p 272

necessary procedures required by international law for the establishment of a state. The South Caucasian delegation gave brief information on the formation of the *de facto* independent Transcaucasian government after the October Revolution, responsible before the Transcaucasian Diet. It added that the government entered the sphere of international relations, accepting the proposal of the Ottoman Government on the independent peace negotiations and sending a telegram to the Powers protesting against the Brest-Litovsk Treaty as related to the South Caucasus.⁶⁰⁹

Not being satisfied with these answers, on 3 (16) March, the Ottoman delegation in a new declaration asked for clarifications on the answers of the South Caucasian delegation and simultaneously made its own position clear. It stated that the formation of a Transcaucasian state did not correspond to the principles of international public law and that this state did not make a declaration of its independence and did not gain recognition by other powers. The Ottoman delegation continued arguing that by declaring in its telegram of 23 January (6 February) 1918 the need for coordination of its activities with other autonomous governments of Russia and abstaining from sending its delegation to Brest-Litovsk conference, the Transcaucasian government considered itself not independent, but part of Russia. On these considerations, the Ottoman delegation found the South Caucasian delegation's declaration on the nullity of Brest-Litovsk Treaty as related to the South Caucasus unacceptable.⁶¹⁰ The Ottoman delegation then asked the South Caucasian delegation to officially define the form of its government, its borders, state languages and religion and its position with regard to the Ottoman Empire.⁶¹¹

On 7 (20) March, the South Caucasian delegation declared that the Brest-Litovsk Treaty was formally not compulsory and in nature not acceptable for the South Caucasus, as Russian rule in the region ended after the October Revolution and gave way to the Transcaucasian government. Moreover, it continued, the Ottoman Government in its telegram of 1 (14) January to the Transcaucasian government on the establishment of peaceful relations between the Ottoman Empire and Transcaucasia called it independent and had notified its readiness to

⁶⁰⁹ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie chetyrnadtsatoe.* Tiflis, 5 March 1918, pp 6-7; *Dokumenty i materialy po vneshney politike Zakavkaz'ya i Gruzii*, dok 57, p 117

⁶¹⁰ *Dokumenty i materialy po vneshney politike Zakavkaz'ya i Gruzii*, dok 54, pp 109-110

⁶¹¹ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie semnadtsatoe.* Tiflis, 13 March 1918, p 6; *Dokumenty i materialy po vneshney politike Zakavkaz'ya i Gruzii*, dok 54, p 110

conduct peace negotiations for the signing of a 'final peace treaty'. In the opinion of the South Caucasian delegation, the burden of negotiations should lie not on the *de jure*, but on the *de facto* side of the issue.⁶¹² As for the form of administration, Transcaucasia would be a democratic federative republic. The area of the 'state' included Baku, Elizavetpol, Erevan, Tiflis and Kutaisi *guberniyas*, Batumi and Kars *oblasts*, and Zagatala and Sukhumi *okrugs*. The official language was Russian, but the state languages would be Georgian, Armenian and Turkic. In international relations, Transcaucasia was in the process of negotiations with the Ottoman Empire on the termination of war and conclusion of a durable peace.⁶¹³

The Ottoman delegation replied with a broad written statement insisting on the acceptance of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty and stating that the objection by a new state organism, which was in the process of formation and not yet a state, to the obligations of the treaty, which was an international act, could not have legal power. Soviet Russia, the delegation noted, replaced the Provisional Government by right. As for the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly, it was considered to be further evidence of the power of this government. The non-recognition of the Soviet Government by Transcaucasia was an intra-state factor and could not influence international relations until that part completely separated and completed the process of formation in accordance with international law, and achieved recognition of its independence by other governments. Taking into account these considerations, the Ottoman delegation considered that all acts and treaties signed by Soviet Russia were valid from a legal point of view and compulsory for all parts of Russia. As for the current negotiations, the Ottoman delegation called them the preparation of a basis for economic and commercial relations and definition of their practical and technical details, which were left outside the obligations of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty.⁶¹⁴

The Ottoman delegation stated that official recognition of the Transcaucasian Republic could take place through a special article in the treaty to be signed as a result of the negotiations, which could start only after abandonment of all pretensions to Batumi, Kars and Ardahan. As

⁶¹² *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie semnadsatoe*. Tiflis, 13 March 1918, p 6; *Dokumenty i materialy po vneshney politike Zakavkaz'ya i Gruzii*, dok 54, p 110

⁶¹³ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie semnadsatoe*. Tiflis, 13 March 1918, p 7

⁶¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp 7-8; *Dokumenty i materialy po vneshney politike Zakavkaz'ya i Gruzii*, dok 54, p 111

for the self-determination of Eastern Anatolia, the Ottoman delegation protested in the most energetic form, finding it to be interference in the internal affairs of the Empire.⁶¹⁵

On 24 March (6 April), the Ottoman delegation sent an ultimatum to the South Caucasian delegation to accept the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. Towards the end of the conference on 28 March (10 April), the South Caucasian delegation declared its acceptance of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty as the basis for negotiations.⁶¹⁶ The reason was explained by the South Caucasian delegation at the 9 (22) April session of the Diet to be the positive hints which the official text of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, received by the delegation only towards the end of the conference, contained with regard to the South Caucasus. This hint was considered to be 'Russia will not interfere in the reorganisation of the national and international relations of these districts [Ardahan, Batumi and Kars – I.K.], but leave it to the population of these districts to carry out this reorganisation in agreement with the neighbouring States, especially Turkey'.⁶¹⁷ In the opinion of the South Caucasian delegation, under 'neighbouring States', the article meant the Ottoman Empire and Transcaucasia, since, after the exclusion of Russia by the article, there were no other neighbouring states there.⁶¹⁸

In reply to the declaration of the South Caucasian delegation, on 31 March (13 April), the Ottoman delegation declared that in order to involve its allies in the peace negotiations, it was necessary to declare Transcaucasian independence.⁶¹⁹ However, acceptance of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty by the South Caucasian delegation as the basis for negotiations was not accepted by the Transcaucasian Diet, which on 31 March (13 April) decided to recall the delegation and to be at war with the Ottoman Empire.⁶²⁰

⁶¹⁵ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie semnadtsatoe.* Tiflis, 13 March 1918, p 8; *Dokumenty i materialy po vneshney politike Zakavkaz'ya i Gruzii*, dok 54, p 111

⁶¹⁶ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie dvadtsat' pervoe.* Tiflis, 31 March 1918, p 3

⁶¹⁷ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie dvadtsat' vtoroe,* Tiflis, 9 April 1918, pp 60-62; Wheeler-Bennett J, *op cit.*, pp 405-406

⁶¹⁸ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie dvadtsat' vtoroe,* Tiflis, 9 April 1918, p 62

⁶¹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶²⁰ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie dvadtsat' pervoe.* Tiflis, 31 March 1918, p 33; *Dokumenty i materialy po vneshney politike Zakavkaz'ya i Gruzii*, dok 54, p 112; dok 72, pp 155-156; dok 77, p 160

6.4 Discussions in the Transcaucasian Diet on the Ottoman-Transcaucasian war

The discussion of the Ottoman ultimatum on the acceptance of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty in the Diet on 31 March (13 April) started with a statement by Evgeniy Gegechkori, head of the Transcaucasian government. He informed the Diet members of the peace negotiations, including the acceptance by the South Caucasian delegation of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty as the basis for negotiation on 28 March (10 April). He continued that after this acceptance, the Ottoman side decided to suspend hostilities, followed by the demand for the surrender of Batumi by 31 March (13 April). Not receiving the desired reply by the mentioned time, the Ottoman side had renewed hostilities.

Gegechkori, on behalf of the government, declared that acceptance of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty would mean that 'Transcaucasia stopped existing as an independent republic and become the province of the Turkish Empire', which the government could not accept.⁶²¹ This statement was followed by speeches from representatives of different factions. According to Martiros Arutyunian from *Dashnaktsutun*, the Ottoman Empire tried 'to implement its old programme of unification of Constantinople with Baku with solid Muslim mass' with the help of internal elements of the South Caucasus.⁶²² In his opinion, Christian Armenians, Georgians and Assyrians, who lived in this area, impeded the implementation of this programme, so Armenians were destined to die, which would be followed by the death of the Georgians.⁶²³ The essence of his speech was that the Muslims, as 'internal elements' of the region, supported the Ottomans, who would not otherwise dare to invade the region.

Arutyunian's view contradicted that of Alexander Khatsov, another member of *Dashnaktsutun*. At the 16 February (1 March) session of the Diet, Khatsov had declared that 'there are some people who, it is claimed, wanted to join Turkey. Who tried to stop them? No one can stop them. There is no faith in Russia. Russia has been weakened. However, they do not do this, because they feel themselves to be independent Caucasian citizens and members

⁶²¹ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie dvadtsat' pervoe.* Tiflis, 31 March 1918, p 5

⁶²² *Ibid.*, pp 12-13

⁶²³ *Ibid.*, pp 12-14

of the Transcaucasian republic'.⁶²⁴ But he did not make any speech at the 31 March session and thus did not repeat the same views when the Muslims were accused of treachery.

Ivan Lordkipanidze, the Georgian Social Revolutionary, stated that the occupation of Batumi, Kars and Ardahan threatened not only Armenians and Georgians, but also Muslims. Citing the rebellion of the Muslim Ajarians of Batumi as an example, he argued that this showed that the Ajarians believed in a better life under Ottoman rule. Lordkipanidze also followed Arutyunian, stating that the Ottomans relied on treason from inside, and considered that Muslim leaders should explain to the Muslim masses that their interests coincided with the interests of the Armenians and Georgians and that the South Caucasus would be unable to live without Batumi.⁶²⁵ Lordkipanidze did not explain the reasons for the Ajarians' belief in a better life under Muslim Ottoman rule. It can be suggested that the Ajarians' dislike of Russian rule stemmed from being inhabitants in a state with an alien dominant religion, and the suspicion with which they were treated as Muslims and Ottoman sympathisers.

Alikhan Kantemirov, a member of the Muslim Socialist Bloc, in his speech during the discussions on the seizure of power in Ardahan by Muslims on 5 (18) March, tried to shed some light on the problem. Disagreeing with Menshevik Georgian and Dashnak Armenian members of the Diet, Kantemirov declared that the seeds of the anarchy in the Muslim villages in Ardahan had been sown by Tsarist Russia long before. At that time, the Muslims were also accused of treason and the population of Muslim villages aged from 18 to 60 were exiled to Siberia. The same policy was followed by the revolutionary government of Alexander Kerensky.⁶²⁶ When self-determination for all peoples was declared, the Muslims of the predominantly Muslim Ardahan and Oltu *okrugs* could not realise this, because of 'known traders and merchants in Oltu and Ardahan [Armenians – I.K.]'⁶²⁷ who tried to rule Ardahan. They read chauvinistic nationalist papers and declared that Muslims should not rule the *okrug* and that the formation of police should not be trusted to them; otherwise they would engage in oppression and murder. Kantemirov added that, in 1914, the entire local Muslim population of

⁶²⁴ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie chetyvortoe*. Tiflis, 16 February 1918, p 26

⁶²⁵ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie dvadtsat' pervoe*. Tiflis, 31 March 1918, p 15

⁶²⁶ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie chetyrnatdsatoe*. Tiflis, 5 March 1918, pp 18-19

⁶²⁷ *Ibid.*, p 19

Ardahan was exiled, but recently when Ardahan Muslims wanted to return to their semi-destroyed houses, they could not do so, as Ardahan was in the hands of ‘other elements [Armenians – I.K.],’ who seized Muslim property and wanted to rule the whole *okrug* by the right of strength. The same happened to the Muslims of Kars, whose entire population was exiled in 1914 and their houses seized by the same aliens. The Muslims of Ardahan, Kantemirov argued, did what anyone would do if exiled from their own home, which was not treason, but justice.⁶²⁸

Regarding the problems of the Kars, Batumi and Ardahan Muslims, it should be added that the Provisional Government, with the aim of introducing *zemstvo* to the South Caucasus, had projected the creation of Armenian-dominated area with the projected Alexandropol, Erevan and Gandzak *guberniyas* (compare Maps 8 and 9). The projected Alexandropol *guberniya* would be constructed at the expense of Alexandropol and Echmiadzin *uezds* of the Erevan *guberniya*, Akhalkalaki *uezd* and parts of Borchaly and Gori *uezds* of the Tiflis *guberniya*, and Kars and Kaghyzman *okrugs* of the Kars *oblast*.⁶²⁹ Moreover, it was suggested to be more reasonable to annex two other *okrugs* of the Kars *oblast* (Ardahan and Oltu) to the Alexandropol *guberniya* rather than to the Batumi *oblast* with which they had religious and cultural connections⁶³⁰ (compare Maps 8 and 9). Kantemirov’s above-mentioned speech showed how the Armenians, supported by the Provisional Government, wanted to include Muslim-dominated Kars *oblast*, including Ardahan and Oltu *okrugs* into the projected Alexandropol *guberniya*.

Tartar Sardar Aghamalov from the Menshevik *Hummat* also rejected the accusations of Muslim treason. He argued that those who thought that the interests of Muslim democracy would suffer more than those of Armenians with the Ottoman occupation were wrong. The Russian ruling elite, he argued, was also Orthodox Christian, but they had kept peasants under oppression, who in the end rebelled. Orthodox Georgia was always inclined towards Russia,

⁶²⁸ Ibid., pp 19-20

⁶²⁹ Note: The Alexandropol *guberniya* was projected to be created by taking the Akhalkalaki *uezd*, three village communities of Trialet *uchastok* (Nardevan, Ashkalin and Avramly) and Lori *uchastok* of Borchaly *uezd* from Tiflis *guberniya*, with cutbacks from Borchaly and Ekaterinin *uchastoks* of the same *uezd* and two villages of Gori *uezd* (Gyzylkilsa and Molit); from Kars *oblast* Kars and Kaghyzman *uezds*, and finally from Erevan *guberniya* Alexandropol *uezd* (without its first *uchastok*) and the fourth *uchastok* of Echmiadzin *uezd*, annexing it to the former (*STsIA*, fn 2080, l 1, fl 707, p 9op).

⁶³⁰ *STsIA*, fn 2080, l 1, fl 707, p 9op

but Christian Poland had left it. The area behind the front, he noted, suffered from the Muslim-Armenian conflict. Armenian soldiers at the front fought against the Turks, but in Transcaucasia they destroyed Muslim villages and thus destroyed the region.⁶³¹

The sufferings of the Transcaucasian Muslims at the hands of the Armenians in the discussed period can be explained by the Armenian military superiority over them, which in turn can be explained by the fact that despite the formation of Armenian and Georgian national military units, the Transcaucasian Commissariat forbade the Muslim organisations to create their own military units. The same approach was demonstrated by the Baku Soviet, which forbade the Muslim National Council to arm the population and create national units. In the words of Jörg Barberowski, 'the tradition of common distrust towards Muslims continued, who were allegedly agents of pan-Turkist imperialism'.⁶³²

When thousands of Muslims were killed in Baku in March 1918 under the guidance of Shaumian together with other Bolsheviks and Dashnaks,⁶³³ Muslim members informed the Diet and asked for help. The Armenian and Georgian factions of the Diet refused to give such help and declared that they could not be in enmity with the Bolsheviks while there was an Ottoman threat.⁶³⁴ With reference to the Russian State Archive of Social and Political History, the *Azerbaydzhan* newspaper and the paper by A. Popov, Barberowski wrote that in March 1918, not only in Baku, but also in Erevan, several thousand Muslims became victims of Armenian pogroms and turned into 'undesirable aliens'.⁶³⁵ Referring to the *Azerbaydzhan* newspaper, he stated that up until March 1918, 199 Muslim villages were destroyed in Erevan *guberniya* and more than 100,000 people were either killed, died of starvation and exhaustion

⁶³¹ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie dvadtsat' pervoe.* Tiflis, 31 March 1918, pp 27-28

⁶³² Barberowski J, *Vrag est vezde. Stalinizm na Kavkaze (perevod s nemetskogo V.T.Altukhova)*, Moscow: Rossiyskaya politicheskaya entsiklopediya (ROSSPEN), 2010, pp 122-123; Note: The First World War was the first instance, when Tsarist Russia, continuing to refuse to allow the Muslim population to be enlisted in the military forces, allowed the Caucasian viceroy to recruit 3,000 Muslim soldiers in the construction units of the Russian Army to be privately financed. The 'Caucasian military division', which was most commonly known as the 'Wild division', was organised with the financial assistance of Muslim industrialist, Hajy Zeynalabdin Taghiyev, and the local Muslim population and was sent to the Austrian-Russian front (Ibid., pp 83-84).

⁶³³ Note: For the account of the events of March-April 1918 see Barberowski J, *op cit.*, pp 129-138

⁶³⁴ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie devyatnadsatoe.* Tiflis, 20 March 1918, p 39; Balaev A, *Azerbaydzhanskoe natsional'no-demokraticeskoe dvizhenie. 1917-1920 gg.*, pp 23-24

⁶³⁵ Barberowski J, *op cit.*, p 164

or left for the territories occupied by the Ottoman Army.⁶³⁶ The violence committed by the Armenians against the Muslims of Transcaucasia in the discussed period was far greater than the violence committed by the Muslims against the Armenians largely due to the military advantages and the Bolshevik support of the latter.

Regarding the last point of Lordkipanidze's speech, it should be mentioned that despite the lack of Georgian and Armenian support and open Armenian enmity towards the Muslims, during the Trabzon negotiations, the Tartar delegates made every effort to retain Batumi in the South Caucasus, bringing submissions of security, economic and political character to incline the Ottomans towards compromise. The position of *Musavat* that the seizure of Batumi by the Ottomans would stifle the South Caucasus was very well known to the Diet members.⁶³⁷ However, this was ignored by Lordkipanidze and other members of the Diet.

During their talks with Enver Pasha, the Ottoman Minister of War, who came to Trabzon and Batumi after the termination of the Trabzon negotiations, the Tartar delegation asked him, as a main figure of Ottoman politics, about his vision of the South Caucasus. According to him, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia should have formed a common federative or confederative South Caucasus with a common Diet in close relation with the Ottoman Empire. In the case that it was impossible to create a common South Caucasus, an independent Azerbaijan could form a much closer union with the Ottoman Empire, in the same form as Austria-Hungary. When asked about his attitude to the independence of Armenia, he answered that the Ottoman Empire would not be against the establishment of an independent Armenia, if the Armenian people stopped their intrigues against it for the sake of Anglo-Russian politics. The views of Enver Pasha were not supported by Vehib Pasha, Commander of the Third Ottoman Army, and Rauf bey, head of the Ottoman delegation at the peace negotiations, who preferred not to interfere in the internal affairs of the South Caucasus for the sake of preserving peace there.⁶³⁸

Although the Georgians and Armenians accused the Muslims of betrayal, Britain, which supported the Georgians and Armenians at the front against the Ottoman Empire, was of a

⁶³⁶ Ibid., p 163

⁶³⁷ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie dvadtsat' vtoroe*, Tiflis, 9 April 1918, p 22

⁶³⁸ *Zaqafqaziya Seyminin müsəlman fraksiyası və Azərbaycan Milli Şurası iclaslarının protokolları: 1918-ci il*, dok 13

different opinion on the reasons for the discord between different peoples of the South Caucasus. According to the confidential outline of events by British Foreign Office staff, 'the Diet itself was split upon racial lines. No force capable of offering effective resistance to the Turkish invasion could be got together. By the action of the Armenians and Bolsheviks the Mahommedan elements in all Transcaucasia had been alienated beyond hope of recovery, and, at least in sympathies, had gone over to the Turko-German side. The Georgians were at loggerheads with the Armenians owing to the continued intrigues and association of the latter with the Russians, both revolutionary and reactionary – in fact the Armenians in Baku had joined hands with the Bolsheviks while the Armenian army in Erivan and the west still regarded itself as under the orders of the reactionary party in Russia. Racial hatred ran higher than ever, and civil war appeared inevitable.'⁶³⁹

The Muslims of the South Caucasus needed Ottoman support under the prevailing conditions to save themselves, as well as to liberate Baku from Bolshevik and Dashnak forces headed by Shaumian, who regarded Azerbaijani autonomy intentions as the 'dream of Azerbaijani nationalists' to make Baku 'capital of a Azerbaijani khanate'.⁶⁴⁰ The Dashnak members of the Diet were also against the Azerbaijani government in Baku and wanted it to be international and the Armenian troops to remain in Baku. The reaction of the Muslim faction of the Diet was that the government in Baku should belong to Muslims.⁶⁴¹

Despite their sympathy for the Turks, the Azerbaijani national leaders did not seek annexation by the Ottoman Empire, but desired national-territorial autonomy for Azerbaijan in the South Caucasus; otherwise, during the Trabzon negotiations, they would have consented to the recommendations of Enver Pasha on the federation of Azerbaijan with the Ottoman Empire in the form of Austria-Hungary.⁶⁴² If the Azerbaijani national leaders had favoured the annexation of Azerbaijan by the Ottoman Empire, there was no power to prevent it at that

⁶³⁹ FO 371/7729, p 309 (7)

⁶⁴⁰ Balaev A, *op cit.*, p 17

⁶⁴¹ *Zaqafqaziya Seyminin müsəlman fraksiyası və Azərbaycan Milli Şurası iclaslarının protokolları: 1918-ci il, dok 15*

⁶⁴² Balaev A, *Mamed Emin Rasulzade (1884-1955)*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'Flinta', 2009, p 114

time, as noted by KhatISOV.⁶⁴³ It did not happen, because the Azerbaijani national leaders were against it.

The leading Azerbaijani nationalist party, *Musavat*, strove for the national-territorial autonomy of Azerbaijan within the South Caucasus. This was proven by the fact that the Diet unanimously decided to declare war on the Ottoman Empire on 1 (14) April 1918, and despite the Georgians and Armenians ignoring the Muslim interests, the Muslims promised every possible help, apart from armed support, to the peoples of the South Caucasus in this war.⁶⁴⁴

By that time, Ottoman troops were advancing, already liberating the territories occupied by Russia during the war and crossing the pre-1914 Ottoman-Russian border. On 6 (19) March, the Ottomans had occupied Ardahan, about 80% of the population of which was Muslim,⁶⁴⁵ and on 1 (14) April, they occupied Batumi,⁶⁴⁶ 70% Muslim.⁶⁴⁷ Thus, the Ottoman troops retained two of three provinces lost to Russia in the 1877-1878 Ottoman-Russian war. On 9 (22) April 1918, the Ottomans renewed their proposal of 31 March (13 April) repeating the same conditions: to accept the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, not to make any claim to Batumi, Ardahan and Kars and to declare independence from Russia.⁶⁴⁸

Conclusion

The failure of the 'Armenian homeland' project both in the Ottoman Empire and its territories occupied by Russia during the Tsarist regime was followed by new hope emerging after the February Revolution with the Provisional Government's 'Act on the arrangement of the administration in the Russian-occupied parts of Turkish Armenia', which included Erzurum, Van and Bitlis. The act envisaged the adoption of measures for the gradual return of

⁶⁴³ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie chetyvortoe*. Tiflis, 16 February 1918, p 26

⁶⁴⁴ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie dvadtsat' pervoe*. Tiflis, 31 March 1918, pp 20, 31; Note: The Tartar Shafi bay Rustambayov from *Musavat* promised on behalf of his party, group of non-partisans and the *Ittihad* party to provide assistance with all available means to other peoples of the South Caucasus in the Ottoman-Transcaucasian war and take all measures for its favourable termination, but would not fight against the Ottoman Empire.

⁶⁴⁵ *Kavkazskiy kalendar' na 1917 god*, pp 200-201

⁶⁴⁶ *Dokumenty i materialy po vneshney politike Zakavkaz'ya i Gruzii*, dok 64, p 132; dok 95, p 195

⁶⁴⁷ *Kavkazskiy kalendar' na 1917 god*, pp 184-185

⁶⁴⁸ Şahin E, *op cit.*, pp 68-69; Kazemzadeh F, *op cit.*, pp 102-106

Armenian refugees to the area. The Armenian belief in the possibility of their project being realised was also strengthened with the drastic decrease of the Muslim population in the area after its occupation by Russia and the Provisional Government's instruction to disallow the return of Muslims. The government's administrative-territorial readjustment project in the South Caucasus was another source of hope. The realisation of both projects would mean the construction of an 'Armenian homeland' in the area extending from Van to Garabagh.

The Bolshevik Revolution, which overthrew the Provisional Government and left the Armenian expectations unrealised, gave rise to new hopes for the implementation of the Armenian project in Eastern Anatolia with the Soviet decree on the 'Turkish Armenia' in January 1918. However, the signing of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty between the Soviets and Central Powers in March 1918 envisaged the return of the territories occupied by Russia during the First World War to the Ottoman Empire, leaving Armenian expectations for the realisation of the homeland project after the February and October Revolutions unfulfilled.

A further hope was the establishment of a *de facto* government in the South Caucasus after the October Revolution, which did not recognise Bolshevik rule. The Ottoman counter-policy of building relations with the regional government to undermine the Soviet policy vis-à-vis the region and Eastern Anatolia led to peace negotiations between the Ottoman Empire and the *de facto* Transcaucasian government. The negotiations were unsuccessful because of the insistence of the former and the refusal of the latter to accept the Brest-Litovsk Treaty as the basis of negotiations, which led to war between the two sides. The occupation by Ottoman troops of Ardahan and Batumi strengthened the insistence of the Ottoman side on the acceptance of the treaty by Transcaucasia and its declaration of independence from Russia.

Thus, although the February and October Revolutions did not bring about the realisation of the 'Armenian homeland' project, they created favourable grounds for the independence of the South Caucasus from Russia, to be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 7: Construction of the Armenian Republic

The chapter explores the process of declaration of the Armenian Republic in the South Caucasus and the efforts to extend its area to include the Eastern Anatolian territories. It analyses the discussions of the Transcaucasian Diet over Transcaucasian independence and the declaration of the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic, and the continuation of the peace negotiations with the Ottoman Empire in Batumi. The chapter examines the Transcaucasian disagreement over the Ottoman-Transcaucasian draft Treaty of Peace and Friendship submitted by the Ottoman Government in the peace negotiations and the subsequent renewal of the military developments, which led to the dissolution of the Transcaucasian Republic and the declaration of three republics in the region, one of which was the Armenian Republic.

7.1 Declaration of the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic

As in the case of the Ottoman-Transcaucasian war, the discussions around the declaration of the Transcaucasian independence on 9 (22) April 1918 revealed arguments pro and con. Thus, David Oniashvili, the Georgian Social Democrat, saw the only way out of the situation in the immediate declaration of political independence and the establishment of an independent Transcaucasian federative republic. His speech was greeted with applause by all except the *Dashnaktsutium* members.⁶⁴⁹

Mahammad Amin Rasulzada, from *Musavat*, stated that the peoples of the South Caucasus wanted to recreate a great democratic Russia, but could not achieve their aim. Russia signed peace for them and deprived the South Caucasus of Kars, Ardahan and Batumi. Concerned about the danger of Russia turning into a centralised imperialistic state, he considered the declaration of Transcaucasian independence to be necessary in order for the South Caucasian peoples to live in solidarity and friendship and benefit from the democratic basis of the Russian revolution.⁶⁵⁰

⁶⁴⁹ *Zakavkazskiy Seym'. Stenograficheskiy otchyot'. Sessiya pervaya. Zasedanie dvadtsat' vtoroe*, Tiflis, 9 April 1918, pp 6-7

⁶⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp 9-10

Grigoriy Georgadze, the Georgian Social Democrat, stated that Transcaucasia as a territorial, economic and strategic unit could not live in isolation without relationships with other states, could not enter into international-legal relations with all other states and thus could not be declared a subject of international-legal relations. In order to do this, it needed to have a certain legal aspect. Moreover, in declaring Transcaucasia as an independent state, its peoples would be united and go against the stream which tried to dismember it. The unity of its peoples was the guarantee of the successful defence of the borders of Transcaucasia. There was another view, he went on, which was pessimistic about the declaration of independence on the grounds that there was no need for independence in order to strengthen unity, defence and the fruits of revolution. However, the supporters of this view hoped that they were mistaken, and declaring and supporting independence, they would make every effort for this young independent state to take its place on the international stage.⁶⁵¹

Lev Tumanov, on behalf of those members of the Social Revolutionaries who were energetically against the declaration of the independence of Transcaucasia under existing circumstances, stated that the declaration of independence would turn it into Turkish slavery. Transcaucasia, he continued, had very small economic power to have its own orientation. Independence was declared under the considerations of the conclusion of peace with the Ottoman Empire, but an independent Transcaucasia would not get the expected peace, but would deepen its problems.⁶⁵²

In the opinion of Yuriy Semyonov from the Constitutional Democrats (*Kadets*), the Mensheviks had supported the declaration of Transcaucasia under pressure from *Musavat*. Transcaucasia, he argued, was economically dependant on Baku oil. However, he declared, the independence of Transcaucasia had to be recognised outside of Baku, as the latter had achieved 'self-determination'. By occupying Baku, he concluded, Transcaucasia would conduct the 'first imperialistic act'.⁶⁵³

Reacting to Semyonov, who referred to the occupation of Baku by Bolsheviks and Dashnaks as its 'self-determination', Rasulzada noted that the Constitutional Democrats fought against

⁶⁵¹ Ibid., pp 11-13

⁶⁵² Ibid., pp 13-16

⁶⁵³ Ibid., pp 17-22

the Bolsheviks with all their power, but now this party had changed its orientation and started seeing safety for Russia in the hands of the Bolsheviks, hoping that it would recreate a Great Russia. *Musavat*, he went on, heard similar aggressive objections to its demands on Baku from a member of the *Kadets* in Baku as well, who openly told *Musavat* representatives, 'declare your autonomy, federation, but leave Baku for us'.⁶⁵⁴ The Bolsheviks were of the same opinion as the members of the *Kadets*, declaring to *Musavat*, 'don't think of autonomous federation, since your autonomy would not be acceptable for Russian democracy and Russian bourgeoisie because of completely different considerations, and as a result, you would have not autonomy, but ruins'.⁶⁵⁵

Ivan Lordkipanidze, the Georgian Social Revolutionary, stated that the Ottomans from the West and Bolsheviks from the East were advancing. If independence was not declared, then these troops from both sides would reach Tiflis. If the Batumi-Baku road was important for the Central Powers, then let them have it and be conquered as an independent state, since it was unclear how the situation might change.⁶⁵⁶

As for the views of the Armenian members of the Diet on independence, apart from Ovannes Kachaznuni from *Dashnaktsutiun*, who declared that 'his party joins the declaration of an independent Transcaucasian state',⁶⁵⁷ no other member made a statement.

Thus, on 9 (22) April 1918, the Transcaucasian Diet declared the independence of the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic.⁶⁵⁸ The same day, Chkhenkeli, head of the new government, sent Vehib Pasha, Commander of the Third Ottoman Army, a telegram that the Transcaucasian government approved the declaration of the Transcaucasian peace delegation on the acceptance of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty and was ready to immediately dispatch the delegation to restart negotiations on the basis of this treaty in Batumi, instead of Trabzon. Moreover, Transcaucasia was declared an independent Federative Republic and the Powers had been notified of this. Subsequently, the condition the Ottoman delegation

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid., pp 53-54

⁶⁵⁵ Ibid., p 54

⁶⁵⁶ Ibid., pp 34-35

⁶⁵⁷ Ibid., p 36

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid., p 56

had mentioned in its declaration of 31 March (13 April) 1918 was implemented. Chkhenkeli also asked the Ottoman side to immediately suspend hostilities.⁶⁵⁹

On 15 (28) April 1918, Vehib Pasha sent a telegram to the Transcaucasian Republic on its recognition by the Ottoman Government and sent notification to the Central Powers about this declaration. He also added that Batumi was accepted as the location for the peace negotiations.⁶⁶⁰ The same day, Kars, the last of the three districts of Article IV of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, was occupied by the Ottomans⁶⁶¹ and thus the Ottoman Empire reached its pre-1877 Ottoman-Russian borders (see Map 11).

7.2 The Batumi peace negotiations and the dissolution of the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic

The peace conference in Batumi opened on 11 May 1918. The Ottoman delegation declared that the Ottoman side could not accept the Brest-Litovsk Treaty as the exceptional basis of the current discussions anymore. The character of the relations between the two states had changed after the Transcaucasian government decided not to approve the acceptance of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty as the basis for peace negotiations and declared war on the Ottoman Empire on 1 (14) April. The Ottoman delegation noted that their troops fought not with the Russian Army, which had left the area after the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, but with Transcaucasian troops.⁶⁶²

The Ottoman delegation presented a draft Treaty of Peace and Friendship between the Ottoman Government and the Transcaucasian Republic. The following territories had to be surrendered to the Ottoman Empire: a great part of Akhaltsikh *uezd*, Akhalkalaki and Surmali *uezds* entirely, and the parts of the *uezds* of Alexandropol (Gumru), Echmiadzin (Sardarabad), Erevan (Kamarli, Ulukhanly and Vedibasari), Sharur-Daralayaz (Sharur) and Nakhchyvan

⁶⁵⁹ *Dokumenty i materialy po vneshney politike Zakavkaz'ya i Gruzii*, dok 102, p 224

⁶⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, dok 122, p 253

⁶⁶¹ *Ibid.*, dok 123, p 255

⁶⁶² *Ibid.*, dok 131, p 314; Note: The atrocities committed by Armenians in the territories occupied by Russia and the three districts, especially in Kars, while they were retreating due to the Turkish advance, where they killed Muslim prisoners in the most horrible manner were presented as the reason for the continuation of war by the Turks (Şahin E, *Diplomasi ve sınır: Gümrü görüşmeleri ve protokolleri – 1918*, p 57).

(excluding Ordubad) through which the Alexandropol-Echmiadzin-Nakhchyvan-Julfa railway passed.⁶⁶³

All of the territories which the Ottoman delegation demanded in the draft treaty were those claimed by the Armenians under the administrative-territorial readjustment project of the Provisional Government. The Georgians also made claims to Akhaltsikh and Akhalkalaki *uezds* in the Tiflis *guberniya*. The Tartars claimed most of the territories demanded by the Ottomans in Erevan *guberniya*, since the majority of the population there was Muslim.⁶⁶⁴

On 13 May, the South Caucasian delegation presented its memorandum. According to the first point, the treaty should have been concluded not between the two countries, but rather between the Central Powers and the Transcaucasian Republic on the basis of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. In the third point it admitted that the absence of representatives of Bulgaria and Austria-Hungary at present should not be an obstacle to the conclusion of the treaty, as they could join later.⁶⁶⁵ The essence of this reply meant that the delegation, especially the Armenians and Georgians, were seeking German interference in the issue, as the territorial demands mostly concerned them, whereas the Tartars were concerned with the areas populated by Muslims in the Erevan *guberniya*, but made no objection.

On 15 May, the Ottoman delegation insisted on its position that the Brest-Litovsk Treaty could not serve as an exceptional basis for the peace negotiations. It considered that the South Caucasian delegation did not have the right to express a view on the matter of who was going to sign the peace treaty, since it depended only on the Central Powers to define which questions were common and which of them concerned only the Transcaucasian Republic. As for Austro-Hungary and Bulgaria, whether they would join the treaty or not concerned only the Central Powers.⁶⁶⁶

⁶⁶³ Şahin E, *op cit.*, p 78; Şahin E, *Trabzon ve Batum konferansları ve antlaşmaları (1917-1918)*, Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2002, p 818

⁶⁶⁴ Note: At present one third of these territories belong to Georgia (Akhaltsikh and Akhalkalaki); one third to Armenia (Alexandropol (Gumru) *uezd*, Sardarabad part of Echmiadzin *uezd*, Kamarli (Garnibasar), Ulukhanly (Zangibasar) and Vedibasar parts of Erevan *uezd*; and one third to Azerbaijan (Sharur part of Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd* and Nakhchyvan *uezd*). Only the Surmali area is part of Turkey.

⁶⁶⁵ *Dokumenty i materialy po vneshney politike Zakavkaz'ya i Gruzii*, dok 132, pp 268-269

⁶⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, dok 136, pp 272-273

In its second memorandum of 16 May, the South Caucasian delegation insisted on its position of the first memorandum. Moreover, the delegation protested against Article V of the draft treaty, defining the borders between the Ottoman Empire and Transcaucasian Republic. In their opinion, this description contradicted Article IV of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, according to which the destiny of the Batumi and Kars provinces should have been decided with the consideration of the rights and interests of these districts and neighbouring states. The South Caucasian delegation concluded by noting that the new circumstances arose because of the seizure by Ottoman troops of the territories, the occupation of which had not been envisaged by any international agreement.⁶⁶⁷

In reply, on 19 May, the Ottoman delegation repeated the earlier arguments that the Transcaucasian government did not approve the acceptance of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty by its delegation, broke up negotiations and returned home and then declared war on the Ottoman Empire. The change of circumstances gave the Ottoman Government the right to rectify the borders. As for the international status of the territories mentioned in Article IV of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, the Transcaucasian government, which was not a party to the treaty and was not an international subject at the time of the conclusion of the treaty, did not have the right to make comments on the provisions of this treaty and the manner of its implementation. It warned the South Caucasian delegation of the consequences that its insistence on making comments on the mentioned article of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty might have on the process of peace negotiations.⁶⁶⁸

In order to realise their conditions, which were stipulated in the above-mentioned draft treaty, the Ottoman troops renewed military operations on 15 May 1918 and occupied Alexandropol.⁶⁶⁹ The Transcaucasian government protested against these developments, but the Ottomans did not relent.⁶⁷⁰ Meanwhile, on 19 May, the German delegation, headed by General Otto von Lossow, proposed German mediation between the Ottoman and

⁶⁶⁷ Ibid., dok 137, pp 273-277

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid., dok 145, pp 288-290

⁶⁶⁹ Ibid., dok 134, p 271

⁶⁷⁰ Ibid., dok 134, p 271; dok 138, p 278; dok 139, pp 278-280; dok 141, pp 282-283; dok 143, pp 284-287; dok 154, pp 304-305

Transcaucasian governments, which was accepted the same day by the South Caucasians,⁶⁷¹ but rejected by the Ottomans.⁶⁷²

The Germans also tried to mediate between the Transcaucasian Republic and Soviet Russia on 14 May. The latter insisted on its participation in the Batumi peace negotiations, but it warned that this step 'did not suggest the recognition of the so-called Transcaucasian government by the Russian Government'.⁶⁷³ It added that it would not recognise the treaty signed without its participation.⁶⁷⁴ In the opinion of Georgiy Chicherin, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, the power of the Transcaucasian government was rejected by the broad popular masses, who protested against their separation from Russia. Armenian cities and villages, in his opinion, demanded a referendum and insisted that their delegates leave the Diet. He continued that many Armenian and Georgian delegates had already left. All of Eastern Transcaucasia up to Elizavetpol had declared the group of Diet delegates usurpers.⁶⁷⁵

On 22 May, the Georgian delegates met alone to discuss their next steps, seeing the only way out in the dissolution of the federation and the proclamation of Georgia's independence. The Georgian National Council, without informing the Armenians or Muslims, decided to ask von Lossow for help and began secret negotiations with him and Friedrich Werner von der Schulenburg, formerly German consul in Tiflis. As a result, on 24 May, agreement was reached between the Georgians and von Lossow.⁶⁷⁶

On 26 May, the Transcaucasian Diet met to discuss the declaration of the collapse of the Transcaucasian Republic. The proposal came from Irakli Tsereteli, the Georgian Social Democrat. His argument for the declaration of the collapse of the republic was that uniting power in Transcaucasia was weaker than separating it, which had especially developed under the influence of external factors. The approach to the borders of Transcaucasia and the subsequent invasion by the Ottoman Empire strengthened the gravitation towards the latter and towards the separation from the former among Muslims. Tsereteli accused the Muslims of

⁶⁷¹ Ibid., dok 149, pp 301-302

⁶⁷² Ibid., dok 155, p 306

⁶⁷³ Ibid., dok 146, pp 291-292

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid., p 292

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid., p 291; dok 156, pp 306-307

⁶⁷⁶ Kazemzadeh F, *op cit.*, p 115; Şahin E, *Diplomasi ve sınır: Gümrü görüşmeleri ve protokolleri – 1918*, pp 80, 82, 84-85

sending non-official delegations from the South Caucasus to oppose the official Transcaucasian delegation, arguing that the latter did not represent the will of the majority of the population. The Muslims were also blamed for the occupation of the region. In his opinion, the Transcaucasian delegation in Batumi was fully supported only by the Georgians in Kutaisi and Tiflis *guberniyas*, who were ready with all their power to resist occupation, but were left alone: the Armenians were separated from them and the Muslims left them. The fictitious existence of the Transcaucasian Republic and its delegation, he argued, deprived the Georgians of the chance of creating a state organisation capable of defending its interests. If the Georgian people wanted to defend its interests, Tsereteli concluded, it should create its own state organism and official representation.⁶⁷⁷

In reply to the question of Shafi bay Rustambayov from *Musavat* as to whether this speech reflected the desire of the Georgian people to separate from the Transcaucasian Republic, Tsereteli referred to one document: the act of the Muslim population of Akhaltsikh and Akhalkalaki *uezds* of 13 (26) April to separate from Transcaucasia, including from 'Georgia', to avoid extermination of the Muslims of these *uezds* which had been continuing since 1914 and because of the impossibility of the peaceful existence of Muslims there. The Muslim population had asked for the annexation of Akhaltsikh and part of Akhalkalaki *uezd* to the Ottoman Empire. The act had been presented to the Batumi negotiations. In the opinion of Tsereteli, *Musavat*, as a leading Muslim party, should have declared these Muslim delegations from almost all parts of Transcaucasia as impostors and traitors, which it did not do.⁶⁷⁸

As is apparent from Tsereteli's reply, the Georgian decision on separation from the Transcaucasian Republic was guided by the loss of Akhaltsikh and Akhalkalaki in addition to Batumi. Again, as usual, the Muslims of the Diet were blamed. However, in the same way, the Muslims of the Diet could have blamed the Georgian and Armenian members of the Diet for the occupation of predominantly Muslim Baku and Elizavetpol *guberniyas* by the Bolsheviks, since in the Caucasus they were headed by Bolshevik-Dashnak Shaumian and supported by 3,000-4,000 national military units of *Dashnaktsutiun*.⁶⁷⁹ Despite this occupation, the Muslim members of the Diet did not declare separation. Tsereteli did not

⁶⁷⁷ *Dokumenty i materialy po vneshney politike Zakavkaz'ya i Gruzii*, dok 161, pp 317-323

⁶⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, dok 161, pp 324-325

⁶⁷⁹ Barberowski J, *Vrag est vezde. Stalinizm na Kavkaze (perevod s nemetskogo V.T.Altukhova)*, p 131

mention what he and his party had done to prevent the occupation of Baku and Elizavetpol *guberniyas* or whether they had done anything to prevent Dashnak support of the Bolsheviks on the one hand and their ethnic cleansing of Muslim-populated areas with the intention of clearing lands for the construction of an 'Armenian homeland' on the other. In the words of Movsum Israfilbayov, member of *Hummat* and Bolshevik Commissar, cited by Barberowski, 'after the events of March [1918], the Muslim masses ultimately turned their back against Soviet rule and impatiently waited for the arrival of the Turks, who, in their opinion, could do away with the domination of the Dashnaks'.⁶⁸⁰

The territories demanded by the Ottoman Empire in the draft treaty showed that, availing itself of the situation, in addition to the territories it had lost to Russia in the 1877-1878 war (Kars, Ardahan and Batumi), it tried to regain Akhalkalaki and Akhaltsikh, which it had lost to Russia in the 1828-1829 war, and to gain strategic territories along the railways (part of the territories belonging to it in 1722-1736) and thus to strengthen its position against Britain and the Soviets. But it recognised the Transcaucasian Republic. In contrast, Soviet Russia, in the person of Chicherin, made it clear that it would not recognise the republic, protesting against its separation from Russia despite the self-determination slogan declared by the Soviets themselves. It was the Soviets who signed the Brest-Litovsk Treaty and opened the way for Ottoman demands in the region. It was the Georgians and Armenians who insisted on fighting the Ottoman troops, notwithstanding their military weakness, which did not end in the achievement of the Transcaucasian goals but in the loss of further territories. The Ottomans could use the miscalculations of the Transcaucasian side and its political and diplomatic naivety and military weakness in its favour and bring about the Transcaucasian dissolution: neither the Ottoman Empire nor the Muslims of Transcaucasian Republic could be blamed for that.

After the discussions around the Georgian proposal, it was decided to declare the dissolution of the Transcaucasian Republic. The reason was stated to be the fundamental split between the peoples of the Republic on the questions of war and peace which made the representation

⁶⁸⁰ Ibid., p 134; Note: For the account of the March-April 1918 events see Barberowski J, *op cit.*, pp 129-138

of one united authoritative power on behalf of the Republic impossible. The Powers were notified of the dissolution.⁶⁸¹

On the same day, 26 May, the independence of Georgia was declared and the Powers were notified of this act as well.⁶⁸² On 28 May 1918, the Azerbaijani Muslim National Council declared the independence of Azerbaijan with a temporary capital in Ganja, since Baku was under the occupation of Dashnaks and Bolsheviks. The collaboration of the representatives of these two parties with contradictory programmes in Baku can be explained in part by their common aim of preventing Azerbaijani rule in oil-rich and predominantly Muslim Baku. Moreover, the Armenian nationalists sought Bolshevik support in order to realise their territorial aspirations, and to secure their future against what they saw as the threat to their very existence posed by the Ottoman and Caucasian Turks. After its liberation on 15 September 1918 from the 'Centro-Caspian Dictatorship' of Social Revolutionaries and Dashnaks, which had replaced the Soviet rule in Baku on 31 July, the city became the capital of Azerbaijan.

Thus, the Georgian Social Democrats declared their first national republic, followed by the Azerbaijanis. The Armenians, the first among the three peoples in advancing their autonomy aspirations, still hesitated on declaring a republic.

7.3 Declaration of the Armenian Republic

After the Georgians and Azerbaijanis proclaimed their independence, only the Armenians were left to make their decision. On 26 May, the Armenian National Council denounced the Georgian proclamation of independence. The Armenian Social Revolutionaries and non-partisans decided against independence, as they thought that independence under the existing circumstances would subject them to the dictates of the Ottoman Empire. The Armenian Social Democrat and Populist Parties called for independence, seeing no alternative. The Dashnaks were split, the majority opposing, with some favouring independence. The same night a conference of Dashnak leaders in Tiflis agreed about independence and peace with the

⁶⁸¹ *Dokumenty i materialy po vneshney politike Zakavkaz'ya i Gruzii*, dok 162, p 330; dok 163, p 331

⁶⁸² *Ibid.*, dok 165, pp 336-338; dok 166, p 338

Ottoman Empire. The view was also shared by Ovannes Khachaznuni and Alexander Khatisian, Armenian delegates in the Batumi negotiations, who stressed that the only possibility for survival was independence and securing peace with the Ottoman Empire, no matter the price. The decision was accelerated by the declaration of independence by the Azerbaijani National Council with 'Southern and Eastern Transcaucasia' as its area,⁶⁸³ since the Armenians made claims to southern Transcaucasia as well.

The questions raised by the Armenian leaders after the Georgian and Azerbaijani declarations of independence were on whether Armenians had the capability to create their own state and keep it. Khachaznuni considered these questions to be 'absurdly needless'.⁶⁸⁴ He wrote that history had brought the Armenians to a certain situation and the Armenians had to have courage and settle it so as not to be destroyed. The Armenians had to become masters of Armenia; otherwise it could be lost forever and become '*res nullius*': even that territory which was not disputed with Armenians would be divided between Georgians, Azerbaijanis and Ottomans.⁶⁸⁵

On the evening of 29 May, *Dashnaksutiun* leaders decided on the proclamation of Armenia as a republic. On 30 May the Armenian National Council issued a statement:

In view of the dissolution of the political unity of Transcaucasia and the new situation created by the proclamation of the independence of Georgia and Azerbaijan, the Armenian National Council declares itself the supreme and only administration for the Armenian provinces. Due to certain grave circumstances, the National Council, deferring until the near future the formation of an Armenian national government, temporarily assumes all governmental functions, in order to pilot the political and administrative helm of the Armenian provinces.⁶⁸⁶

The declaration, as also pointed out by Hovannisian, made no mention of 'independence', 'republic', the rights of citizenry or relations with other states.⁶⁸⁷

⁶⁸³ Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, p 190

⁶⁸⁴ Khachaznuni Ov, *Dashnaksutyun bol'she nechego delat'!*, p 28

⁶⁸⁵ Ibid., pp 28-29

⁶⁸⁶ Hovannisian R, *op cit.*, p 191

⁶⁸⁷ Ibid.

The Ottoman ultimatum, sent to the Transcaucasian government on 26 May to give its reply within 72 hours to the Ottoman draft peace treaty of 11 May containing further territorial demands,⁶⁸⁸ now was valid for each of the Transcaucasian states and was extended until the evening of 30 May. The same day, Khatisian informed the Ottoman side of the decision of the Armenian National Council to declare itself the supreme Armenian governing body and the Armenian delegation's authorisation to conclude peace and accept the Ottoman conditions as the basis for further discussions.⁶⁸⁹

On 4 June 1918, the Treaty of Peace and Friendship between the Ottoman Imperial Government and each of the three South Caucasian republics was signed in Batumi. The treaties, among others, defined the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire with these republics (see Map 11). According to Article III of the Batumi Treaty between the Ottoman Empire and the Armenian Republic, the boundaries between Armenia and Azerbaijan would be defined by these republics and the protocol of the agreement would be communicated to the Ottoman Imperial Government.⁶⁹⁰

Only after the Batumi Treaty did the Armenian National Council publicly use the title 'Republic of Armenia',⁶⁹¹ although it should be noted that 'Republic of Armenia' was only one of the names of the newly established republic: 'Ararat Republic' or 'Erevan Republic' were most commonly used. 'Armenia' was the title with which they usually referred to the Eastern Anatolian provinces of the Ottoman Empire claimed by the Armenians. Even Bogos Nubar Pasha, representing Ottoman Armenians at the Paris Peace Conference, called the first Armenian Republic the 'Araratian Republic'.⁶⁹² This important point reveals the position of the Armenian nationalist leaders and other states regarding the notion of 'Armenia'. As for the Azerbaijan Republic, there was no disagreement among the Azerbaijani leaders over the name of the republic. However, Persia and Britain, which had political and economic interests in Persia, were concerned over the declaration of the Republic with its 'Azerbaijan' name,

⁶⁸⁸ *Iz istorii inostrannoy interventsii v Armenii v 1918 godu (Dokumenty i materialy)*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Erevanskogo Universiteta, 1970, dok 66, pp 134-135

⁶⁸⁹ Hovannisian R, *op cit.*, pp 194-195; *Dokumenty i materialy po vneshney politike Zakavkaz'ya i Gruzii*, dok 169, p 340

⁶⁹⁰ *Iz istorii inostrannoy interventsii v Armenii v 1918 godu (Dokumenty i materialy)*, dok 76, p 157

⁶⁹¹ Hovannisian R, *op cit.*, p 191

⁶⁹² Hovannisian R, *The Republic of Armenia. Volume I*, p 259

seeing this as the source of future claims to the Azerbaijan provinces of Persia on the south of the Araz River.⁶⁹³

The capital of this new republic became Erevan, conceded by Azerbaijan on 29 May 1918, since after Alexandropol⁶⁹⁴ had gone to the Ottomans, the Armenians did not have any place to serve as a capital.⁶⁹⁵

Although the Batumi treaties only defined the borders between the Ottoman Empire and the three republics, the sources have different interpretations of the area of the Armenian Republic on the basis of the Batumi Treaty between the Ottoman Empire and the Armenian Republic. According to Hovannisian in 1967, the territory of Armenia consisted of the New Bayazid *uezd* and parts of the Alexandropol, Echmiadzin and Erevan *uezds*, with a total area of about 4,400 square miles (11,396 square kilometres).⁶⁹⁶ However, in 1971, the historian added the eastern half of the Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd* to the list of the republic's territories.⁶⁹⁷

⁶⁹³ Note: Until 28 May 1918, 'Azerbaijan' had been the geographical and administrative-territorial notion describing the territories on the north and south of the Araz River. A large amount of evidence supports this argument. For example, according to the memorandum of 1864 by Keith E. Abbott, the British Consul-General in Persia, 'the country known to the Persians as Azerbaijan is divided between them and Russia, the latter Power possessing about five-eighths of the whole, which may be roughly stated to cover an area of about 80,000 square miles [about 207,200 square kilometres – I.K.], or about the size of Great Britain; 50,000 square miles [about 129,500 square kilometres – I.K.] are therefore about the extent of the division belonging to Russia, and 30,000 [about 77,700 square kilometres – I.K.] of that which remains to Persia. The Russian division is bounded on the north and north-east by the mountains of Caucasus, extending to the vicinity of Bâkou on the Caspian. On the west it has the provinces of Imeritia, Mingrelia, Gooriel, and Ahkhiska (now belonging to Russia); on the east it has the Caspian Sea, and on the south the boundary is marked by the course of the River Arrass [...] In this area are contained the following territorial divisions: – Georgia or Gootjistan, comprising Kakhetty, Kartaliny, Somekhetty, Kasakh; the Mohammedan countries of Eriwan, Nakhshewan, Karabâgh, Ghenja, Shirwan, Shekky, Shamachy, Bâkou, Koobeh, Saliân and a portion of Tâlish.' (Abbott K, 'Extracts from a Memorandum on the Country of Azerbaijan', *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, vol 8, no 6 (1863 - 1864), p 275) Among other sources see *Tadhkirat Al-Muluk: A Manual of Safavid Administration* (translated and explained by V.Minorsky), Cambridge: E.W. Memorial Trust: Spicer and Pegler, 1980, pp 112, 163; Perry J, 'Forced Migration in Iran during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *Iranian Studies*, vol 8, no 4, 1975, pp 201, 204; *Opisanie oblastey Azerbaydzhanskikh v Persii i ikh politicheskogo sostoyaniya, sdelannoe polkovnikom i kavalerom Burnashevym v Tiflise v 1786 g.*, Kursk, 1793, p 5; *Prisoedinenie Vostochnoy Armenii k Rossii. Sbornik dokumentov, tom 1 (1801-1813)*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, 1972, p 448

⁶⁹⁴ Note: According to the secret document of British Intelligence Bureau of 18 December 1917 (1 January 1918), Alexander Khatissov, who was ex-Mayor of Tiflis, had 'taken up a residence in Alexandropol, the possible centre of the future Armenian State' (CAB 24/28, p 233(5)).

⁶⁹⁵ *ARSPIHDA*, fn 970, l 1, fl 1, p 51; Note: The referenced archival document also substantiated this concession with the occupation of Alexandropol by the Ottomans.

⁶⁹⁶ Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, pp 195-196

⁶⁹⁷ Hovannisian R, *The Republic of Armenia. Volume I*, pp 37, 35

According to Enis Shahin, the area of the Armenian Republic was 10,000 square kilometres (3,860 square miles).⁶⁹⁸ The British Foreign Office memorandum of 28 October 1918 wrote that the 'Armenian Republic of Ararat' consisted of Erevan and Echmiadzin *uezds* with an area of 12,000 square kilometres (4,633 square miles)⁶⁹⁹ (see Map 8). According to Ervand Sarkisian, the republic included the New Bayazid *uezd*, excluding its south-eastern Basarkechar area and parts of the *uezds* of Erevan, Echmiadzin and Alexandropol, with a population of 321,000, including 230,000 Armenians and 80,000 Muslims.⁷⁰⁰ Firuz Kazemzadeh noted that Armenia lost Kars, Ardahan, Borchaly, parts of Echmiadzin and Sharur, as well as the larger part of Nakhchyvan with about 11,000 square kilometres (4,247 square miles).⁷⁰¹ Tadeusz Swietochowski wrote that Armenia was 'reduced to barely four thousand square miles [about 10,360 square kilometres – I.K.] of its territory'.⁷⁰² According to Armen Khachikian, Armenia lost a lot of territory and was left with an area of 12,000 square kilometres (4,633 square miles) around the Sevan Lake.⁷⁰³

These comments about the area and territory of the Armenian Republic are questionable. First, if the republic did not exist until the end of May 1918, it could not lose or gain any territory or it was impossible to define its area only on the basis of the Batumi treaties, which defined the borders of the Ottoman Empire with three republics, not the borders of these republics themselves. Second, Armenia did not have national-territorial autonomy within Russia, which would allow the discussion of its area. The administrative-territorial readjustment project of the Provisional Government of July 1917 failed, as it was never adopted.⁷⁰⁴ The discussions of the project had revealed the clashing territorial aspirations of the Armenians, Tartars and Georgians. As a result, the following administrative units in the region were declared disputed:

⁶⁹⁸ Şahin E, *Diplomasi ve sınır: Gümrü görüşmeleri ve protokolleri – 1918*, pp 98-99

⁶⁹⁹ FO 371/3301, p 466/4

⁷⁰⁰ Sarkisian E, *Ekspansionistskaya politika Osmanskoy imperii v Zakavkaz'ye nakanune i v gody pervoy mirovoy voyny*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, 1962, pp 365-366

⁷⁰¹ Kazemzadeh F, *op cit.*, pp 127, 211

⁷⁰² Swietochowski T, *Russian Azerbaijan, 1905-1920: The Shaping of National Identity in a Muslim Community*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, p 130

⁷⁰³ Khachikian A, *Istoriya Armenii (kratkiy ocherk)*, Erevan: Izdatel'stvo 'Edit Print', 2009, pp 169-170

⁷⁰⁴ Hovannisian R, *The Republic of Armenia. Volume I*, p 81

- Erevan *guberniya*
- Gazakh, Elizavetpol, Javanshir, Shusha, Garyagin (Jabrayil) and Zangazur *uezds* of Elizavetpol *guberniya*
- Akhalkalaki and Borchaly *uezds* of Tiflis *guberniya*
- Kars and Kaghyzman *okrugs* of Kars *oblast*⁷⁰⁵ (see Map 8)

As for Ardahan and Oltu *okrugs*, predominantly Muslim units, even the Provisional Government project had not included them in the projected Alexandropol *guberniya*. It had just suggested that it would be preferable to annex them to the projected Alexandropol *guberniya* rather than to the predominantly Muslim Batumi *oblast* (see Maps 8 and 9). However, as was seen from Kantemirov's speech at the Diet, the Muslims declared their self-rule in these *okrugs*.

The comments on the area of the Armenian Republic were made on the basis of the Armenian territorial claims during the *zemstvo* conferences. The claims, made with the aim of constructing compact Armenian units, were never adopted, and so never realised. As discussed earlier, the Armenian national-territorial autonomy project in the projected South Caucasian democratic republic as part of the projected Russian federation aimed at by *Dashnaktsutiun* in its second programme of 1907 was also not realised. In other words, the comments on the area of Armenian Republic made by historians or other sources are based on a particular, often debateable, interpretation of evidence.

The Armenians were dissatisfied with the Batumi Treaty for obvious reasons. One was that the Batumi Treaty deprived Armenia of the territories they claimed in the western and southern Transcaucasia: Kars *oblast* with four *okrugs* (Kars, Kaghyzman, Ardahan and Oltu), Surmali *uezd*, a great part of Akhaltsikh *uezd*, Akhalkalaki *uezd*, half of Alexandropol, Echmiadzin and Erevan *uezds*, the Sharur part of the Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd*, and two thirds of Nakhchyvan *uezd* (see Map 11). This means that Armenia had to come to terms with the failure of half of its territorial claims in the South Caucasus under the Batumi Treaty (compare Maps 11, 12 and 13). Another reason was the failure to include 'Turkish Armenia' in the area of the republic. This meant that the Armenians failed not only in adding this

⁷⁰⁵ *STsIA*, fn 2080, l 1, fl 707, p 16op; *ARDA*, fn 970, l 1, fl 87, p 1

Ottoman territory to the republic's area, but also in gaining access to the Black Sea, thus being deprived of its economic benefits. The Armenians did not want Armenia to be surrounded by the Muslim Ottoman Empire and Azerbaijan. Tsarist Russia, Provisional Government and Dashnak-Bolshevik collaborators had tried their best to cut the connection between the Muslims of South Caucasus and the Ottoman Empire by settling Christian Armenians on the border and cleansing Muslims from the area, but could not fully achieve their aims. By the time Armenia was declared a republic, the South Caucasian and Ottoman Muslims still had common borders, something not desired by Armenia.

Despite their mutual hatred, the Ottoman Empire and the first Armenian Republic concluded a peace treaty and thus the Ottoman Empire became the first country which recognised Armenia as an independent state. Neither Germany nor Soviet Russia wanted to recognise either Armenia or Azerbaijan. This became much clearer with Article 13 of the Supplementary Treaty to the Brest-Litovsk Treaty of Peace between Soviet Russia and the Central Powers, signed in Berlin on 27 August 1918, and the ratifications exchanged on 6 September 1918. With this treaty, Germany, which had *de facto* recognised Georgia on 28 May 1918,⁷⁰⁶ would take measures to prevent the military forces of any third power in the Caucasus overstepping the lines between the Kuban and Kur Rivers. In return Russia would supply Germany with Baku oil.⁷⁰⁷ The conclusion of this treaty meant that Germany considered both Armenia and Azerbaijan as being in the Bolshevik zone of influence.

After the supplementary treaty, Enver Pasha confidentially informed Armenian delegates in Istanbul that if Armenia became an Ottoman ally against Britain and Russia and entered the Azerbaijani-Armenian-Ottoman confederation, it would help them in their territorial problems with Georgia and Azerbaijan and even extend the Armenian borders to the western border of Erevan *guberniya*. According to Hovannisian, on the confederation issue 'the Armenian delegates remained as noncommittal as the occasion would permit'.⁷⁰⁸

The Ottoman recognition of Armenia and Azerbaijan continued to disturb Soviet Russia, as also becomes clear from the third point of the draft protocol between the Ottoman Empire and

⁷⁰⁶ Kazemzadeh F, *op cit.*, pp 122-123

⁷⁰⁷ Wheeler-Bennett J, *op cit.*, pp 427, 433

⁷⁰⁸ Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, p 236

Germany, signed on 23 September in Berlin. According to this point, if a conflict arose between Soviet Russia and the Ottoman Empire because of the Ottoman recognition of Armenia and Azerbaijan, Germany would try to settle the dispute. The Ottoman Government agreed to withdraw all military units from Azerbaijan and Armenia, after which Germany would try to induce the Soviets to waive their objection to Ottoman recognition of these republics.⁷⁰⁹

After Berlin, Talat Pasha told the Armenian delegates that his government was prepared to grant the Armenians more than they had requested during the preceding months. In his letter to Amazasp Ohanjanian in Berlin, Khatisian mentioned that ‘the change in Turkish heart was undoubtedly prompted by the unfavourable course of the war’.⁷¹⁰ However, he considered that ‘even at this late date, if the Ottomans were to propose a workable agreement, he would favour immediate acceptance. To wait for the Western allies to establish a viable Armenian state would be foolish [...] We must create our own government and effect a *fait accompli*, and this must be done with the assistance of Turkey.’⁷¹¹

Although these words did not imply any appreciation of the Ottoman Empire, they reflected one truth: if the Soviets invaded the South Caucasus before the Ottomans, there would be no Armenia, no Georgia and no Azerbaijan either in 1918 or today. It was the Ottoman insistence on the declaration of South Caucasian independence and separation from Russia and the following Ottoman invasions that, irrespective of Ottoman intentions, resulted in three independent republics in the region. Whether sincere or not, the following sentences of Avetis Aharonian, Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia in Istanbul, on 6 September 1918, in the audience of Mehmet the Sixth, the new Ottoman Sultan, reflected the truth: ‘it was the Ottoman Government which first spoke out on the creation of independent Armenia and it was the first which recognised it’.⁷¹²

The Ottoman Government prevented the construction of Armenian autonomy or state in the Ottoman territories and it achieved the return of all the Ottoman territories occupied by Russia

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid., p 225

⁷¹⁰ Ibid., p 236

⁷¹¹ Ibid., pp 236-237

⁷¹² Gürün K, *Ermeni dosyası*, p 307

in the South Caucasus during the nineteenth century, although Akhalkalaki, Akhaltsikh and most of Batumi *okrug* were taken back under the Kars Treaty of 1921 and became part of Georgia (see Map 15). The Ottoman Government was not against the Armenian state anywhere beyond its boundaries, provided this state did not cause problems for it in the future. But the Armenian leaders were of the opinion that the area left for the Armenian Republic under the Batumi Treaty was too small and would be the basis of these problems.⁷¹³

Armenia, alongside Azerbaijan and Georgia, sent representatives to Istanbul on the invitation of the Ottoman Government to discuss the territorial issues at a conference to be held between the South Caucasian republics and the four Central Powers.⁷¹⁴ Not being able to obtain protection from Germany, Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria in Istanbul, the Armenian delegates again turned to the Ottoman Government. The delegation wanted 'to win German recognition of the Republic' through Ottoman intercession.⁷¹⁵ But the more interesting point among the goals of the Armenian delegation was its territorial demands, which now shifted against its neighbours in the South Caucasus: Azerbaijan and Georgia. The Armenian delegation strove to convince the *Ittihadist* leaders that 'without a viable Armenia, there would be neither peace nor justice in Transcaucasia and that, therefore, certain lands disputed with Azerbaijan and Georgia should, with Ottoman support, be awarded to Armenia'.⁷¹⁶

7.4 Failure of the extension of the area of the Armenian Republic to Eastern Anatolia

Although the Brest-Litovsk Treaty deprived Armenians of hope of the construction of the 'Armenian homeland' in Eastern Anatolia, Article 24 of the Mudros Armistice between the Ottoman Empire and the Allied Powers of 30 October 1918 renewed their expectations, since according to it, in case of disorder in the six provinces, the Allies would reserve the right to

⁷¹³ Hovannisian R, *op cit.*, pp 218, 195-196

⁷¹⁴ Topchibashev A, *Memorandum pred'yavlenniy nakhodyashchimsya v Konstantinopole pochyotnym predstavityam derzhav Antanty chlenom pravitel'stva Azerbaydzhanskoy Respubliki, chrezvychaynym ministrom-poslannikom pri pravitel'stvakh Blistatel'noy Porty, Armenii i Gruzii Ali Mardanbekom Topchibashevym (noyabr' 1918)*, Baku: Izdatel'stvo 'Azerbaydzhan', 1993, pp 19-20, 35-36; Hovannisian R, *op cit.*, p 230

⁷¹⁵ Hovannisian R, *op cit.*, p 231

⁷¹⁶ Ibid.

occupy any part of them.⁷¹⁷ After the victory of the Allied Powers, the Armenian leaders were less concerned by the fact that the Armenians represented a significant minority in the projected area, and hoped that this problem could be solved by securing a mandate from the Great Powers.

Thus, Avetis Aharonian, Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, thought that with a mandate over 'united Armenia' a great number of Armenians would return from all over the world. With this expected influx, Armenia's population would number over two million, which would almost give them a majority even at the present time.⁷¹⁸

According to Bogos Nubar Pasha, Head of the Armenian National Delegation, representing Ottoman Armenians, at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, after this war the Armenians would be 'more numerous than the Turks and even than the Turks and Kurds combined. In fact, although the losses of the Armenians were very great, those of the Turks in the course of the war have not been less. A German report gives 2.5 million as the total losses of the Turks by war, epidemic and famine [...] If, therefore, it is admitted that the Turkish population has at least sustained equally heavy losses, the Armenians are still in the majority after the war, as they were before it. But this majority will be still greater when the Armenian Republic of the Caucasus is united to Turkish Armenia to form one State, as both the Armenians of the Caucasus and those of Turkey ardently desire.'⁷¹⁹

Vahan Cardashian, founder of the American Committee of the Independence of Armenia, gave another view when substantiating his cause for the construction of Armenia under the US mandate in 1920. He wrote that there were 1,293,000 Armenians in 'Russian Armenia'; three-quarters of a million native Armenians in 'Turkish Armenia'; 494,000 Armenians in Georgia and Azerbaijan, 100,000 Armenians in 'Persian Armenia', and about half a million Armenians in other regions, the great majority of whom were ready to migrate to Armenia

⁷¹⁷ Erim N, *Devletlerarası hukuku ve siyasi tarih metinleri*, cilt I (Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Andlaşmaları), Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1953, p 524; Note: The English text brought by Hovannisian referred to 'six Armenian vilayets' (Hovannisian R, *op cit.*, p 239).

⁷¹⁸ FO 608/78, pp 26-27

⁷¹⁹ *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Paris Peace Conference, 1919*. Volume IV, pp 154-155

‘provided that Armenia include her natural boundaries’.⁷²⁰ Thus, the question of population would be adjusted by ‘repatriation, emigration and immigration. Armenians will immigrate into Armenia and a great many Turks will migrate to Anatolia’. In his estimations, ‘there will be in the proposed Armenian State a minimum of two and a half million Armenians and a maximum of one million Moslems, out of a population of about four and a half millions’.⁷²¹

Despite the inaccurate information about the Armenian majority in the claimed area before the war in the speech of Bogos Nubar Pasha, which contradicted even the Armenian Istanbul Patriarchate statistics, the quoted excerpts from the speeches of the Armenian nationalist leaders show that in spite of the Armenian minority distribution in the claimed area, which significantly decreased after 1915, the Armenian leaders were still optimistic about the extension of the area of the Armenian Republic to include Eastern Anatolia, substantiating it with the decrease of the Muslim population and the hope of Allied support.

After the Mudros Armistice, the Great Powers also started to closely consider the extension of the Armenian Republic to include Eastern Anatolia. However, for them, the population issue was problematic. In the opinion of Dr Caleb Gates, President of Robert College (now Boghazichi University) in Istanbul (1903-1932), which he expressed in December 1918, it would be difficult to organise a state which would be Armenian in government, while the majority of the population were Muslims. He had two solutions for this project: either transfer the Muslim population from the Armenian state into the Muslim state so as to make the population of the Armenian state as homogenous as possible, realised through an exchange system where Armenians living in the Muslim state gave up their property to Muslims coming from the Armenian state and received in exchange the property of these Muslims; or have an Armenian state thoroughly controlled by some great power, so that the people governed would feel themselves subject to that power rather than to the Armenians. In his opinion, Armenians would certainly prosper, and gain the ascendancy under such conditions, and probably the Muslims would gradually relocate into the Muslim state.⁷²²

⁷²⁰ FO 371/4156, p 44

⁷²¹ Ibid.

⁷²² FO 608/77, pp 531-532

The British High Commissioner in Istanbul in May 1919 was sceptical about the success of this project. He questioned whether all Armenians would wish to move to a new Armenia; whether it would be in their own interests to do so; and whether urban Armenians would wish to move to an unknown land to enter into an agricultural life to which they were wholly unsuited. However, he mentioned that very large number of Armenians, including the Istanbul Armenian Patriarch, looked forward to the foundation of an independent Armenia under a Mandatory, in which case the US seemed eminently suited to receive the Mandate.⁷²³ The US Senate refused to accept a Mandate for Armenia on 31 May 1920.⁷²⁴ It did not want to be involved in the Armenian issue, except for the US President Woodrow Wilson's arbitration on the delimitation of the borders between Armenia and Turkey, which would be stipulated in the Sevres Peace Treaty of 10 August 1920 between Turkey and the Allied Powers. According to this treaty, Turkey recognised Armenia as a free and independent State⁷²⁵ and based on this, the borders between the two countries were defined by Wilson on 22 November 1920 in the provinces of Erzurum, Trabzon, Van and Bitlis with access to the Black Sea⁷²⁶ (see Map 14).

On 26 November 1920, Armenia issued a declaration rejecting the Sevres Treaty, a Turkish prerequisite for the start of the peace negotiations. The reason for this change was that, with the aim of occupying the territories reflected in the Sevres Treaty, Armenia had started a large-scale military campaign against the Turks and despite Allied support it was defeated and had to appeal to the Turkish Command with the proposal to start peace negotiations. On 18 November, when the Armenian Government had started these peace negotiations with Kemalists, Alexander Khatisian (who was appointed by the Armenian Government to negotiate peace with the Kemalists), in his meeting with the British Colonel, Claude Stokes, the British political officer at Baku, stated that the Armenian Government realised that it was 'obliged to make peace either with the Turks or the Bolsheviks. It would be preferable to make peace with the Turks and he inclined to the belief that His Majesty's Government would

⁷²³ Ibid., p 497

⁷²⁴ *League of Nations: Application by the Armenian Republic for Admission to the League. Memorandum by the Secretary-General*, p 3

⁷²⁵ *Peace Treaties: Various Treaties and Agreements signed between the Allied and Associated Powers and the Serb-Croat-Slovene State, Roumania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Turkey*, pp 347-348

⁷²⁶ *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Paris Peace Conference, 1920. Volume III*, Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1936, pp 795-804

also prefer this. It considered such a peace feasible as Armenia would be now content with much less territory than was accorded to her by the Peace Treaty with Turkey.’⁷²⁷

The peace negotiations were concluded, apparently with the approval of the British Government, with the signing of the Gumru (Alexandropol) Treaty between Kemalist Turkey and the Armenian Republic on 2 December 1920, represented by Dashnak Armenia’s representatives headed by former premier, Khatisian. Under this treaty, Dashnak Armenia declared the Sevres Treaty annulled.⁷²⁸ On 24 July 1923, the Sevres Treaty, which was not ratified, was replaced by the Lausanne Treaty, due to the military and diplomatic achievements of the Kemalists. The treaty made no mention of Armenia and the above-mentioned provinces were left to Turkey.

Conclusion

The failure of Transcaucasia in the war with the Ottoman Empire was instrumental in its acceptance of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, the declaration of its independence from Russia in the form of the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic and the subsequent restoration of peace negotiations in Batumi. In the Batumi negotiations, the aim of the Ottoman Government was to make use of the new situation to restore its territories lost to Russia in the South Caucasus in the early nineteenth century, as well as to bring the strategic areas containing the regional railways under its control to strengthen its position against Britain and Soviet Russia. The new territorial claims of the Ottoman Empire combined with the Soviet danger and internal disagreements within the Transcaucasian Republic accelerated its dissolution and the declaration of the Georgian and Azerbaijan Republics, leaving the Armenian leaders with no alternative but to declare the Armenian Republic.

The estimations provided by different sources for the territorial extent of the Armenian Republic based on the Batumi treaties are questionable, since the treaties defined the borders

⁷²⁷ Butler R and Bury J (ed.), *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939. First Series, Volume XII*, London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1962, doc 622, pp 648-649

⁷²⁸ Imranli K, *Sozdanie armyanskogo gosudarstva na Kavkaze: Istoki i posledstviya*, Moscow: Nauchno-izdatel’skiy tsentr ‘Ladomir’, 2006, pp 145-146; the source cited by Imranli K: *Velikaya Oktyabr’skaya sotsialisticheskaya revolyutsiya i pobeda sovetskoy vlasti v Armenii (Sbornik dokumentov)*, Erevan: Aypetrat, 1957, dok 294, pp 438-439; *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’nin anlaşmaları*, cilt 1, Ankara: Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Dışişleri Bakanlığı yayınları, 1992, pp 3-4

of the South Caucasian republics with the Ottoman Empire, not the borders of these republics. Despite the mutual Ottoman-Armenian hatred and the Armenian dissatisfaction with the Batumi Treaty, it was the Ottoman Government which first recognised Armenia as an independent state. It was not recognised by Soviet Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary or Bulgaria. It was again the Ottoman Government, with the help of which the Armenian delegation in Istanbul hoped to expand in the South Caucasus, getting 'certain lands disputed with Azerbaijan and Georgia'.

After failing to gain anything from the 1917 Russian revolutions, another hope emerged for the Armenians when the Allied Powers signed the Mudros Armistice and the Sevres Treaty. According to the latter, Armenia was recognised as a free and independent state by Turkey, and the US President Wilson defined the borders between them in the provinces of Erzurum, Trabzon, Van and Bitlis with access to the Black Sea. However, with the failure in the war against Turkey in 1920, the Armenian Republic was compelled to give up the Sevres Treaty and the latter was replaced by the Lausanne Treaty in 1923, which made no mention of Armenia: the above-mentioned provinces were left to Turkey.

Unlike Zionism, which was considered by Gellner and Smith as a successful diaspora nationalism⁷²⁹ and ended in the construction of Israel in 1948 in its 'historical homeland', the Armenian diaspora nationalism did not result in the construction of an Armenian autonomy or state in the 'historical homeland' in Eastern Anatolia. The reasons were the 1915 events and the absence of a Great Power mandate. However, the declaration of the Armenian Republic in the South Caucasus proved that diaspora nationalism can end in the declaration of a state in the diaspora as well, if there is strong external power support.

⁷²⁹ Gellner E, *Nations and Nationalism* (introduction by John Breuilly – 2nd ed.), p 103; Smith A, *Myths and Memories of the Nation*, p 220

Part 3

Chapter 8

Case study: Garabagh

The chapter examines the Armenian efforts to include Garabagh in Armenia and their results. It explores the Armenian nationalist intentions of administrative-territorial redrawing of the Elizavetpol *guberniya* with the aim of constructing ethnic Armenian units. It analyses ethnic, historical, economic, geographical and security arguments the Armenian Government submitted to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 to substantiate its vision of territorial delimitation between Armenia and Azerbaijan regarding Garabagh. The chapter also considers the position of the Azerbaijan Republic, the Ottoman Empire, the Allied Powers and Bolshevik Russia on the political status of Garabagh and assesses the impact of their stance on the settlement of the conflict.

It should be noted that ‘Garabagh’ refers to Mountainous Garabagh and Zangazur.⁷³⁰

8.1 Historical background

The first serious attempts to territorise various ethnic groups in the South Caucasus were made during the conferences on the introduction of *zemstvo* (local administrative council) into the region in 1905 and 1909 on the initiative of Illarion Vorontsov-Dashkov, Caucasian Viceroy, which did not yield any results.⁷³¹ The issue became pressing in March 1917 after the establishment of the Provisional Government.⁷³² The government’s aim was at least to issue a decree on the *zemstvo* reforms in the South Caucasus before the opening of the Constituent Assembly.⁷³³

⁷³⁰ Note: These territories had been part of the Garabagh khanate until 1822, when it was renamed the Garabagh province (see Maps 6 and 7), and in 1840 turned into the Shusha *uezd* of the Caspian *oblast* of the Russian Empire (Mil’man A, *Politicheskiy stroy Azerbaydzhana v XIX – nachale XX vv.*, Baku: Azər nəşr, 1966, pp 67, 113). On the basis of the administrative changes in 1868 and 1873, Garabagh was divided into four *uezds*: Javanshir, Jabrayil (Garyagin) and Shusha, which included Mountainous Garabagh, and Zangazur *uezd* of the Elizavetpol *guberniya* (see Maps 8 and 15).

⁷³¹ Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, p 15

⁷³² *STsIA*, fn 2080, l 1, fl 707, pp 4-4op

⁷³³ *Ibid.*, p 4op

Taking advantage of the presence of representatives of the peoples and political parties of the South Caucasus at the Conference on the elaboration of the draft act on the elections to the Constituent Assembly in Petrograd, the Russian Interior Ministry organised a Special Conference. It raised the following questions: 1) whether it was necessary to adopt local administration and self-administration reforms in the Caucasus within the existing administrative division of the region or whether it was necessary to make preliminary administrative readjustment; 2) if the readjustment was necessary, in which form should it be realised.⁷³⁴

For the Interior Ministry, the idea of introducing self-administration in the South Caucasus necessitated the 'correct' administrative division of the region, since the creation of ethnically and culturally compact administrative units would facilitate better administration.⁷³⁵ The attention of the Ministry was first drawn to the areas of the region populated by Armenians and Tartars (Azerbaijanis).⁷³⁶ Two of the administrative units considered for administrative-territorial redrawing were Elizavetpol and Erevan *guberniyas* (see Map 8). The current section considers the discussions on Elizavetpol *guberniya*, since it included the Garabagh region. The *zemstvo* issues with regard to Erevan *guberniya* will be considered in the next chapter on the Nakhchivan case.

According to the Interior Ministry report of 21 July 1917, the mountainous (south-western) part of Elizavetpol *guberniya* was populated mainly by 419,000 Armenians, whereas its plain valleys in the Kur and Araz Rivers were dominated by 797,000 Muslims. Both peoples were present in every *uezd*, however, the Armenians in the *guberniya* formed a minority in all *uezds* except for Shusha, where they constituted a small majority.⁷³⁷ The Ministerial report did not indicate the source of these population data. Comparison of the Interior Ministry data with those of the Russian official statistics in *Kavkazskiy kalendar'* (Caucasian Calendar), prepared for 1916, reveals that the Armenians in the latter source also constituted a small majority only in one *uezd* out of eight in Elizavetpol *guberniya* (see Annex I and Maps 8 and 12).

⁷³⁴ Ibid., p 6

⁷³⁵ Ibid., pp 6-60p

⁷³⁶ Ibid.

⁷³⁷ Ibid., p 60p

The Ministry proposed to divide the Elizavetpol *guberniya* into two separate *guberniyas*: Gandzak (Armenianised form of ‘Ganja’, renamed Elizavetpol in 1804⁷³⁸) *guberniya* with the centre in the Armenian part of the Elizavetpol town (Ganja town until Russian occupation in 1804) with up to 20,000 people and Elizavetpol *guberniya* with the centre in the Muslim part of the Elizavetpol town with up to 40,000 inhabitants⁷³⁹ (see Map 9). According to the Elizavetpol *uezd* administration, in 1916, the number of Muslims (Azerbaijanis) of the town was 38,158 (excluding 84 Kurds and 89 Dagestanis),⁷⁴⁰ with 12,125 Armenians.⁷⁴¹ Comparison of the Ministerial figures with the 1916 statistics reveals that although the number of Muslims of the town is closer, changing from 38,158 to 40,000, the number of Armenians differs by about 7,800, rising from 12,125 to 20,000 within one year. This difference, in no way a result of natural growth, can be explained by one of the following suggestions: one of the sources is not reliable or settlement of the Armenians in the town.

According to the Ministerial report, the projected administrative readjustment of the Elizavetpol *guberniya* would give predominance to Muslims in the projected Elizavetpol *guberniya* and Armenians in the projected Gandzak *guberniya*⁷⁴² (see Map 9). Before its submission for the consideration of the Provisional Government, the project was submitted to the Special Transcaucasian Committee.⁷⁴³ During its 14-15 October 1917 *zemstvo* sessions, the Committee discussed the official readjustment project and another such project advocated by the Muslim delegates (see Table 8.3 and Map 10).

⁷³⁸ Note: ‘Gandzak’ was the Armenianised form of ‘Ganja’, which had been the name of the town from the Middle Ages up until the occupation of Ganja khanate by Russia in 1804, when its name was changed to Elizavetpol. The town regained its name in 1918, but in 1935 it was re-changed to Kirovabad. In 1991, when Azerbaijan restored its independence, the historical name of the city was returned, and is still called ‘Ganja’. The name in translation from Persian means ‘treasure’.

⁷³⁹ *STsIA*, fn 2080, 1 1, fl 707, pp 7op-8op

⁷⁴⁰ *Kavkazskiy kalendar’ na 1917 god*, Tiflis: Tipografiya Kantselyarii Namestnika Y.I.V. na Kavkaze, 1916, pp 192-193

⁷⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p 191

⁷⁴² *Ibid.*, p 11

⁷⁴³ *Ibid.*, p 5op

Table 8.1 Population distribution in the officially projected Gandzak *guberniya*⁷⁴⁴

Uezds	Armenians	Muslims	Others	Total
<i>Karavansaray</i>	61,000 – 83%	9,000 – 11%	4,000 – 5%	74,000
<i>Gandzak</i>	67,000 – 59%	29,000 – 25%	18,000 – 16%	114,000
<i>Shusha</i>	150,000 – 70%	58,000 – 27%	5,000 – 3%	213,000
<i>Zangazur</i>	88,000 – 69%	38,000 – 30%	1,000 – 1%	127,000
	366,000 – 70%	134,000 – 25%	28,000 – 5%	528,000

Table 8.2 Population distribution in the officially projected Elizavetpol *guberniya*⁷⁴⁵

Uezds	Armenians	Muslims	Others	Total
<i>Nukha</i>	40,000 – 18%	163,000 – 74%	17,000 – 8%	220,000
<i>Elizavetpol</i>	6,000 – 4%	156,000 – 91%	9,000 – 5%	171,000
<i>Barda</i>	3,000 – 3%	92,000 – 97%	4,000 – 3%	95,000
<i>Jabrayil (Garyagin)</i>	–	119,000 – 97%	4,000 – 3%	123,000
<i>Arash</i>	4,000 – 5%	70,000 – 95%	–	74,000
<i>Gazakh</i>	–	63,000 – 98%	1,000 – 2%	64,000
	53,000 – 7%	663,000 – 89%	31,000 – 4%	747,000

⁷⁴⁴ *STsIA*, fn 2080, l 1, fl 707, p 9; Note: Gandzak *guberniya* would include: 1) part of Gazakh *uezd*, which would be called Karavansaray *uezd* with fifteen village communities of Gazakh *uezd* (parts of I, II, III and IV *uchastoks*): Baranin, Bashkand, Kulaly, Tatlykand, Tovuzgala, Old Dilijan, New Dilijan, Garagoyunlu, Kotkand, Askipara, Mikhaylovsk, Chambarak, Uzuntala, Karavansaray and Garadash; 2) part of Elizavetpol *uezd*, which would include the following village communities of Elizavetpol *uezd*: the second *uchastok* without Pirijan village community, the third *uchastok* without Goranboy-Ahmadli, Zeyva and Mingachevir village communities, Frezov village community, the fourth *uchastok* and fifth *uchastok* (Elenin, Mikhaylov, Bayan, Damzhalan, Zaylik, Dastafur, Aghjakand, Borisy, Erkech, Chardakhly, Frezov, Gadabay, Slavyansk, Miskinli, Garamurad (Ayrum), Novosaratovsk), as well as the right bank of Elizavetpol town; 3) Shusha *uezd* would contain parts of Shusha *uezd*: the first *uchastok* of Shusha *uezd*, excluding Gulably village community, the second *uchastok* without Skobolev and Gajar village communities and Arpaduz village and the Aghoghlan valley of Arpaduz village community; parts of Javanshir *uezd*: the third *uchastok* of the same *uezd* without Maraghaly village community and Talysh village community from the fifth *uchastok*; parts of the Zangazur *uezd*: the village communities from the second *uchastok* (part of Jijimli, namely Gushchular, Mazutlu, Safian, Malik-payasy and Baghyrbayli, Galadarasi, Hajysamly); and parts of Jabrayil *uezd* (village communities of Hadrut, Edilli and Arakul); 4) Zangazur *uezd* would consist of the rest of this *uezd* excluding the village communities of Temir-Muskanli, Dondarly, Shykhoven, Khojahan, Mollaburhan and Raband (*STsIA*, fn 2080, l 1, fl 707, pp 7op-8op).

⁷⁴⁵ *STsIA*, fn 2080, l 1, fl 707, p 9; Note: Elizavetpol *guberniya* would constitute: 1) Nukha *uezd* with the following village communities of Arash *uezd* annexed to it: Hajaly, Baylarkand, Gayabashy and Boyuk Soyudlu; 2) The village communities which were not included in Gandzak *uezd* would form Elizavetpol *uezd*; 3) Barda *uezd* would contain the village communities of Javanshir *uezd* and part of Shusha *uezd* which were not included in Shusha *uezd* (Aghdam, Goytapa, Zangishaly, Giyasly, Garakhanly, Saryjaly-Guzanly, Shykhlar-Garvand, Novruzlu, Hindarkh, Lambaran and Gulably); 4) Garyagin *uezd* would consist of the village communities of Garyagin and Shusha *uezds* which were not included in Shusha *uezd* (Skobelev, Afatli, Khojavand, Garadaghy, Khalfali and Gajar) with the annexation of six village communities of the Zangazur *uezd* which were not included in Gandzak *guberniya*; 5) Arash *uezd* would constitute the village communities of Arash *uezd* which were not included in the Nukha *uezd*; 6) Gazakh *uezd* would constitute the village communities of Gazakh *uezd* which were not included in Karavansaray *uezd* (*STsIA*, fn 2080, l 1, fl 707, pp 7op, 8op-9).

Table 8.3 Population distribution in the counter-project advocated by the Muslims on the readjustment of the Elizavetpol *guberniya*⁷⁴⁶

Cantons	Armenians	Turco-Tartars	Others	Total
<i>Karavansaray</i>	55,702 – 93.5%	3,189 – 5.3%	673 – 1.2%	59,564
<i>Gandzak</i>	68,923 – 80.3%	9,054 – 10.5%	7,823 – 9.2%	85,800
<i>Shusha</i>	109,958 – 77.4%	29,190 – 20.5%	2,879 – 2.1%	142,027
<i>Jabrayil (Garyagin)</i>	–	45,403 – 99.99 %	6 – 0.01 %	45,409
<i>Gazakh</i>	2,530 – 4.3%	54,636 – 94.3%	836 – 1.4%	58,002
<i>Elizavetpol</i>	11,638 – 9.9%	104,934 – 88.7%	1,758 – 1.4%	118,330
<i>Aghdam</i>	486 – 0.6%	74,826 – 99.4%	–	75,312
<i>Arash</i>	16,631 – 27%	44,626 – 72.6%	255 – 0.4%	61,512
<i>Nukha</i>	17,230 – 13%	104,871 – 81.2%	7,062 – 5.5%	129,163
<i>Upper Gazakh</i>	3,317 – 3.3%	36,339 – 78.3%	5,906 – 13%	45,562
<i>Javanshir</i>	4,661 – 13.2%	30,238 – 85.6%	495 – 1.2%	35,394
<i>Zangazur</i>	83,129 – 52.9%	74,454 – 46.9%	1,072 – 0.2%	158,755

The discussions revealed different positions. According to the journal of the session of 15 October, for the Armenian Arsham Khondkarian (Social-Revolutionary), the readjustment should have been a preliminary condition for the introduction of *zemstvo* into the Eastern Transcaucasia.⁷⁴⁷ The Tartar Akbar agha Sheykh-ul-Islamov (*Hummat*) opposed the position of Gazar Ter-Gazarian (Social Democrat), who favoured the official project. Sheykh-ul-Islamov insisted on the organisation of *volosts* (unity of village communities or cantons), which was supported by the Tartar Khudadat bay Malik-Aslanov (non-partisan). Sheykh-ul-Islamov considered that the decision of the session should be limited to whether the redivision was necessary. Malik-Aslanov was also against the redivision as a precondition for the introduction of *zemstvo*.⁷⁴⁸

The Muslims opposed the Armenian-favoured official project because it would replace the existing four Muslim-dominated *uezds* in the border between Erevan and Elizavetpol *guberniyas* with four projected Armenian-dominated *uezds*: Gazakh, Elizavetpol, Javanshir and Zangazur *uezds* with Muslim majority would be replaced with Karavansaray, Gandzak, Shusha and Zangazur *uezds* with Armenian majority (compare Maps 8 and 9). The Muslim delegates aimed to prevent this project with their counter-project giving two Muslim-dominated (Upper Gazakh and Javanshir) and one Armenian-dominated (Karavansaray) canton in the border between Elizavetpol and Erevan *guberniyas*, while Zangazur canton, also

⁷⁴⁶ ARDA, fn 970, l 1, fl 257, pp 4-5

⁷⁴⁷ Ibid., p 14op

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid., pp 14op-15

on the border of the two *guberniyas*, would have almost equal Muslim and Armenian populations⁷⁴⁹ (compare Map 10 with 8 and 9).

Comparison of the official project favoured by the Armenians and the canton project favoured by the Muslims as related to Garabagh shows that in the former, the Armenians would have had two predominantly Armenian *uezds* (Shusha and Zangazur) in Garabagh, whereas in the latter they would have only Shusha canton with a significant Armenian majority in Garabagh, since neither Armenians nor Muslims would be ethnically dominant in Zangazur canton (compare Maps 9 and 10). Even if both projects were realised, neither Shusha *uezd* of the Armenian-favoured official project, with 70% of its population, nor Shusha canton of the Muslim-favoured canton project, with 77.4% of its population, would have been fully ethnically homogenous. The realisation of any of the projects would not create a compact Armenian area in the South Caucasus either, as its realisation would need to minimise the solid Muslim mass in the area between the Armenians of Elizavetpol and Erevan *guberniyas* (see Map 12).

Armenian support for the official project was influenced by the fact that it corresponded to the plan adopted by the regional meeting of *Dashnaktsutun* at the end of 1916 and suggested, like the official project, the formation of three Armenian provinces: Gandzak,

⁷⁴⁹ Note: The proposed redivision of Elizavetpol *guberniya* into cantons would create three more or less compact Armenian units with a total of 287,391 people in the projected Karavansaray, Gandzak and Shusha cantons (highlighted in red on Table 8.3 and see Map 10) with 83.5% Armenians and 12.2% Muslims; eight more or less compact Muslim units with a total of 568,684 people in the projected Jabrayil, Gazakh, Elizavetpol, Aghdam, Arash, Nukha, Upper Gazakh and Javanshir cantons (highlighted in blue on Table 8.3 and see Map 10) with 9.9% Armenians and 87.2% Muslims; and Zangazur canton (highlighted in green on Table 8.3 and see Map 10) with a total of 158,755 people with a mixed population of 52.9% Armenians and 46.9% Muslims. The statistical data on Table 8.3 was noted by the referred source, to be for 1914, according to which the total population of official Elizavetpol *guberniya* was 1,014,568 with 374,205 Armenians and 611,866 Tartars, which contradicted the official data of 1914. According to the official statistics in the *Kavkazskiy kalendar'*, the total population of the *guberniya* was 1,165,836 with 396,815 Armenians and 700,590 Muslims (*Kavkazskiy kalendar' na 1915 god*, Tiflis: Tipografiya Kantselyarii Namestnika Y.I.V. na Kavkaze, 1914, pp 227-229). Moreover, the figures on the Zangazur *uezd* also do not correspond to the official data in the *Kavkazskiy kalendar'*, according to which in 1914 the total population of the *uezd* was 209,951 with 89,906 Armenians and 118, 146 Muslims (Ibid., pp 231-233). This means that the number of Muslims in the Zangazur canton should have been more than the number of Armenians, which allows classification not as 'mixed', but with Muslim predominance. Although the data in 1914 is based on religion and confession and the division in the projected canton readjustment statistical table is ethnic, in the canton project the terms 'Tartar' and 'Muslim' were used interchangeably. It should be admitted that the referred source itself noted the absence of reliable statistic data, which contradicted each other and made the study of the administrative readjustment issue even more complicated (*ARDA*, fn 970, l 1, fl 257, p 1).

Alexandropol⁷⁵⁰ and Erevan (see Map 9). These provinces encompassed the area of a large South Caucasian Armenian province of fifteen counties, ten with absolute Armenian majority, which was suggested by Stepan Kamsarakan, a non-partisan. The territory of the suggested Armenian province would include Erevan *guberniya*, southern parts of Tiflis *guberniya*, part of Kars *oblast*, and the western half of Elizavetpol *guberniya*⁷⁵¹ (see Map 8).

After long discussions, the Special Transcaucasian Committee adopted a resolution stating that *zemstvo* were to be introduced into those administrative units where there was no issue on the readjustment of the administrative borders. *Zemstvo* could not be introduced into the Elizavetpol *guberniya*, which was declared, together with Erevan *guberniya*, Kars and Kaghyzman *okrugs* of the Kars *oblast* and Borchaly and Akhalkalaki *uezds* of the Tiflis *guberniya*, disputed by the Special Transcaucasian Committee session of 15 October (see Map 8). Administrative readjustment of the Elizavetpol *guberniya* within one month of the date of the issuance of the decree of the Provisional Government was declared to be a precondition for the introduction of *zemstvo*.⁷⁵²

Khachatur Korchikian, on behalf of the *Dashnaktsutun* representatives attending the session, read the statement on their refusal to take part in future sessions on administrative redivision and issued their 'special opinion' on the resolution, signed by Korchikian and Avetik Shakhaturian. They argued that the introduction of *zemstvo* into some *guberniyas* and *uezds*, leaving 'the disputed regions without it would aggravate relations of neighbouring peoples'. They stated that a full agreement on the disputed issues was impossible, since the three months' work in the commissions and sub-commissions had brought agreement on some questions, whereas the disputed paragraphs had revealed that the interested parties could not make further compromises. These questions, *Dashnaktsutun* continued, were discussed in detail: the views of the parties were clear and definite and could serve as comprehensive material for the final settlement of the issue. The party representatives viewed that the

⁷⁵⁰ Note: The Alexandropol *guberniya* was projected to be created by taking from Tiflis *guberniya* Akhalkalaki *uezd*, three village communities of Trialet *uchastok* (Nardevan, Ashkalin and Avramly) and Lori *uchastok* of Borchaly *uezd* with cutbacks from Borchaly and Ekaterinin *uchastoks* of the same *uezd* and two villages of Gori *uezd* (Gyzylkilsa and Molit); from Kars *oblast* Kars and Kaghyzman *uezds*, and finally from Erevan *guberniya* Alexandropol *uezd* (without its first *uchastok*) and the fourth *uchastok* of Echmiadzin *uezd*, annexing it to the former (*STsIA*, fn 2080, l 1, fl 707, p 90p).

⁷⁵¹ Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence*, p 91

⁷⁵² *STsIA*, fn 2080, l 1, fl 707, pp 160p-17

postponement would not give new results, so were not reasonable. In their opinion, a decree on the administrative readjustment could be issued on the basis of the results of the work of the commissions and *zemstvo* could be introduced into the whole of the South Caucasus.⁷⁵³

On 1 December 1917, the Transcaucasian Commissariat issued a decree on the introduction of *zemstvo*, which declared similar conditions to those of the Special Transcaucasian Committee resolution of 15 October 1917. One of the points of the decree stated that within one month from the date of the issuance of the decree the Transcaucasian Commissariat was to redraw the administrative borders in the disputed *guberniyas* and *uezds (okrugs)*, requesting the preliminary opinion of the Armenian, Georgian and Muslim national committees on the issue and to introduce *zemstvo* administration immediately in the mentioned *guberniyas* and *uezds (okrugs)* in the new borders. Also among the disputed administrative borders were Elizavetpol, Gazakh, Javanshir, Shusha, Zangazur and Jabrayil *uezds* of the Elizavetpol *guberniya*⁷⁵⁴ (see Map 8).

No agreement could be reached between the Armenians and the Muslims until the declaration of the Armenian and Azerbaijan republics,⁷⁵⁵ so the administrative boundaries of Shusha, Javanshir and Jabrayil *uezds*, which included Mountainous Garabagh, and Zangazur *uezd* were not redrawn and were left as they were before the *zemstvo* projects of 1917 (see Map 8).

Thus, the *Dashnaktsutun* vision of the territorial division of Elizavetpol *guberniya* was not realised in this period. The next discussion of the territorial issues between the Armenians and the Muslims took place during peace negotiations in Batumi on 11 May-4 June 1918. There, the Armenian National Council (represented by Alexander Khatisian, Ovannes Kachaznuni and Mikayel Papajanian) gave up its claims to the Elizavetpol *guberniya*,⁷⁵⁶ including

⁷⁵³ Ibid., pp 19-19op

⁷⁵⁴ ARDA, fn 970, l 1, fl 87, p 1

⁷⁵⁵ Hovannisian R, *The Republic of Armenia. Volume I*, p 81; Note: Armenian claims, among others, to parts of Akhalkalaki and Borchaly *uezds* of Tiflis *guberniya* caused opposition from the Georgians, who found these areas to be connected to Tiflis *guberniya* from historical, geographical and economic points of view. The Armenians considered Akhalkalaki *uezd* to be Armenian both geographically and ethnically, arguing that it was a natural continuation of the 'Armenian plateau' and predominantly Armenian. The Armenians argued the same about the Lori *uchastok* of Borchaly *uezd*, which they found to be ethnically Armenian (for the Georgian and Armenian arguments on the issue see STsIA, fn 2080, l 1, fl 627, pp 3-12).

⁷⁵⁶ ARDA, fn 897, l 1, fl 11, pp 236-236op

Garabagh,⁷⁵⁷ and in return, the Azerbaijani National Council (represented by Mahammad Amin Rasulzada and Mammad Hasan Hajynskiy) gave up its claims to the rest of the Erevan and Echmiadzin *uezds*, which were not under Ottoman control, and the New Bayazid *uezd*.⁷⁵⁸ As a result of this ‘agreement’, Azerbaijan conceded Erevan to serve as the capital of the Armenian Republic on 29 May 1918,⁷⁵⁹ and Armenia’s government moved there on 19 July 1918.⁷⁶⁰

The Batumi Treaties of 4 June 1918 between the Ottoman Empire and each of the South Caucasian republics, as mentioned in Chapter 7, did not define the borders between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which was left to the republics concerned. However, there was the above-mentioned understanding between Armenia and Azerbaijan on their borders. Despite this, soon after the signing of the Batumi Treaty, Armenia declared Garabagh disputed and sought the support of the Central Powers, including the Ottoman Government, to include it in Armenia.⁷⁶¹

The Armenian Republic’s change of position with regard to Mountainous Garabagh and Zangazur was related to the change in the situation in Zangazur owing to the violent activities of General Andranik Ozanian, himself an Ottoman Armenian. Ozanian, whose operations against the Muslims in Nakhchyvan had failed, changed direction towards Zangazur in July 1918⁷⁶² with 45,000 Ottoman Armenian refugees and turned 80,000 Muslims of Zangazur into refugees in Persia, Nakhchyvan and parts of Baku *guberniya*.⁷⁶³ This became the main source of hope for the realisation of the Armenian territorial aspirations.

⁷⁵⁷ Avalov Z, *op cit.*, p 57; *ARDA*, fn 897, l 1, fl 11, pp 236-236op

⁷⁵⁸ *ARDA*, fn 897, l 1, fl 11, pp 246, 256-256op

⁷⁵⁹ *ARSPIHDA*, fn 970, l 1, fl 1, p 51

⁷⁶⁰ Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence*, p 210

⁷⁶¹ Hovannisian R, *op cit.*, pp 231, 235; *ARDA*, fn 894, l 10, fl 31, pp 16, 20-21

⁷⁶² Note: Referring to one report from the US Archives, Richard Hovannisian wrote that ‘Andranik arrived in Zangazur with 12,000 men and 40,000 refugee followers’, whereas according to Hovannisian himself, there were about 30,000 Armenian refugees in Zangazur, of whom 15,000 were from Nakhchyvan (Hovannisian R, *The Republic of Armenia. Volume I*, pp 87, 189-190).

⁷⁶³ *ARSPIHDA*, fn1, l 1, fl 69a, pp 2, 5-6; Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence*, p 194

The Armenian Government tried to present Andranik as *persona non grata* and declared that it was ready to disarm him 'if he entered the bounds of the Republic'.⁷⁶⁴ But the Armenian Prime Minister's statement on 28 March 1919 that Andranik was expected to arrive in Erevan with his force, to be taken by the Armenian Army,⁷⁶⁵ the Armenian officials' welcome of Andranik in the railway station of Ararat,⁷⁶⁶ and the words of Avetis Aharonian, Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia at the Paris Peace Conference, on 26 February 1919 that the 'renowned Andranik' fought against 'Abdul Hamid and Turkish tyranny for 30 years',⁷⁶⁷ suggest the opposite.

Andranik's goal was to prevent the submission of the local Armenian population of Garabagh to the Azerbaijani Government, urging them to fight against it. According to Andranik's letter, published in the Dashnak newspaper *Nor Horizon* in Tiflis on 27 November 1918 and republished in the *Azerbaydzhan* newspaper in Baku on 17 December 1918, the 'local population [of Garabagh – I.K.], which during the whole war was not subjected to any violence and did not suffer, yet showed us [Ottoman Armenian refugees and soldiers who followed Andranik – I.K.] a cold and indifferent, and in some places hostile attitude'.⁷⁶⁸ 'Most of my forces', Andranik went on, 'not meeting any confidence and support of the population of Zangazur, left Garabagh'.⁷⁶⁹ Andranik was not happy that the population of Zangazur wanted 'to meet the demands of the enemies [Azerbaijani Government – I.K.] and accept its citizenship', but 'thanks to my decisive opposition, this intention was abandoned'.⁷⁷⁰

Fatali Khan Khoyskiy, Prime Minister of Azerbaijan, in his speech to the Azerbaijani Parliament on 20 December 1918, referred to numerous telegrammes from different parts of Garabagh on the atrocities perpetrated by Andranik. He cited one case: 'in one of the villages, where the bands of Andranik were repulsed, a wounded local Armenian gave the following

⁷⁶⁴ Hovannisian R, *op cit.*, p 214; Note: The protest of the Azerbaijani Government of 15 August 1918 to the Armenian Government on Andranik's advancement into Zangazur and Garabagh and the reply of the Armenian Government of 23 August 1918 can be found in *ARDA*, fn 897, l 1, fl 11, pp 192-193.

⁷⁶⁵ FO 371/3658, p 519

⁷⁶⁶ Hovannisian R, *The Republic of Armenia. Volume I*, pp 190-191

⁷⁶⁷ *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Paris Peace Conference, 1919. Volume IV*, p 149

⁷⁶⁸ *Azerbaydzhanskaya Respublika. Dokumenty i materialy 1918-1920 gg.*, Baku: Elm, 1998, dok 49, p 77

⁷⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p 78

⁷⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

evidence: Andranik terrorised the local Armenians as well, forcefully recruiting them to his bands. Those who resisted were hung cruelly; thirty old Armenian men who did not share his opinion were jailed in Gorus. As long as Andranik is here, – the wounded man says, – there cannot even be talk of peaceful coexistence between the Armenians and the Muslims.’⁷⁷¹

During the First World War, Britain subsidised Andranik’s force to fight against the Turks. The force was disbanded by the British Command in the South Caucasus, as it found his presence in the region undesirable after the Mudros Armistice.⁷⁷² For his services to the British interests in the past, Andranik was allowed by William Thwaites, the Director of Military Intelligence Department of the War Office, to proceed to England.⁷⁷³

Nevertheless, Armenia did not abandon its claims to Garabagh, as can be seen from the joint Armenian memorandum submitted by the Republic of Armenia and the Armenian National Delegation, representing Ottoman Armenians, to the Paris Peace Conference on 26 February 1919. According to this memorandum, Armenia must include the entire Erevan *guberniya*, southern part of Tiflis *guberniya*, south-western part of Elizavetpol *guberniya*, and Kars *oblast* (excluding northern Ardahan) in the South Caucasus, and the provinces of Van, Bitlis, Diyarbakyr, Mamuret-ul-Aziz, Sivas, Erzurum and Trabzon (excluding regions to the south of Tigris and to the west of the Ordu-Sivas line) and four *sanjaks* (counties) of Cilicia (Marash, Khozan (Sis), Jebel-Bereket and Adana, including Alexandretta) in Anatolia⁷⁷⁴ (see Map 13).

8.2 Armenian arguments on Garabagh

The Republic of Armenia tried to substantiate its claims to Garabagh with ethnic, economic, historical, and geographical and security arguments in another memorandum submitted to the Paris Peace Conference on 17 May 1919. The next sections examine and assess these arguments.

⁷⁷¹ Ibid., dok 73, p 110

⁷⁷² FO 371/3657, p 481

⁷⁷³ Ibid., pp 483, 480

⁷⁷⁴ *The Armenian Question before the Peace Conference*, New York: Press Bureau, The Armenian National Union of America, 2010 (reprinted), pp 2, 6

Ethnic argument

The settlement of territorial conflicts between the South Caucasian republics was the subject of the South Caucasian Conference, convened on 27 April 1919 in Tiflis and continuing until 19 May 1919.⁷⁷⁵ The Azerbaijani delegation proposed to include the territorial issues in the conference programme and to establish a commission to define the principles and means for their settlement. The proposal was strongly opposed by the Armenian delegation, but after long discussions the delegation was compelled to accept it.⁷⁷⁶

The Armenian delegation presented its vision for the settlement of territorial problems between the South Caucasian republics at the sessions of the Territorial Commission of the South Caucasian Conference on 17-19 May 1919. The discussions revealed different approaches among the members of the Armenian delegation. Stepan Mamikonian supported the ethnic principle, but opposed the economic and strategic ones. He rejected the economic principle on the grounds that economically the whole of the South Caucasus gravitated towards Russia and the South Caucasian republics towards Georgia. Also, the destiny of 'Turkish Armenia' was not yet defined and Armenia did not have an independent outlet to the sea. Mamikonian considered the strategic principle⁷⁷⁷ unacceptable, but did not substantiate his position.⁷⁷⁸ Samson Arutunian supported the principle of self-determination for the settlement of contiguous borders, and did not oppose the other principles. He favoured the settlement of border disputes by plebiscite, both in the disputed province and in its part within any republic.⁷⁷⁹ Sirakan Tigranian considered that disputes on contiguous borders should be settled on the basis of self-determination and auxiliary principles.⁷⁸⁰

The common position of the Armenian delegation was presented by Tigranian in a written form as the 'main guidelines' to be followed during the settlement of the territorial questions: the creation of independent republics in the South Caucasus, which started from the principle

⁷⁷⁵ Note: The idea of convening such a conference for the liquidation of territorial problems by peaceful means was first expressed by the Azerbaijani Government in 1918. Since the idea was opposed by Armenia, it could not be realised. This time the idea was realised at the proposal of the Georgian Government and it was attended by three South Caucasian Republics, as well as Mountainous Republic (*ARDA*, fn 970, l 1, fl 215, pp 20-21).

⁷⁷⁶ *ARDA*, fn 970, l 1 secret, fl 79, pp 38-38op

⁷⁷⁷ Note: 'Strategic principle' should be taken to mean the geographical and security arguments.

⁷⁷⁸ *ARDA*, fn 970, l 1, fl 72, p 1

⁷⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p 1op

⁷⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p 3

of self-determination, should have been finalised so that every nation could have a compact territory, which would include a significant part of the relevant people within the borders of the South Caucasus, leaving only a small minority of that people under the rule of other republics.⁷⁸¹

As seen above, the principle which dominated the Armenian vision of the territorial delimitation in the region was ethnic: the Armenian Republic was striving to include as much Armenian-populated territory as possible within its borders, leaving only a small Armenian minority outside. This demonstrates the aim of the Armenian Government to build an Armenian ethno-nation, once again proving Anthony Smith's ethno-symbolist approach and setting the Armenian case within his 'ethnic' type of nationalism.

The principle of self-determination was also considered as a basis for the settlement of territorial problems by the Azerbaijani delegation, whose position was presented in a written form by Khalil bay Khasmammadov. According to the Azerbaijani position, if the dispute was on the districts, which from economic and historical points of view were inseparably connected with other undisputed districts, a referendum should be held among the population of all these districts.⁷⁸²

Whilst the South Caucasian Conference was meeting, Avetis Aharonian submitted the above-mentioned memorandum on Armenian claims to the Paris Peace Conference on 17 May 1919. The part of the memorandum dedicated to ethnic considerations started with the explanation of the intention of the Russian authorities behind the administrative divisions of the Caucasus. According to this document, the Russian Government had deliberately created administrative divisions in which Tatar (Azerbaijani) and Armenian populations were mixed, so as not to have compact ethnic groups to foster national ambitions. It was argued that the Russian Government joined entirely different geographical and physical environments with incompatible cultures and customs. Based on these considerations, the memorandum found it necessary 'to rectify this artificial creation of the Russian autocracy which is the result of the famous precept "Divide et Impera"'.⁷⁸³

⁷⁸¹ Ibid., p 2

⁷⁸² Ibid.

⁷⁸³ FO 608/82, p 324

Here it should be noted that it was because of the Russian settlement of Armenians from Persia and the Ottoman Empire, discussed in Chapter 4, and the administrative divisions that in 1916 Armenians could get a 52.3% majority in Shusha *uezd* and 44.6% significant minority in Zangazur *uezd* in addition to 29% and 24.3% minorities in Javanshir and Jabrayil *uezds* respectively (see Map 8). It appears that the Russian rule favoured the Armenians, not the Muslims, who until then significantly outnumbered Armenians in the whole province of Garabagh. It was due to the Russian authorities that the Armenians could create compact areas and subsequently declare their state in the South Caucasus.

The mixture of mountains and plains in Garabagh was not a Russian construction. They constituted parts of this historical and geographical region before its occupation by Russia, whereas the idea of their separation emanated from the Armenian nationalists. ‘Mountainous Garabagh’ was a notion politically constructed by the Armenians during the *zemstvo* conferences in 1917. This notion did not exist either before the Russian occupation of Garabagh in 1805 or during the Russian rule in 1805-1917. The aim was to separate the areas populated by Armenians from Muslim-dominated Garabagh in order to construct predominantly Armenian units. In order to achieve this aim, the memorandum advanced both ethnic arguments and administrative units with contradictory data. Thus, while in the letter to the Peace Conference, the total population in the mountainous parts of Elizavetpol *guberniya* in Gazakh, Elizavetpol, Shusha, Javanshir, Jabrayil and Zangazur *uezds* was claimed to be ‘494,000 with 358,000 Armenians, 24,000 other Christians and 112,000 Muslims’,⁷⁸⁴ in the accompanying copy of the memorandum itself, the total population was presented as 419,000 with 328,000 Armenians and 91,000 Muslims.⁷⁸⁵ The same was true of the ethnic data on Zangazur *uezd*, which had two different statistics in the same memorandum: 1) total population of 127,000 with 90,000 Armenians and 37,000 Muslims; 2) total population of 152,000 with 100,000 Armenians and 50,000 Muslims.⁷⁸⁶ Further contradictory data was provided in the Armenian delegation’s letter of 1 January 1920, according to which Mountainous Garabagh had 300,000 Armenians and 113,000 Tartars.⁷⁸⁷

⁷⁸⁴ Ibid., p 318

⁷⁸⁵ Ibid., p 325

⁷⁸⁶ Ibid., pp 325, 342

⁷⁸⁷ FO 608/273, p 11

According to the official Russian statistics of 1916, there were 373,938 Armenians and 573,571 Muslims in Gazakh, Elizavetpol, Shusha, Javanshir, Jabrayil and Zangazur *uezds* (see Map 8). Of these, 243,627 Armenians and 327,705 Muslims were in Garabagh, with 142,572 Armenians and 204,310 Muslims in the *uezds* of Javanshir, Shusha and Jabrayil in Mountainous Garabagh, and 101,055 Armenians and 123,395 Muslims in Zangazur. For Alimardan bay Topchubashov, Head of the Azerbaijani Delegation at the Paris Peace Conference, three quarters of the population of mountainous Garabagh were Tartar, as in order to avoid taxation and the possibilities of military service the Tartars always understated the number of their sons, and for other reasons did not include a number of their unmarried women.⁷⁸⁸

Comparing the figures of the Armenian memorandum with those of the official Russian statistics, it can be argued that the number of Armenians in Mountainous Garabagh could not more than double in 1916-1919 from 142,572 to 300,000. This increase can represent gross exaggeration, include Armenian refugees, or both. The highest available number of Armenian refugees in the whole of Garabagh was estimated to be in Zangazur: 45,000, as mentioned earlier. Even this figure does not make the number of Armenians in Zangazur more than 150,000, and in the whole of Garabagh more than 300,000. Comparing official and memorandum figures, though contradictory, it can be suggested that the number of Ottoman Armenian refugees who came to Zangazur with Andranik, has not been included in the Armenian population of the *uezd* in the memorandum, whereas the Muslim population had been decreased significantly in both statistics. This suggests that in the case of the Muslims, the memorandum had taken into account the number of Muslim refugees who left Zangazur for other places populated by Muslims, in the first data a decrease of about 85,000 in comparison with that of 1916, and in the second statistics a decrease of about 73,000 Muslims.

After considering the memorandum's ethnic arguments, it can be concluded that in order to substantiate its territorial claims to Garabagh, the Republic of Armenia presented distorted ethnic data to the Paris Peace Conference, exaggerating the number of Armenians and underestimating that of the Muslims. As the official ethnic statistics of the Garabagh region

⁷⁸⁸ FO 608/84, p 100

were not favourable for the memorandum, it tried to construct arguments, artificially dividing the historically, geographically and economically established region into mountainous and plain parts.

Even in this case, in order to annex Armenian-populated parts of Garabagh, the Armenian Republic would need to minimise the solid Muslim mass between Garabagh and the compact Armenian settlements around Erevan (see Map 12). The area included Javanshir and Zangazur *uezds* of the Elizavetpol *guberniya* and Nakhchyvan, Sharur-Daralayaz and Erevan *uezds* of the Erevan *guberniya*. In these *uezds*, according to the official data of 1916, there were 412,018 Muslims as against 206,437 Armenians living in areas separated from each other in the form of islands.⁷⁸⁹ If we deduct from this figure about 30,000 Muslims of Javanshir *uezd*, who lived in the east of mountainous Garabagh, even in this case their number would count 382,018, which means that Muslims outnumbered Armenians by 175,581.

Armenia tried to 'neutralise' this Muslim barrier with the help of Armenian refugees, who were settled in the Daralayaz part of Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd* and in Zangazur *uezd* on the lands and properties of the expelled Muslims, as the occupation of these areas and their settlement with Armenians were important to connect the Armenian settlements around Erevan with Garabagh: all Armenian efforts to subjugate Nakhchyvan *uezd* and to connect with Mountainous Garabagh through it failed. On the other hand, occupation of these areas would mean the dissociation of the Muslim-dominated parts of Elizavetpol *guberniya* from Nakhchyvan.

It was this obstacle in the substantiation of the Armenian territorial claims which the memorandum wanted to eliminate with the construction of the arguments blaming the Russian administrative divisions for the lower number of Armenians in these areas than Muslims, seeking to create artificial divisions separating mountains from plains and turning the Armenians into a compact mass constituting the majority in the claimed territories.

The application of the ethnic principle to the Armenian Republic would mean that its area should have included Erevan, Echmiadzin and Alexandropol *uezds* and the western part of

⁷⁸⁹ *Kavkazskiy kalendar' na 1917 god*, pp 191-197, 219-221

New Bayazid *uezd* of Erevan *guberniya* (see Map 12). Only in these areas did Armenians constitute a compact mass. The application of the self-determination principle would not allow Garabagh to be regarded as ‘contiguous’ to the Armenian Republic, since the former bordered on the west with the Muslim-dominated Sharur-Daralayaz and Nakhchyvan *uezds* of Erevan *guberniya*. As Garabagh could not be considered a border area adjacent to the compact Armenian areas, it could not be involved in the delimitation of the border areas. The issue of Armenians in Garabagh could be solved under minority status with the recognition of their cultural rights within Azerbaijan. The application of the same ethnic principle to the provinces of the Ottoman Empire, which the joint Armenian memorandum claimed at the Paris Peace Conference, would also fail. Neither before nor after 1915 did Armenians constitute a majority in any of the claimed provinces, as argued in Chapters 3 and 5. In this case both Armenians and the British Government interpreted self-determination in such a way that both ‘Armenians and Jews had “for historical reasons” claims to consideration out of proportion to their numbers’.⁷⁹⁰

This approach shows that ethnic arguments could be ignored when the Great Powers were intent on constructing ‘ethnic’ states. The ethnic gap was considered to be filled by attracting Armenians from all over the world to these areas both before and after the construction of this state, as discussed in Chapter 7. Until then, the principle more suitable for application seemed to be ‘historical’, since history could also be constructed on an ethnic basis. Although Eastern Anatolia was a historical habitat of the Armenians, they were an isolated minority there. Armenian nationalists blamed external factors for the decrease of their numbers in Eastern Anatolia. But, as discussed in Chapter 4, in the early nineteenth century, it was on the initiative of the Armenian leaders that a great number of Armenians moved from their historical territories in Eastern Anatolia to the South Caucasus. At that time, the Armenian leaders were concentrating on establishing an Armenian autonomy under Christian Russia and did not seem to be concerned about the resulting decrease of their number in Eastern Anatolia. The emergence of Armenian trade and merchant colonies all over the world from the Middle Ages onward also tells us that Armenians were inclined to move from one place to another, with economic benefits being of paramount consideration. The idea of ‘historical homeland’ became important after the nationalist movement, gaining importance in the eyes of those

⁷⁹⁰ Hovannisian R, *The Republic of Armenia. Volume I*, p 269

nationalist leaders who themselves lived away from Eastern Anatolia, in diaspora. Although in the case of Eastern Anatolia, the Armenian leaders in 1919 referred to history, in the case of the South Caucasus they appealed to a range of arguments, including historical ones.

Historical argument

According to the official Armenian memorandum, Garabagh had been part of Armenia from time immemorial ‘known as the three provinces of Siunia, Artsakh and Uti’⁷⁹¹ (for the localisation of these provinces by Mik’ayel Ch’amch’yants’ see Map 4: N9 (Seunies), N10 (Arzakh) and N12 (Uti)). The document continued, ‘this is one of the Armenian regions where the population has always been resolutely loyal to the nation; it has remained pure and free from any mixing with the neighbouring populations and has rarely migrated. Centuries have passed, but the national character and the moral physiognomy of this population have remained intact until today, in spite of the continuous invasions and assaults of foreign races.’⁷⁹² The memorandum also argued the historical racial, religious and cultural connections between the ‘Armenians’ of Garabagh, ‘Ararat’ (for the localisation of Ararat province by Ch’amch’yants’ see Map 4: province N15) and the Van region, and considered the Garabagh *melikates* (counties), discussed earlier in the thesis, to be the ‘last refuge of the Armenian national idea in the 16th-18th centuries’.⁷⁹³

As it appears from the Armenian memorandum’s arguments, Armenia included Garabagh from time immemorial. Although it did not refer to any source while making this argument, our investigation revealed that the passage on the historical belonging of Artsakh, Uti and Siunia provinces to Armenia was based on the Armenian ‘Geography’, discussed in Chapter 4. This work in turn was based on the work of Faustos Buzandatsi, the Armenian historian of the fifth century. He is considered to be the first Armenian historian, who attempted to write a periodised history of Armenia from the beginning until 387 AD, which was first published in Istanbul in 1730.⁷⁹⁴ Buzandatsi, who was not contemporary to the

⁷⁹¹ FO 608/82, p 323

⁷⁹² Ibid.

⁷⁹³ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁴ Ch’amch’yants’ M, *History of Armenia: From B.C. 2247 to the Year of Christ 1780 or 1229 of the Armenian Era* (translated from the original Armenian text by Johannes Avdall), Vol I, Calcutta: Bishop’s College Press, 1827, p XXVI

events he described in his work, according to Levon Khachikian, author of the introductory part of the translation of this history into Russian, ‘did not use almost any written sources for the description of the events’.⁷⁹⁵ However, this work, which included more than half of the South Caucasus in ‘Greater Armenia’ until 387 AD, has been one of the major sources of reference for the study of the ancient history and geography of the South Caucasus by Armenian, European and Russian scholars.

Since the topic of the current thesis is not the history and geography of ancient Armenia, its ‘territorial’ components will not be discussed in this section. Moreover, the historians dealing with this issue either do not make reference to any source or refer to the later manuscripts or different editions based on the later manuscripts of the ancient Armenian sources, because of the absence of their originals. Different people scribed these later manuscripts in various periods, leaving their traces in terms of interpolations depending on the demands of the time and the persons ordering the scribing.⁷⁹⁶ As expressed by Nicolas Adontz, ‘historical literature underwent repeated revisions and re-workings to bring it into agreement with the spirit and demands of the period. Consequently, the literary heritage, too, is by no means free from tendentious colouring both in the presentation of material and in the fusion of the true with the false.’⁷⁹⁷

As for the argument of the memorandum that Garabagh ‘Armenians’, being ‘resolutely loyal to the [Armenian] nation’, ‘have remained pure and free from any mixing with the neighbouring populations’, study of the works of the Armenian historians, including those who wrote closer to the date of submission of this memorandum in May 1919, reveals a somewhat different picture. Thus, in 1908, Adontz wrote that ‘the only certain fact is that

⁷⁹⁵ *Istoriya Armenii Favstosa Buzanda* (perevod s drevnearmyanskogo i kommentarii M.Gevorgiana pod redaktsiei S.Eremiana), Erevan: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Armyanskoy SSR, 1953, pp XI-XII

⁷⁹⁶ Nikol'skiy M (ed.), *Drevnosti Vostochniya. Trudy Vostochnoy Kommissii Imperatorskago Moskovskago Arkheologicheskago Obshchestva. Protokoly zasedaniy Vostochnoy Kommissii Imperatorskago Moskovskago Arkheologicheskago Obshchestva za 1888-1895*, tom II, vyp 1, Moscow, 1896, pp 118-120; Adontz N, *Armenia in the Period of Justinian: The Political Conditions based on the Naxarar System*, p 254; Khorenats'i M, *History of the Armenians* (translation and commentary on the literary sources by Robert Thomson), p 52; *Istoriya Armenii Moiseya Khorenskago* (noviy perevod N.O.Emina s primechaniyami i prilozheniyami), pp VI, XIX-XXI; *Armyanskaya Geografiya VII veka po R.Kh. (pripisyyavshayasya Moiseyu Khorenskomu)* (perevod s drevnearmyanskogo i kommentarii K.P.Patkanova), pp II-XXVI; Ch'amch'yants' M, *History of Armenia: From B.C. 2247 to the Year of Christ 1780 or 1229 of the Armenian Era* (translated from the original Armenian text by Johannes Avdall), Vol I, p XXVI; *Istoriya Armenii Favstosa Buzanda* (perevod s drevnearmyanskogo i kommentarii M.Gevorgiana pod redaktsiei S.Eremiana), *loc cit.*

⁷⁹⁷ Adontz N, *Armenia in the Period of Justinian: The Political Conditions based on the Naxarar System*, *loc cit.*

Siwnik [Siunia – I.K.], the Albanian borderland of Armenia, had a population which differed somewhat from that of the central districts of Armenia. The tribal peculiarity of Siwnik was supported and reinforced by a stream of migrations from the adjacent mountains, which have left traces in the toponymy.⁷⁹⁸ Another Armenian historian, Kevork Aslan, in 1914, in his work in French dedicated to the history of Armenia, translated into English in 1920, mentioned that during the days of the Arsacids, whose rule he dated from the second century AD to the third century AD,⁷⁹⁹ the kingdom of Armenia included different ‘territories or countries’. The historian included ‘Sunik’ (Siunia), ‘Oudi and Artzakh [Uti and Artsakh – I.K.], inhabited principally by Albani’ in this list.⁸⁰⁰ As his footnotes explain, by ‘Sunik’ he meant ‘Karabagh’ and he considered that the ‘Albani, known to Armenian writers as the Aghuanis, who embraced Christianity in the fourth century, were finally merged into the Armenians’.⁸⁰¹

In 1904, Joseph Hübschmann wrote that Siunia was a country in its own with its own people.⁸⁰² Based on the above-mentioned Armenian historian of the fifth century, Faustos Buzandatsi, the scholar interpreted that ‘Artsakh seems to have belonged to Albania originally, was then conquered by the Armenians and still belonged to Armenia in the first half of the fourth century. In the year 387 it was returned to Albania, where it remained.’⁸⁰³ As for Uti, Hübschmann, based on two editions of the Armenian ‘Geography’ in 1865 and 1881, gave unclear localisation such as ‘between Albania and the Kur River’ and ‘between Artsakh and the Kur River’.⁸⁰⁴

Nicolas Adontz, Kevork Aslan and Johann Hübschmann, despite their works being based on the ancient Armenian sources, did not consider Siunia, Artsakh and Uti to be Armenian-populated provinces. This means that the official Armenian memorandum did not follow either the Armenian or non-Armenian historians of its time. Although based on ancient

⁷⁹⁸ Ibid., p 325

⁷⁹⁹ Aslan K, *Armenia and the Armenians: From the Earliest Times until the Great War (1914)* (translated from the French by Pierre Crabites), New York: The Macmillan Company, 1920, p 29, note 26

⁸⁰⁰ Ibid., p 30; see also there: notes 32 and 34

⁸⁰¹ Ibid., notes 32 and 34

⁸⁰² Hübschmann J, *Die Altarmenischen Ortsnamen*, Strasbourg: Verlag von Karl J.Trübner, 1904, p 263 (translation of the sections related to Siunia, Artsakh and Uti from German into English by Hannah Wälzholz at the personal request of Kamala Imranli-Lowe)

⁸⁰³ Ibid., p 266

⁸⁰⁴ Ibid., p 270

Armenian sources, the memorandum included these provinces in Armenia; it was not consistent in its loyalty to the historical Armenian narrative. Thus, it did not take into account, among others, the information related to the Albanians, which can be found in all translations of the historical work of the ‘father’ of Armenian history, Moisey Khorenski, including in its Russian and English translations. Both translations of this work of Khorenski, whose lifetime was debated between the fifth and the tenth centuries,⁸⁰⁵ gave information on the ‘tribe of Sisak, which inherited the plain of Albania and the mountainous region of the same plain from the river Araxes as far as the fortress called Hnarakert [localised on the border of modern Georgia and Azerbaijan by specialists – I.K.]. And the country was called Aluank [Albania] after the gentleness of his mode of life; for they called him *alu*. Descended from him was this famous and valiant Aran whom the Parthian Valarshak made military governor. From his offspring, they say, descend the families of Uti and Gardman and Tsovdek and the principalities of Gargar.’⁸⁰⁶ The language of one of these tribes, Gargarians, who lived in Gargar, one of the historical names of Garabagh, the source called a ‘guttural, harsh, barbarous, and very rough tongue’.⁸⁰⁷

Unlike the sources whose originals have been lost and the conflicting information in their later manuscripts and editions open way to conflicting interpretations, the events of the 18th-early 19th centuries can be studied with the use of original sources contemporary to the period. These documents, as cited in Chapter 4, narrate information about the Albanian people in Garabagh. However, in 1919, when the Armenian memorandum made claims to Garabagh, this Christian population of Garabagh was already Armenian, though mostly converted, which was also discussed in Chapter 4. This nineteenth-century conversion made it easier for the Armenian Government to demonstrate the above-mentioned primordialist approach to the history of Garabagh by constructing a historical ethnic link between Garabagh and the Armenian people from time immemorial, and by arguing the historical territorial connection between Garabagh and the Armenians.

⁸⁰⁵ Nikol'skiy M (ed.), *Drevnosti Vostochniya. Trudy Vostochnoy Komissii Imperatorskago Moskovskago Arkheologicheskago Obshchestva. Protokoly Zasedaniy Vostochnoy Komissii Imperatorskago Moskovskago Arkheologicheskago Obshchestva za 1888-1895*, tom II, vyp 1, pp 118-119

⁸⁰⁶ Khorenats'i M, *History of the Armenians* (translation and commentary on the literary sources by Robert Thomson), p 140; *Istoriya Armenii Moiseya Khorenskago* (noviy perevod N.O.Emina s primechaniyami i prilozheniyami), p 58

⁸⁰⁷ Khorenats'i M, *op cit.*, p 322; *Istoriya Armenii Moiseya Khorenskago*, p 193

Here, the Armenian case once again suggested the accuracy of the ethno-symbolist approach, since the memorandum tried to substantiate its claims based on the constructed ethnic history, trying to create an unbreakable ethnic link between the Armenians of 1919 and several millennia ago. The Armenian nationalist activists some forty years previously in 1881 seemed to have no idea about the ‘Armenian’ counties of Garabagh, which the official Armenian memorandum of 1919 presented as the ‘last refuge of the Armenian national idea in the 16th-18th centuries’. In 1881, Raffi, the ideological father of the Armenian nationalist movement, reacting to the indifference of his nationalist friends to the history of Garabagh, was surprised that the ‘people who argued about the cuneiform inscriptions of Van and who wrote about the periods before the Flood, regarded events which happened recently, just fifty years ago, as fiction, figments of the imagination.’⁸⁰⁸

The Armenian nationalists who argued about the ancient history and seemed to be more concerned about Van and the adjacent areas ignored another well-known fact about the recent past of Garabagh. This fact was the Kurakchay Treaty, which could be found, among other sources, in the second volume of *Akty sobranniye Kavkazskoy Arkheograficheskoy Komissiey* (Acts collected by the Caucasian Archeographic Commission), published in Tiflis in 1868. This treaty, signed between Pavel Tsitsianov, Commander-in-Chief of the Russian forces in Caucasia, and the Muslim Ibrahim khan of Garabagh on 14 May 1805⁸⁰⁹ (see Map 6), was the last legal document on the status of Garabagh before its annexation by Russia, which was also reaffirmed by the Gulustan Treaty of 12 October 1813 between Russia and Persia. It was on the basis of the Kurakchay Treaty that, after the annexation of the region to Russia, the son of Ibrahim khan, Mehdigulu khan, ruled as khan of Garabagh within Russia until 1822, when the khanate was abolished and turned into a province⁸¹⁰ (see Map 7). The Muslims, who constituted a majority in Garabagh, came to be called Tartars, Turco-Tartars, Azerbaijani Turks, Azerbaijani Tartars and, finally, Azerbaijanis after the Russian occupation and the establishment of the first Azerbaijan Republic.

⁸⁰⁸ Raffi, *Melikstva Khamsy: 1600-1827. Materialy dlya novoy armyanskoy istorii*, p 188

⁸⁰⁹ *AKAK*, tom 2, Tiflis: Tipografiya Glavnago Upravleniya Namestnika Kavkazskago, 1868, dok 1436, pp 704-705

⁸¹⁰ Mil'man A, *Politicheskiy stroy Azerbaydzhana v XIX – nachale XX vv.*, p 67

Even though the historical claims related to time immemorial should not have mattered, given the situation on the ground in the 19th and 20th centuries, these historical claims did play a role and are still utilised with consequences which lead to human tragedy.

Economic argument

The Armenian memorandum also presented economic arguments. According to it, ‘the great tragedy of Armenian life is the hundred-year old struggle to safeguard an essentially agricultural culture against the nomadic races.’⁸¹¹ It argued that the ‘nomadic farmers who spend winter on the lower steppes of the current Republic of Azerbaijan [...] have always been attracted towards the alpine pastures [...] in the middle of regions populated by Armenians [...] In spring, as soon as the grass dries out because of the heat, the Tartars get ready to migrate with their herds towards the alpine pastures [...] Hundreds of thousands of hungry cattle cross Armenian villages through sown lands and wheat fields. The local population, made up of Armenian farmers, sees this migration as a plague they have to guard against. The farmers get ready to attack and arm themselves. As soon as the hungry herds rush towards the fresh greenery, a relentless war starts between nomads and farmers. These perpetual conflicts between nomads and farmers, starting up again every spring and autumn, only intensify the hatred that Muslim nomads harbour towards Armenian farmers. This fight, initially purely economic, has become more complex since the second half of the nineteenth century and had gradually been complicated by religious and national considerations.’⁸¹²

The memorandum declared that ‘the deliverance of the Armenian farmer from the recurring nomad invasions with their hungry herds is a prerequisite to the political and economic revival of Armenia’ and ‘the state economy and the general progress of a country require alpine pastures to be run by the population living in the alpine area or the nearby regions.’⁸¹³

These alpine areas or highlands were not populated by Armenians, but by Muslims, who had used them as pastures for centuries. The ‘nomad invasions’ was a politically constructed argument under which the Armenian Government tried to get rid of the Muslim population

⁸¹¹ FO 608/82, p 321

⁸¹² Ibid., pp 321-322

⁸¹³ Ibid., p 322

inhabiting the alpine area. If the problem was indeed an economic one, the memorandum would not try to substantiate it with ethno-religious factors. In doing so, it once again demonstrated that the Armenian nationalism was ethnic nationalism.

For Azerbaijan, the plains and mountains of Elizavetpol *guberniya* were not contrasting entities, but complementary components of a single unit.⁸¹⁴ According to the Azerbaijani arguments, the economic gravitation of Elizavetpol *guberniya*, including Garabagh, towards Azerbaijan was clearly demonstrated by the fact that nearly every primary road led eastward towards Baku, not westward towards Erevan. The Armenians of Garabagh depended on Baku for a large share of their supplies, and thousands of them were seasonal labourers or permanent employees in the oil fields and offices of Baku.⁸¹⁵ This view was shared at that time by Anastas Mikoian, an Armenian and a member of the Caucasian Committee of the Russian Communist (Bolshevik) Party, who, in his report to Vladimir Lenin of 22 May 1919, wrote that ‘Dashnaks, agents of the Armenian Government, try to annex Garabagh to Armenia. However, for the Garabagh population that would mean to be deprived of its life in Baku and to be connected to Erevan, with which it has never been connected with anything.’⁸¹⁶

The date mentioned by the memorandum for the deterioration of the Armenian-Muslim relations in Garabagh in the second half of the nineteenth century suggests that a major source of the problem was Armenian nationalism. The economic argument in the Armenian memorandum again suggests the accuracy of the approach of Anthony Smith that it was the intense preoccupation of nationalist intelligentsia with an ‘authentic’ vernacular culture and history⁸¹⁷ that turned the Muslims and Christians who had lived side by side in Garabagh for centuries into enemies.

⁸¹⁴ Hovannisian R, *The Republic of Armenia. Volume I*, p 82; Note: As Khosrov bay Sultanov, Garabagh Governor-General, explained, ‘beginning from Yevlakh we have an entire zone of Muslim population. Approaching the foothills, the zone is replaced with the mixed zone of Muslim-Armenian population. Rising to the mountains, we meet an almost absolutely Armenian population. After this zone again the Muslim zones of Zangazur come and further Nakhchivan, and then the territory of Armenia. Thus, the Armenian district is surrounded by Muslim districts.’ (*Azerbaydzhanskaya Respublika. Dokumenty i materialy 1918-1920 gg.*, dok 163, p 202) (see Map 12).

⁸¹⁵ Hovannisian R, *loc cit.*

⁸¹⁶ *K istorii obrazovaniya Nagorno-Karabakhskoy Avtonomnoy Oblasti Azerbaydzhanskoy SSR (1918-1925). Dokumenty i materialy*, Baku: Azerbaydzhanskoe Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1989, p 16

⁸¹⁷ Smith A, *National Identity*, p 130

Geographical and security arguments

Geographical and security arguments were also considered by the Armenian memorandum: Garabagh was the direct prolongation of the ‘Armenian plateau’ with the same physical and geological characteristics and constituted the natural and strategic defence of Armenia.⁸¹⁸

Chapter 1 of the current thesis has presented the views of different scholars on the ‘Armenian plateau’ and argued that they did not offer a clear picture of what areas they meant by ‘Armenian plateau’, some localising it in Eastern Anatolia, some extending it up until Garabagh and some with conflicting descriptions in works published in different periods, like, for example, Suren Eremian, the main specialist on Armenian historical geography. In 1952, Eremian localised the ‘Armenian plateau’ in Eastern Anatolia (see Map 3 for ‘*Armyanskoe nagor’ye*’), whereas in 1980 he extended it as far as Garabagh.⁸¹⁹

Martin Lewis and Karen Wigen in their work dedicated to the critique of metageography, by which they meant the ‘set of spatial structures through which people order their knowledge of the world’, convincingly argued for the constructed nature of geographical notions. They wrote that it was in the nineteenth century that the categories of continental systems were increasingly naturalised, coming to be regarded, as ‘real geographical entities that had been “discovered” through empirical inquiry’, but not as ‘products of a fallible human imagination’.⁸²⁰ The fact that the ‘Armenian plateau’, itself being a creation of the nineteenth century, has not found its exact boundaries up until the present day, suggests that it is not a ‘real geographical’ notion, but a politically motivated construction.

As for the British position on the delimitation of borders between Armenia and Azerbaijan, according to Arnold Toynbee, consultant of the British delegation at the Paris Peace Conference, ‘along the Armenia-Azerbaijan border the Tatars and Armenians are hopelessly intermingled and it is impossible to draw a frontier that is even roughly ethnographic. The boundary between the former Russian provinces of Erivan and Elizavetpol is therefore

⁸¹⁸ FO 608/82, p 324

⁸¹⁹ *Istoriya armyanskogo naroda*, 1980, p 7

⁸²⁰ Lewis M and Wigen K, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1997, pp IX, 30

suggested as being the best physical frontier, and as leaving roughly equal Armenian and Tatar minorities on the wrong side, respectively, of the line.’⁸²¹ It is not clear from this position of Toynbee in his minute of 26 April 1919 which ‘border’ he meant while describing the ethnic situation ‘along the Armenia-Azerbaijan border’, since there was no established border between the countries yet, which he himself was attempting to draw. However, it is clear that Toynbee was looking for the satisfaction of the geographical and ethnic frontiers with more preference given to the ‘physical frontier’.

This suggestion was opposed by Avetis Aharonian, Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia at the Paris Peace Conference, on the grounds that in that case Garabagh Armenians would remain on the Azerbaijani side and would not agree to make an exchange with the Tartars from Erevan *guberniya*. The Armenian representative declared himself willing to give up Nakhchyvan *uezd* in exchange for the Armenian parts of Garabagh. Toynbee’s attitude to the territorial exchange was that in that case alien minorities would be reduced, but ‘nothing approaching an ethnographic frontier would be attainable while a satisfactory physical frontier would become difficult to find’.⁸²² Later, on 16 May 1919, Aharonian in his interview with Louis Mallet, Assistant Secretary for British Foreign Affairs and chief Near Eastern adviser, also a member of the British delegation, did not favour this territorial exchange.⁸²³

The exchange of views between Aharonian and Toynbee demonstrates that, unlike Aharonian, Toynbee considered the Elizavetpol-Erevan *guberniya* frontier rather than the eastern frontiers of Mountainous Garabagh to be the best geographical one. Aharonian’s ‘Armenian plateau’ argument was sympathised with by Louis Mallet and Eric Forbes Adams, members of the British delegation. The latter wondered why Garabagh, ‘which is admittedly preponderantly Armenian and, according to M.Aharonian, belongs geographically to Armenia as being the N.E. corner of the Armenian “plateau”, should not be attached to the Armenian Republic or Erivan instead of Azerbaijan’.⁸²⁴

⁸²¹ FO 608/80, pp 40-41

⁸²² Ibid.

⁸²³ Ibid., pp 46-46op

⁸²⁴ Arslanian A, *op cit.*, pp 99-100

The consideration of the geographical arguments and attempts at their satisfaction, alongside with ethnic arguments, at the Paris Peace Conference, testifies to the popularity of 'physical frontier' approach in the early twentieth century. According to Juliet Fall, the popularisation of the idea of 'natural boundaries', which had passed down from antiquity, started with the French Revolution, with a famous speech of Danton proclaiming France's boundaries as 'divinely ordained'.⁸²⁵ However, at the end of the nineteenth century, she went on, Friedrich Ratzel, German geographer and ethnographer, referred to this idea as a tool of definition of political boundaries, which was also shared by Lord Curzon of Kedleston, since it 'reflected their experiences of imperial ambitions'.⁸²⁶ The geographical arguments of Toynbee and Aharonian suggest that 'natural boundaries' were indeed not 'divinely ordained', but constructed with political motivations, the success of which depended on their correspondence to the interests of the Great Powers.

The real intention behind Toynbee's arguments was the realisation of the British policy of leaving Garabagh as part of Azerbaijan and giving Nakhchyvan to Armenia or Persia. This would secure strategic railways and roads on the suggested Armenian-Persian border under British control. This argument is strengthened by the further views of Toynbee on the Armenian borders. 'Armenia', he went on, 'cannot, of course, trench on the integrity of Persia, though there is a considerable Armenian element in Dilman and Khoi, while the Maku district of Persia makes an awkward salient into Armenian territory. The awkwardness is increased by the fact that this salient is traversed by a railway from Bayazid to Shakh Takhti (built by the Russians during the war and not marked on the million map) which will be of considerable importance for communication between different parts of Armenian territory. If Armenia obtains the Nakhitchewan district in the forthcoming settlement, she might later on negotiate with Persia with a view of exchanging it for Maku.'⁸²⁷

As it appears from these considerations of Toynbee, he was more inclined to give 'Tatar-dominated' Nakhchyvan to Armenia or Persia rather than to Azerbaijan. Although in the case of the discussion of the Armenia-Azerbaijan boundaries, he objected to the exchange of

⁸²⁵ Fall J, *Drawing the Line: Nature, Hybridity and Politics in Transboundary Spaces*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005, pp 17-18

⁸²⁶ Ibid., p 18

⁸²⁷ FO 608/80, p 41

Nakhchivan and Garabagh, substantiating this with his preference to 'physical frontier', when it came to the border between Armenia and Persia, he did not seem to be concerned about the satisfaction of the 'physical frontier'. On the contrary, under the suggested exchange of Nakhchivan between Armenia and Persia, the Araz River would no longer be a 'natural boundary' between the two countries. This once again demonstrates that geographical arguments were informed by political aims: when necessary, Garabagh could be turned into a part of the 'Armenian plateau' or when it suited British interests, the 'physical frontier' could be either preferred or ignored.

Regarding the security arguments, the memorandum again referred to the Muslims of South Caucasus and Asia Minor as a people who with an irresistible tendency wanted to unite to form a compact Muslim world. This, it argued, meant 'leaving Garabagh to the pan-Turanian fanatics' which would 'clear the way to endless invasions, threaten peace in the East and undermine the basis of a political balance' and 'the north-eastern borders of Integral Armenia would remain defenceless if Garabagh was not part of it'.⁸²⁸

The argument on the 'pan-Turanism' danger was well known to the Azerbaijani Government, and was considered one of the impediments to the establishment of friendly relations and the settlement of territorial problems between Armenia and Azerbaijan: Armenia suspected Azerbaijan of sympathy towards Turkey, whereas Azerbaijan suspected Armenia of seeking to conclude a special agreement with the Russian White Army general Denikin against Azerbaijan,⁸²⁹ giving the republics mutual security concerns.

On 17 May 1919, when the Armenian Government had presented its memorandum to the Paris Peace Conference, including security arguments, the Ottoman Empire did not present a real danger to the Armenians, because both the South Caucasus and the Ottoman Empire were under Allied control. Unlike Armenia, Georgia, also Christian and non-Turkic, did not have 'pan-Turanism'-related security concerns regarding the Ottoman Empire and Azerbaijan. Although Azerbaijan and Georgia also had territorial problems, they solved them peacefully between themselves. However, Georgia had gone to war with Armenia in December 1918

⁸²⁸ FO 608/82, p 324

⁸²⁹ *ARDA*, fn 970, l 1, fl 190, p 24op

over Lori in the Borchaly *uezd*. They also had territorial problems related to Akhaltsikh and Akhalkalaki *uezds* in Tiflis *guberniya* (see Maps 8, 9 and 12).

For Georgia, the major perceived threat was Denikin's Army. This was also the reason for the conclusion of the Georgian-Azerbaijan Defensive Treaty on 16 June 1919, under which both republics bound themselves 'to act conjointly, using all their military forces and military means, against any attack which threatens the independence on the territorial inviolability of one or both of the contracting republics'.⁸³⁰ The paragraph did not apply to frontier conflicts in respect to territorial boundaries of the South Caucasian republics. Armenia was also given 'the right to announce its willingness to join this Treaty within two weeks from the date of the official announcement of the Treaty'.⁸³¹ Armenia did not join this treaty, which means that it did not consider Denikin's Army to be a threat.

As for Armenia's concerns related to Azerbaijan, the latter tried to assure the Armenian delegation attending the Armenian-Azerbaijani conference in Baku on 14-21 December 1919 that there was no basis for the suspicion towards Azerbaijan, as its delegation at the Paris Peace Conference, as well as the representatives of the Azerbaijani Government, repeatedly and officially stated the desirability of the independent existence of Azerbaijan and its confederation only with its neighbours in the form of a unity of independent states under the aegis of either the League of Nations or any other All-European organisation or strong power.⁸³²

Alimardan bay Topchubashov, Head of the Azerbaijani Delegation at the Paris Peace Conference, in his interview with Mallet on 23 May 1919, referred to the possibility of a confederation of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Dagestan along the lines of the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic discussed in Chapter 7.⁸³³ In his interview with Prof Simpson from the British delegation on 27 June 1919, about ten days after the conclusion of the Georgian-Azerbaijan Defensive Treaty, Topchubashov noted that the Armenians were inclined to stand aloof on the confederation issue on the ground that they

⁸³⁰ FO 371/3664, p 95

⁸³¹ Ibid.

⁸³² *ARDA*, fn 970, l 1, fl 95, pp 24-24op, 46

⁸³³ FO 608/84, pp 91-92

believed themselves to be ‘special pets’ of America, and likely to get anything that they want without working things out with the other elements in Caucasus.⁸³⁴ The same could be a reason for Armenia’s refusal to join the Defensive Treaty.

If ‘pan-Turanism’ was a real danger to world peace, including to the security of Armenia, as argued by the memorandum, the Lesser Caucasus Mountains in Garabagh would not be able to prevent it. Moreover, by including Garabagh, Armenia would not solve a security problem, but instead create one, since in this case, not only the Muslim-dominated or, in the words of the memorandum, predominantly ‘pan-Turanist’ Garabagh region, but also the Muslim-dominated Nakhchyvan region in the west of Garabagh, would be included in Armenia. As for the Turkish danger from the west, when this memorandum was presented in May 1919, the Ottoman Empire was under Allied occupation after the Mudros Armistice, so it was not realistic to think of the presence of such danger at that time. One could counter-argue that the Allied involvement in the region was not going to last and the League of Nations was not going to provide any real guarantee for the existence of the Armenian state, so under these circumstances gaining control of territory to create defensible borders was necessary. Here one could counter-argue that the Ottoman Empire being in a more advantageous position in May-June 1918 did not prevent the establishment of the Armenian Republic. If Armenia at that time indeed thought that the Allied presence in the region was temporary, it would try to solve the problems with its neighbours directly and would not make territorial claims from the Mediterranean to Garabagh (see Map 13). It was belief in the durable Allied presence at that time that emboldened the Armenian nationalists to make such claims. Armenia should have been aware that these territorial claims formed the basis of its neighbours’ distrust and enmity, which means that the insecurity concerns emanated not from its neighbours but from Armenia’s claims. Moreover, Armenian nationalists had representatives in all camps, i.e. Allied, including Denikin, and Bolshevik. As the development of events showed, Armenia could gain more territories due to Sovietisation than it could during the domination of the Allied Powers. In summary, the concerns of the Armenian Republic were not security, but territorial-related.

⁸³⁴ Ibid., p 99

8.3 Garabagh and the Ottoman Empire, the Allied Powers and Bolshevik Russia

The Garabagh problem was at the centre of the politics of all external powers involved in the region. Here we examine the approach of each of these powers to the Garabagh case and the impact of their positions on the settlement of the issue.

*Garabagh and the Ottoman Empire*⁸³⁵

The Ottoman Government considered Garabagh an integral part of the Azerbaijan Republic and the Armenian Government was aware of this fact. When the Armenian Government was asked by Halil bey, Ottoman Commander of the Army Group of the East, during his first official visit to Erevan on 30 August, about Armenian General Andranik's slaughtering of the Muslim population in Zangazur, Armenian Prime Minister Kachaznuni mentioned that Andranik was persona non grata and would be disarmed 'if he entered the bounds of the Republic'. He stated that Nuri Pasha, commander of the Islamic Army, 'had refused to permit any regular Armenian units into Zangezur or Karabagh on the grounds that these were Azerbaijani territories'.⁸³⁶ He asked Halil bey 'to refrain from supporting the Azerbaijani pretensions' to these areas.⁸³⁷

The Armenian premier's statement shows that the Armenian Government was not happy with the fact that Mountainous Garabagh and Zangazur were outside the 'bounds' of the Armenian Republic. It also demonstrates that both the Armenian and Ottoman Governments considered these areas to be parts of the Azerbaijan Republic.

Garabagh and the Allied Powers

The signing of the Armistice of Mudros on 30 October 1918 between the Ottoman Empire and the Allied Powers and that of Compiegne on 11 November 1918 between Germany and

⁸³⁵ Note: Due to the fact that the Ottoman recognition of Garabagh as part of Azerbaijan has not been disputed by Armenian historians, the section does not go into detailed discussion of the issue, rather confining itself to the articulation of the position of the Ottoman Empire on the matter.

⁸³⁶ Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, pp 214-215

⁸³⁷ Ibid., p 215

the Allied Powers replaced Ottoman-German control in the South Caucasus with that of the British, whose military control of the region lasted until 28 August 1919 (it stayed longer in Batumi), when it was replaced by the British diplomatic mission.⁸³⁸ The British attitude to the independence of the South Caucasian republics is reflected in the secret memorandum of the Foreign Office's Political Intelligence Department of 1 November 1918, just one day after the Mudros Armistice.

Although the document was clear enough on the Azerbaijani territories, in which it included Elizavetpol and Baku *guberniyas*⁸³⁹ (see Map 8), it did not have the same clear position about 'Armenia' in general, including 'Russian Armenia'. Unlike the Azerbaijani territories, it did not mention which territories were considered to be 'Russian Armenian provinces'.⁸⁴⁰ However, one very clear point was that it did not include Garabagh, part of Elizavetpol *guberniya*, in Armenia, although the British control of the region gave rise to Armenian hopes regarding the realisation of their claims to Garabagh, since the Armenians fought against the Ottoman Empire with the Allied Powers.

On 15 January 1919, the Azerbaijani Government established a temporary Garabagh General-Governorship consisting of Javanshir, Shusha, Jabrayil and Zangazur *uezds*, with Azerbaijani Khosrov bay Sultanov as its governor-general.⁸⁴¹ This position was supported by the British Command in Baku, which officially recognised Sultanov as Garabagh Governor-General on 3 April 1919.⁸⁴² Britain had also disbanded Andranik's force in January-February 1919, which, as noted by a confidential Foreign Office document, 'had its origin among Turkish Armenians, and which represented their ideals'.⁸⁴³ The main source of opposition to the British policy on Garabagh was considered to be *Dashnaktsutun*. In the words of British General William Thomson, Commander of Allied forces in Eastern Transcaucasia, moderate

⁸³⁸ FO 371/7729, pp 17-18

⁸³⁹ CAB 24/69, 'The future settlement of Transcaucasia with special regard to British interests', 1 November 1918, p 61 (2)

⁸⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁴¹ *Azerbaydzhanskaya Respublika. Dokumenty i materialy 1918-1920 gg.*, dok 102, p 142

⁸⁴² *ARDA*, fn 970, l 1, fl 65, p 76; Hovannisian R, *The Republic of Armenia. Volume I*, p 170

⁸⁴³ FO 371/7729, p 12

Armenians were working well with them, giving an example of Dastakov,⁸⁴⁴ the President of the Local Armenian Council, who on Thomson's request joined the Azerbaijani Cabinet.⁸⁴⁵

Politically constructed Armenian arguments on Garabagh presented by Aharonian confused the British Foreign Office staff with regard to the War Office decision on the region.⁸⁴⁶ The Foreign Office did not have representatives in the region, which was under the responsibility of the War Office. The latter obtained information on the details of the territorial conflicts directly from its representatives in the conflict zones.⁸⁴⁷ British General William Thwaites, the Director of Military Intelligence Department of the War Office, 'consistently pooh-poohed the Armenian complaints as to the Karabagh situation', 'expressed doubt in Aharonian's good faith' and stated that Aharonian shared 'a propensity frequently observed in Armenian communications to looseness regarding details and dates'.⁸⁴⁸

On 22 August 1919, a temporary agreement was signed between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Armenians of Mountainous Garabagh, which included the former Albanian *malikates* (counties) of Dizak, Varanda, Khachyn and Jraberd in the *uezds* of Shusha, Javanshir and Jabrayil. Under this agreement, the Armenian-populated sector of mountainous Garabagh regarded itself to be provisionally within the boundaries of the Azerbaijan Republic. Shusha, Javanshir and Jabrayil *uezds* were organised into a separate unit of the Garabagh Governor-Generalship, in the Armenian-populated part of which an administration of Armenians would be appointed with the rights of all minorities guaranteed. The parties accepted the provisional agreement until the Peace Conference rendered a decision, which both sides would accept as an equally binding solution. The Armenians of Garabagh would enjoy rights of cultural autonomy. The activities of the Armenian National

⁸⁴⁴ Note: Abraham Dastakov, member of *Dashnaktsutun*, was the Minister of Healthcare in the Fourth Cabinet of the Azerbaijan Republic.

⁸⁴⁵ FO 371/3658, p 65

⁸⁴⁶ Note: The British Foreign Office staff, getting their information from Aharonian, wondered why Garabagh, which is 'admittedly preponderantly Armenian' and according to Aharonian, 'belongs geographically to Armenia as being the N.E. corner of the Armenian "plateau"', should not be attached to the Armenian Republic instead of Azerbaijan; or another confusion like 'Aharonian had placed the Armenian population of Karabagh at 72 per cent, a figure which differed 'only by 1 or 2 per cent from the Russian statistics of some years ago' (Arslanian A, 'Britain and the Question of Mountainous Karabagh', *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol 16, no 1, 1980, p 100).

⁸⁴⁷ Arslanian A, *op cit.*, p 98

⁸⁴⁸ Ibid., pp 99-100

Council would be regulated by the Government of the Azerbaijan Republic through Armenian intermediaries. The agreement would have remained in effect in all circumstances.⁸⁴⁹

Based on the Armenian archival documents, the *Azerbaydzhan* newspaper published in Baku, the *Bor'ba* newspaper published in Tiflis and the *Hayrenik* newspaper published in Boston, Hovannisian wrote that on the same day, Garabagh General-Governor Sultanov, Garabagh bishop Vahan and other Muslim and Armenian notables spoke of 'interracial brotherhood and of the vital need to end the mutually calamitous strife' and signed the agreement.⁸⁵⁰ According to the telegramme of Azerbaijani Prime Minister and War Minister published in the *Azerbaydzhan* newspaper on 3 August 1919, during the visit of the Azerbaijani Prime Minister and War Minister to the Armenian church in Shusha on 30 July 1919, they were met with bread and salt, and the Armenian bishop made a speech in Azerbaijani. In the Armenian bazaar, two arches were created with the slogan 'Long Live the Azerbaijan Republic'.⁸⁵¹

Scotland Liddell, a British journalist in Tiflis, wrote that the Dashnak allegation that 'Azerbaijan is trying to destroy all the remaining Armenian population in her boundaries' was 'absolutely untrue. The case of Garabagh proves this. For some time this district was in great unrest [...] Fortunately, the local Armenians have made an agreement with Azerbaidjan and the Karabagh Tartars and Armenians are now on excellent terms. The local Armenians have agreed to be under the rule of Azerbaidjan: many of them are serving in Azerbaidjan government positions: and there is [...] a state of peace and order in Garabagh such as has never existed before.'⁸⁵²

⁸⁴⁹ ARDA, fn 897, l 1, fl 31, pp 141-142; Hovannisian R, *The Republic of Armenia. Volume I*, pp 186-187

⁸⁵⁰ Hovannisian R, *op cit.*, p 185; Note: With regard to this agreement, Nasib bay Usubbayov, Azerbaijani Prime Minister, in his speech in the Azerbaijani Parliament on 22 December 1919, touched upon the peaceful settlement of the Garabagh problem with the recognition of the cultural rights of the Armenian ethnic minority. 'The issue of recognition of national minorities,' he noted, 'is written in national programmes, is mentioned in the speeches, but, unfortunately, very little is seen in the deed. The Azerbaijani people without hesitation recognised this natural right of their Armenian co-citizens in Garabagh. Despite the fires and massacres, which occurred in Surmali, New Bayazid and Echmiadzin [meaning the massacres of the Muslim population by Armenian Government in 1918-1919 – I.K.] all the time before events, it did not remove this from its wording. Now our co-citizens, Armenians in Garabagh, take an active part in the local administration, are busy with opening and enlarging schools and in the betterment of enlightenment in general. For that end, the Government allocates, when needed, millions and will not refuse from now on. In the Caucasus, so far for the first time this example is demonstrated by us and we wish that our neighbours also follow this example.' (*Azerbaydzhanskaya Respublika. Dokumenty i materialy 1918-1920 gg.*, dok 368, p 402)

⁸⁵¹ *K istorii obrazovaniya Nagorno-Karabakhskoy Avtonomnoy Oblasti Azerbaydzhanskoy SSR (1918-1925). Dokumenty i materialy*, pp 22-23

⁸⁵² FO 371/3664, 'The Georgian Mail', 8 October 1919, p 1

The British journalist also answered other Armenian allegations writing that the ‘British never “forcibly” removed Karabagh from Armenia: it was separated geographically as it was. The British never took Nakhitchewan away from Armenia: nor did they take away Akhalkalaki. And regarding the statement that there are 320,000 Armenians in Karabagh and Zangezour, and 70,000 in Sharur and Nakhitchewan, and 175,000 in Lori and Akhalkalaki, it would be interesting to know the exact figures of the Mussulmans there.’⁸⁵³ He continued, ‘one can understand very well how violent is the agitation against the Tartar when one reads the Dashnak abuse of the British – “the friends of long years.” The pity is that so much of this false news finds its way abroad. Only a few days ago we received a British wireless message from England in which a great massacre of Armenians by Tartars in the Kars district was reported. This wireless message went all over the word. There was not a single word of truth in it as we here know very well. It is simply another instance of the false propaganda which is of so much propaganda as it is stupid and criminal provocation.’⁸⁵⁴ Liddell went on, ‘we have many Armenian friends and we hesitate to say a single word which would hurt their feelings, but the fact remains that the Armenian in the Caucasus is generally disliked. That is his own fault. It is also a fact that in other countries he is generally sympathised with. But there is a great danger that he will lose the world’s sympathy if the Dashnak campaign of lies continues.’⁸⁵⁵

It was not only the British journalist who accused Dashnaks of the ‘campaign of lies’. As mentioned earlier, despite the inclination of top Foreign Office officials to trust the information, including arguments and statistics, provided by Aharonian, the Armenian Government’s representative at the Paris Peace Conference, British generals in Transcaucasia dealing with the conflicts in the region directly doubted the good faith of Aharonian, did not trust him and criticised *Dashnaktsutiun*.⁸⁵⁶

Despite the agreement on Mountainous Garabagh, the situation on the western half of the Zangazur *uezd*, where the Ottoman Armenian refugees and those from Nakhchyvan were gathered, continued to be unresolved, although a cease-fire agreement was signed between

⁸⁵³ Ibid., p 2

⁸⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁶ Arslanian A, *op cit.*, pp 99-100

Armenia and Azerbaijan on 23 November 1919, where both governments pledged ‘to stop the present hostilities and not resort again to force of arms’.⁸⁵⁷

Colonel Claude Stokes, the British political officer at Baku, blamed France for supporting Armenian claims to Zangazur, claiming that this support was linked to France’s interest in a copper mine in southern Zangazur and the Alat-Julfa railway. Stokes expressed his concern that it seemed, ‘as a result of French and Armenian propaganda, the Allies will give Armenia far more favourable treatment than Georgia or Azerbaijan despite the fact that it has been the misconduct and dishonesty of the Armenians which has prevented those concerned in trying to keep the situation quiet from achieving success’.⁸⁵⁸ The reason for the French support of Armenian claims to Garabagh and its dissatisfaction with the British support of Azerbaijan in Garabagh was that Britain supported the Armenian claims to Cilicia, which was claimed by France, considering it to be a northern part of Syria.⁸⁵⁹ The disagreements of the Allied Powers over territorial issues negatively affected relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan and impeded the settlement of the territorial problems.

Meanwhile, the failure of Denikin’s campaign, the *Entente*’s ally against Bolshevik Russia, in December 1919, and the growing threat of Bolshevism, compelled the members of the League of Nations to recognise the independence of Azerbaijan and Georgia *de facto* on 12 January 1920, followed with the recognition of Armenia on 19 January 1920.⁸⁶⁰ The *de facto* recognition of both Azerbaijan and Armenia came without the settlement of the territorial conflicts between the two countries: they could not be resolved until the end of the Paris Peace Conference on 21 January 1920.

On the other hand, relations between the Turkish Nationalist and Bolshevik movements were allegedly progressing. Based on information given by Fuad Bey, Turkish general and former Ottoman Under-Secretary of State of War, Olivier Wardrop, head of the British diplomatic

⁸⁵⁷ ARDA, fn 970, l 1, fl 95, p 13op

⁸⁵⁸ Butler R. and Bury J (ed.), *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939. First Series, Volume XII*, doc 522, p 579

⁸⁵⁹ FO 608/77, p 403; FO 608/78, p 550; Note: As mentioned earlier in the chapter, Cilicia was in the list of territorial claims of the Armenian National Delegation, who represented Ottoman Armenians at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919.

⁸⁶⁰ Imranli K, *Sozdanie armyanskogo gosudarstva na Kavkaze: Istoki i posledstviya*, pp 133-134; the source cited by Imranli K: *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Paris Peace Conference, 1919*. Volume IX, Washington, D. C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946, pp 904, 899

mission in the South Caucasus, wrote to Earl Curzon, British Foreign Secretary, on 12 March that 'Mustapha Kemal has agreement with Lenin to allow Bolsheviks free hand in North Caucasus and Azerbaijan in order to secure free passage of arms for him'.⁸⁶¹ Although this information was denied by the Azerbaijani Government, Admiral John de Robeck, Commander of the Allied Mediterranean Fleet and British High Commissioner in Istanbul, was convinced that an understanding existed 'if not between two Governments at least between Azerbaijan and Turkish Nationalists'.⁸⁶²

The Bolshevik occupation of Azerbaijan was approaching, but Azerbaijan had sent its best troops against Armenia in Garabagh, leaving its northern border without enough defence. Wardrop, referring to Malik-Aslanov, Azerbaijani Minister of Trade and Communications, wrote to Earl Curzon on 26 March 1920 that the March troubles in Garabagh were the result of the war supplies that the Allies had sent to Armenia, and begged the Foreign Secretary to 'deny this officially in order to quell anti-Allied agitation'.⁸⁶³ Touching upon the March events, based on Russian archival documents, Barberowski wrote that as a result of the long prepared revolt of the Armenian partisans in Shusha on 23 March 1920, which then rapidly spread to Zangazur, Gazakh and Javanshir *uezds*, they were joined by Azerbaijani and Armenian regular units, who even used gas bombs. About 20,000 soldiers and other military personnel participated from both sides. The Armenian quarter of Shusha, he went on, was 'wiped off the face of the earth': 25 houses were left out of 1,700, and 8,000 Armenians were killed during one night in Shusha.⁸⁶⁴

Concern over the escalation of the conflict between the two countries was conveyed to Earl Curzon by Wardrop and Admiral de Robeck on 4 and 6 April 1920 respectively.⁸⁶⁵ On 8 April, the British Foreign Secretary, in turn, met an Armenian deputation consisting of Bogos Nubar Pasha, Erevan Archbishop and Avetis Aharonian and 'spoke to them in the strongest possible manner about foolish and indefensible conduct of their compatriots on North-Eastern

⁸⁶¹ Butler R and Bury J (ed.), *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939. First Series, Volume XII*, doc 515, p 573

⁸⁶² Ibid., doc 519, pp 575-576

⁸⁶³ Ibid., doc 526, pp 582-583

⁸⁶⁴ Barberowski J, *Vrag est vezde. Stalinizm na Kavkaze (perevod s nemetskogo V.T.Altukhova)*, pp 170-171

⁸⁶⁵ Butler R and Bury J (ed.), *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939. First Series, Volume XII*, doc 530, p 586; doc 531, p 587

frontiers of Armenia'.⁸⁶⁶ Curzon continued that the 'detailed list of outrages committed since beginning of year by Armenians on one hand and Tartars on other' showed a 'heavy balance against Armenians', and told them that 'we were not at all keen about giving them arms to fight Turks which they would almost certainly use to fight Azerbaijan.'⁸⁶⁷ The Georgian representative to Istanbul, M.Rtzkhiladze, in his meeting with British Admiral de Robeck on 6 April 1920 touched upon the March events in Garabagh, mentioning that 'consequent on the misguided policy of the Erivan Government in the Karabagh district and the oppressive measures carried out against the Tartar population, the Azerbaijan Government had been obliged to transfer troops to that district, and the northern frontiers of the State were, in consequence, not sufficiently well guarded for a successful defence to be opposed to any Bolshevik force which might advance south.'⁸⁶⁸ According to Wardrop's letter of 12 April, the fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan proceeded on an extended front⁸⁶⁹ and Azerbaijan seemed 'to be on the point of pro-Turk-Bolshevik attitude in despair of promised Allied help'.⁸⁷⁰

The Bolshevik menace compelled the Supreme Council of the League of Nations to adopt a decision on the mandate over Armenia in San-Remo on 25 April 1920. According to this decision, Armenia's borders with Azerbaijan and Georgia were to be established by the Supreme Council simultaneously with its borders with Turkey.⁸⁷¹

By 28 April, Soviet rule had been established in Azerbaijan. According to the act of the Azerbaijani parliament on 27 April, the full independence of Azerbaijan ruled by the Soviets would be maintained; the final form of administration in the country would be defined by the supreme legislative body of Azerbaijan in the person of the Soviet of workers, peasants and soldier deputies of Azerbaijan.⁸⁷² The Bolshevik seizure of power in Azerbaijan made the San-Remo decision redundant, since the borders with Armenia were not going to be defined by the Allies.

⁸⁶⁶ Ibid., doc 533, p 589

⁸⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁸ Ibid., doc 531, p 587

⁸⁶⁹ Ibid., doc 536, p 591

⁸⁷⁰ Ibid., doc 545, p 597

⁸⁷¹ *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Paris Peace Conference, 1920. Volume III, pp 780-781*

⁸⁷² Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 139; the source cited by Imranli K: *Azerbaydzhanskaya Respublika. Dokumenty i materialy 1918-1920 gg.*, dok 491, p 539

Garabagh and Bolshevik Russia

On 30 April 1920, two days after the establishment of Soviet rule in Azerbaijan, the Azerbaijani Soviet Government sent a note to the Government of the Armenian Republic demanding to ‘clear Garabagh and Zangazur from your troops’, to ‘retreat to your own borders’ and to ‘stop international massacre’; otherwise Azerbaijan would consider itself in a situation of war with Armenia.⁸⁷³

The note demonstrated the Azerbaijani Soviet government’s position on Garabagh, including Zangazur, which was regarded by Azerbaijan as being within its borders. On 19 June 1920, Sergo Orjonikidze, Head of the Caucasian Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist (Bolshevik) Party, in his letter to Georgiy Chicherin, People’s Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the RSFSR, informed him that ‘Soviet rule was declared in Garabagh and Zangazur and above-mentioned territories consider themselves as parts of the Azerbaijani Soviet Republic’.⁸⁷⁴

However, the protocol of the session of the Bureau of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist (Bolshevik) Party on 10 July 1920 shows that although the situation in Javanshir and Jabrayil *uezds* of Garabagh had been normalised, this was not the case in Shusha and Zangazur *uezds*. According to this document, ‘the situation in Shusha is the worst... Zangazur has been destroyed by Ararat troops, the main supporters of which are Turkish [i.e. Armenian] refugees, who were always fed by Anglo-American capital’.⁸⁷⁵

The same day, the common opinion of Nariman Narimanov, Head of the Azerbaijani Revolutionary Committee, Anastas Mikoian and Viktor Naneyshvili, members of the Azerbaijani Communist Party, Budu Mdivani, member of the Caucasian Bureau of the Russian Communist (Bolshevik) Party, and three representatives of the Revolutionary Military Soviet of the Eleventh Red Army was sent to the Central Committee of the Russian

⁸⁷³ Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 139; the source cited by Imranli K: *K istorii obrazovaniya Nagorno-Karabakhskoy Avtonomnoy Oblasti Azerbaydzhanskoy SSR (1918-1925). Dokumenty i materialy*, p 41

⁸⁷⁴ Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 140; the sources cited by Imranli K: *K istorii obrazovaniya Nagorno-Karabakhskoy Avtonomnoy Oblasti Azerbaydzhanskoy SSR (1918-1925). Dokumenty i materialy*, p 49; *ARSPIHDA*, fn 609, 11, fl 21, p 100

⁸⁷⁵ *K istorii obrazovaniya Nagorno-Karabakhskoy Avtonomnoy Oblasti Azerbaydzhanskoy SSR (1918-1925). Dokumenty i materialy*, p 53; *ARSPIHDA*, fn 1, 11, fl 18, p 90p

Communist (Bolshevik) Party. It appears from this common opinion that Mountainous Garabagh and Zangazur were going to be declared 'disputed' by the Centre, and the above-mentioned representatives warned against this position: 'The Muslim masses will consider this an unexpected change to the old and [will regard the] inability of the Soviet power to secure Azerbaijan within its previous borders as treason, Armeniophilia or weakness on the part of the Soviet power [...] We warn the Centre against hesitations in the issue of Garabagh and Zangazur in the interests of not turning Azerbaijan into a bastard in the hands of the Red Army and distributing [it] among the Armenians and Georgians, instead of creating a strong centre and a base for class revolution in the East.'⁸⁷⁶ On 14 July, after discussions with the Azerbaijani Government in Baku, Orjonikidze and Boris Legran, plenipotentiary envoy of Soviet Russia in Dashnak Armenia sent a telegram to Chicherin proposing to 'fully and unconditionally annex Garabagh to Azerbaijan, but declare Zangazur disputed'.⁸⁷⁷

Notwithstanding Azerbaijani opposition,⁸⁷⁸ on 10 August 1920, the agreement between Soviet Russia and the Armenian Republic – signed by Boris Legran on the Russian side and Arshak Jamalian and Artashes Babalian on the Armenian – 'proceeding from the recognition of independence and complete independence of the Republic of Armenia' declared that '2. [...] Troops of RSFSR occupy disputed provinces: Garabagh, Zangazur and Nakhchyvan' and '3. Occupation of disputed territories by Soviet troops does not foreclose the issue of rights to these territories of either Republic of Armenia or Azerbaijani SS Republic. By this temporary occupation the RSFSR intends to create favourable conditions for the peaceful settlement of territorial disputes between Armenia and Azerbaijan...'⁸⁷⁹

According to Boris Klimenko, in international law, the existence of a territorial dispute in certain degree depends on its admittance by the sides as such.⁸⁸⁰ Despite the claims of the Armenian Republic to Mountainous Garabagh and Zangazur and their consideration as disputed, the Azerbaijan Republic did not consider them disputed. Despite this agreement between Armenia and Russia, Azerbaijan continued considering both regions as undisputed

⁸⁷⁶ *K istorii obrazovaniya Nagorno-Karabakhskoy Avtonomnoy Oblasti Azerbaydzhanskoy SSR (1918-1925). Dokumenty i materialy*, pp 54-56

⁸⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp 56-57

⁸⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p 57; *ARSPIHDA*, fn 1, l 1, fl 18, p 13op

⁸⁷⁹ *Velikaya Oktyabr'skaya sotsialisticheskaya revolyutsiya i pobeda sovetskoy vlasti v Armenii (Sbornik dokumentov)*, dok 270, pp 384-385

⁸⁸⁰ Klimenko B, *Mirnoe reshenie territorial'nykh sporov*, p 179

territories of Azerbaijan, something also mentioned in Narimanov's letters to Lenin, Chicherin and Orjonikidze.⁸⁸¹

On 29 November 1920, the Revolutionary Committee of Armenia declared Armenia a Soviet Socialist Republic. It stated its firm belief that the proclamation of Soviet rule would solve all the problems between Armenia and Azerbaijan.⁸⁸² The next day, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan suddenly adopted a decision to transfer Zangazur to Soviet Armenia and to grant a right to self-determination to Mountainous Garabagh.⁸⁸³

Two days later, on 2 December, an agreement was signed in Erevan between RSFSR in the person of Legran and the Republic of Armenia in the person of Dashnak Dro Kanaian and Arutyun Terterian. The agreement declared Armenia an 'independent socialist republic' and 'Russian Soviet Government recognised as undisputed parts of Socialist Soviet Republic of Armenia the Erevan *guberniya*... part of Kars *oblast*... Zangazur *uezd*... part of Gazakh *uezd*... those parts of Tiflis *guberniya* which were in the possession of Armenia until 23 October 1920'. Under the agreement, the Government of the Republic of Armenia had to remove itself from power, which temporarily had to be transferred to the military command.⁸⁸⁴

The first Sovietisation of Armenia did not last long, as on 18 February 1921, Dashnaks headed by Simon Vratzian carried out a coup d'état in Erevan, which lasted until 2 April 1921 when the Dashnaks were driven to Zangazur under Soviet pressure. It was there in the autumn-winter that the Dashnaks under Nzhde established 'Autonomous Sunik', to be

⁸⁸¹ ARSPIHDA, fn 609, l 1, fl 21, p 97; fn 609, l 1, fl 15, p 116

⁸⁸² Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 147; the source cited by Imranli K: *Velikaya Oktyabr'skaya sotsialisticheskaya revolyutsiya i pobeda sovetskoy vlasti v Armenii (Sbornik dokumentov)*, dok 291, p 433

⁸⁸³ Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 147; the source cited by Imranli K: ARSPIHDA, fn 1, l 1, fl 24, p 51op

⁸⁸⁴ Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 148; the sources cited by Imranli K: *Mezhdunarodnaya politika noveyshego vremeni v dogovorakh, notakh i deklaratsiyakh. Chast' III (Ot snyatiya blokady s Sovetskoy Rossii do desyatiletiya Oktyabr'skoy Revolyutsii)*. Vyp 1 (Akty Sovetskoy diplomatii), Moscow: Izdanie Litizdata NKID, 1928, dok 41, pp 75-76; *Velikaya Oktyabr'skaya sotsialisticheskaya revolyutsiya i pobeda sovetskoy vlasti v Armenii (Sbornik dokumentov)*, dok 295, pp 441-442; Note: The same day the Gumru (Alexandropol) Treaty was signed between Kemalist Turkey and Armenia in the person of Dashnak Armenia's representatives headed by former premier, Alexander Khatisian. Dashnak representatives agreed to recognise and declare the Sevres Treaty of 10 August 1920 annulled and gave up claims to Nakhchivan (Imranli K, *op cit.*, pp 145-146; the sources cited by Imranli K: *Velikaya Oktyabr'skaya sotsialisticheskaya revolyutsiya i pobeda sovetskoy vlasti v Armenii (Sbornik dokumentov)*, dok 294, pp 438-439; *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin anlaşmaları*, cilt 1, pp 3-4).

transformed into 'Mountainous Armenia' in April 1921.⁸⁸⁵ According to Hovannisian, after getting assurance that Zangazur would be 'permanently incorporated into Soviet Armenia rather than into Soviet Azerbaijan', its members left for Persia on 16 July 1921,⁸⁸⁶ which can be considered the date of the beginning of the second Sovietisation of Armenia.

The agreement of 2 December 1920 between Soviet Russia and Armenia had included Zangazur *uezd* in Armenia, but it appears that the Dashnaks were given 'assurances' about its incorporation into Armenia, which suggests that the processes around Zangazur were not developed in accordance with the agreement of 2 December; otherwise there would be no need for such assurances. For reasons to be discussed in the next chapter, Nakhchivan, which was also included in Armenia under this agreement, was later returned to Azerbaijan. It is also known that both the Azerbaijani Democratic Republic and Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic had always been against the transfer of Zangazur to Armenia. However, the Azerbaijani Government on 30 November 1920, as mentioned above, suddenly decided on its transfer to Armenia. The author of this strategy was Stalin, who in early November 1920 declared that the transfer of Zangazur to Armenia could be realised only 'in extreme case', only if Soviet rule was established there.⁸⁸⁷

Zangazur *uezd* here referred to its larger western part, populated by local Armenians and Ottoman Armenian refugees and occupied by Dashnaks. This is confirmed by the decision of the Azerbaijani Revolutionary Committee of 18 September 1920 on the settlement of the Zangazur issue only after the readjustment of its Muslim section into a separate *uezd*.⁸⁸⁸ The adoption of this decision between the agreement of 10 August and the agreement of 2 December suggests that the issue was settled in the proposed way, and that Zangazur *uezd* in the last agreement meant just the western part of Zangazur. The fears of the Dashnaks about Zangazur in July 1921 were connected with their failure to include Nakhchivan in Armenia and concerns that after their surrender to the Soviets the western part might also be returned to Azerbaijan. As later developments would show, the western part of the Zangazur *uezd* was not returned to Azerbaijan.

⁸⁸⁵ Hovannisian R, *The Republic of Armenia. Volume IV*, p 405

⁸⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p 406

⁸⁸⁷ Imranli K, *op cit.*, pp 149-150; the source cited by Imranli K: *ARSPIHDA*, fn 1, l 1, fl 22, p 20; *ARSPIHDA*, fn 1, l 1, fl 14, p 19

⁸⁸⁸ *ARSPIHDA*, fn 1, l 169, fl 249/II, p 48

The same was the case with Mountainous Garabagh, in the sense that although the region was not included in the Armenian SSR under the agreement of 2 December, it was the subject of negotiations. On 4 July 1921, the plenum of the Caucasian Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist (Bolshevik) Party decided 'to include' it in the Armenian SSR, but with strong objections by Narimanov, it was decided to submit the issue for the final decision of Central Committee of the Russian Communist (Bolshevik) Party.⁸⁸⁹ In order to pacify the Dashnaks on the mountains of Zangazur and to establish Soviet rule there, Russia was prepared to give Mountainous Garabagh to Armenia, but it faced strong objections from the Azerbaijani side and, on 5 July 1921, Orjonikidze and Amayak Nazaretian, Secretary of the Caucasian Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist (Bolshevik) Party, raised the issue on the reconsideration of the decision of the previous plenum on Garabagh. It was decided that 'taking into account the necessity of national peace between the Muslims and the Armenians, the economic relations between Upper and Lower Garabagh and its permanent relations with Azerbaijan, Mountainous Garabagh shall be retained within the Azerbaijan SSR and broad autonomy shall be given to Mountainous Garabagh with Shusha city as an administrative centre'.⁸⁹⁰

The issue of granting autonomy to Mountainous Garabagh had been raised by Orjonikidze in a telephone conversation with Narimanov before the conclusion of the agreement of 2 December. Orjonikidze had proposed that Narimanov grant autonomy to Mountainous Garabagh, which should have not been mentioned in the peace agreement with Armenia, but should have come from Azerbaijan. He had repeated the same proposal in a telegram to Chicherin.⁸⁹¹ The Azerbaijani decision of 30 November 1920 on granting a right to self-determination to Mountainous Garabagh and the lack of mention of Mountainous Garabagh in the agreement of 2 December showed Orjonikidze's influence. Although the Dashnak rebellion in Zangazur compelled Russia to change this strategy, Azerbaijani objections prevented it, and resulted in the granting of autonomy status to Mountainous Garabagh within Azerbaijan SSR.

⁸⁸⁹ Imranli K, *op cit.*, pp 164-165; the source cited by Imranli K: *K istorii obrazovaniya Nagorno-Karabakhskoy Avtonomnoy Oblasti Azerbaydzhanskoy SSR (1918-1925). Dokumenty i materialy*, pp 90-91

⁸⁹⁰ Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 165; the source cited by Imranli K: *K istorii obrazovaniya Nagorno-Karabakhskoy Avtonomnoy Oblasti Azerbaydzhanskoy SSR (1918-1925). Dokumenty i materialy*, p 92

⁸⁹¹ *K istorii obrazovaniya Nagorno-Karabakhskoy Avtonomnoy Oblasti Azerbaydzhanskoy SSR (1918-1925). Dokumenty i materialy*, pp 33-34

Ottoman recognition of Garabagh as part of Azerbaijan was based on the understanding that the region was populated mostly by Muslims, who shared their ethnicity and religion. The British position on the issue can be explained by its political considerations of creating balance to support the Azerbaijani position on Garabagh and the Armenian position on Nakhchivan, to be discussed in the next chapter. Bolshevik Russia's aim was to achieve the Sovietisation of both Azerbaijan and Armenia: first to satisfy the Azerbaijani position on Garabagh in order to achieve its Sovietisation, since the Bolshevik forces were advancing from the East, so Azerbaijan should have been Sovietised first. After fulfilment of this goal, it was necessary to Sovietise Armenia, which required the satisfaction of Armenian demands without alienating Azerbaijan and trying to keep a balance between them. The evaluation of all three positions suggests that their decisions derived from their own interests, but if Garabagh was not recognised as part of Azerbaijan by the Ottoman Empire or Allied Powers, it might not have been considered as such by Bolshevik Russia as well.

The decision of Soviet Azerbaijan on the Mountainous Garabagh Autonomous *Oblast* did not come straight away. On 26 September 1921, the session of the Organisational and Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist (Bolshevik) Party decided to reconsider its decision on the organisation of Mountainous Garabagh into autonomy. The same was decided at the session of the Conference of senior officials of Garabagh together with the members of the Organisational Bureau of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist (Bolshevik) Party on 21 October 1921. The session considered it unreasonable to organise Mountainous Garabagh into a separate autonomous *oblast* and instead suggested that measures should be taken to eliminate nationalist tendencies and promote internationalism.⁸⁹²

On 12 March 1922, the Transcaucasian Federation of three Soviet republics (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia) was established. This idea dated back to 22 April 1918, when the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic was established. On 26 May 1918, the federation collapsed and three republics emerged on its area. Then in 1919, a confederation of these republics together with Dagestan was proposed as a mean of settling existing problems between the republics. This idea could not be realised because of the opposition of Armenia. Again, after Sovietisation, the federation of three republics was proposed, and was realised on

⁸⁹² Ibid., pp 99-101

12 March 1922, reorganised into the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic on 13 December 1922 and joining the USSR on 30 December 1922.

The creation of the federation was supposed to solve the territorial issues between the republics. Nevertheless, the territorial autonomy for Mountainous Garabagh was still pushed through the session of the Transcaucasian Committee of the Russian Communist (Bolshevik) Party on 27 October 1922, which was attended only by one Azerbaijani, the rest being Armenians, Georgians and Russians,⁸⁹³ and on 7 July 1923, the Azerbaijani Central Executive Committee of Soviets issued a decree 'On the formation of the Mountainous Garabagh Autonomous *Oblast*' 'out of Armenian part of the Mountainous Garabagh as a constituent part of Azerbaijan SSR with the centre in Khankandi'.⁸⁹⁴ On 18 September 1923, the session of the Garabagh *Oblast* Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist (Bolshevik) Party decided to change the Azerbaijani name 'Khankandi' into the Armenian name 'Stepanakert', in honour of Bolshevik and Dashnak Stepan Shaumian.⁸⁹⁵ The area of the autonomous *oblast* corresponded to that of 'Armenians of Mountainous Garabagh' under the temporary agreement they had concluded with the Azerbaijan Government on 22 August 1919 mentioned earlier.

The federation, realised by the Soviets, also did not last long, and in December 1936, it was dissolved and the constituent republics became parts of the USSR separately (see Map 15). Thus, confederation and/or federation ideas did not justify themselves as means of settling territorial problems between Armenia and Azerbaijan, as the former continued its territorial claims and achieved territorial autonomy for the Mountainous Garabagh within Azerbaijan SSR.

The solution declared by the US President Woodrow Wilson in 1918 for small peoples was threefold: 1) statehood; 2) disputed border areas decided by plebiscite; and 3) too small or dispersed ethnic groups, not eligible for either course of action, to benefit from the protection

⁸⁹³ Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 169; the source cited by Imranli K: *K istorii obrazovaniya Nagorno-Karabakhskoy Avtonomnoy Oblasti Azerbaydzhanskoy SSR (1918-1925). Dokumenty i materialy*, p 127

⁸⁹⁴ Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 170; the source cited by Imranli K: *K istorii obrazovaniya Nagorno-Karabakhskoy Avtonomnoy Oblasti Azerbaydzhanskoy SSR (1918-1925). Dokumenty i materialy*, pp 152-153

⁸⁹⁵ Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 170; the source cited by Imranli K: *K istorii obrazovaniya Nagorno-Karabakhskoy Avtonomnoy Oblasti Azerbaydzhanskoy SSR (1918-1925). Dokumenty i materialy*, p 188

of special minorities regimes, supervised by the Council of the new League of Nations, to solve the problem of ‘peoples, of ethnic communities, nations or nationalities distinguished by language and culture crisscrossing the lines of the existing political entities’.⁸⁹⁶

The first solution was already realised by the establishment of the Armenian Republic in 1918. A plebiscite could not be applied to Mountainous Garabagh, as there was a solid mass of Azerbaijani population between the Armenian-populated areas of the Republic of Armenia and Mountainous Garabagh, which means that Armenians living in mountainous parts of Garabagh did not border with Armenians of Armenia. This in itself brought the third solution, which meant that both Armenians within the borders of Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijanis within the borders of Armenia should have enjoyed cultural, including language, rights.

In the Soviet system, minority rights were realised by the application of Stalin’s plan of national-territorial delimitation. In the Soviet Union, only Armenians, in addition to their union republic, had an autonomous region within another union republic, in this case Azerbaijan. The same strategy was not applied to Azerbaijanis, who compactly resided in Armenia and whose number was more than the number of Armenians in the autonomous region.

Conclusion

Practical steps towards the realisation of the Armenian aspirations with regard to Garabagh were made during the *zemstvo* conferences in 1917. It was during these conferences that the notion of ‘Mountainous Garabagh’ came into being. The aim was to separate the areas populated by Armenians from Muslim-dominated Garabagh in order to construct predominantly Armenian units. Despite the efforts of the Provisional Government to construct compact Armenian units in Elizavetpol *guberniya*, the project could not be realised because of the opposition of the Muslims to the replacement of Muslim-dominated units with Armenian-dominated ones. The project could not be realised during the *de facto* Transcaucasian

⁸⁹⁶ Whelan A, ‘Wilsonian Self-Determination and the Versailles Settlement’, *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, vol 43, no 1, 1994, pp 100-101

government and Transcaucasian Republic either and turned into a claim of the Armenian Republic to Garabagh after the declaration of independence.

The arguments (ethnic, historical, economic, geographical and security) presented by the Armenian Republic to the Paris Peace Conference to substantiate its claims to Garabagh were largely political constructions. The problem with the inclusion of Mountainous Garabagh in Armenia was related to its separate geographical location from the compact contiguous areas of settlement of Armenians in the northern part of Erevan *guberniya* and the failure to enlist Ottoman, British and Bolshevik Russian support. In order to Sovietise Armenia, the Bolsheviks decided to partially satisfy the Armenian demands, granting territorial autonomy to the Armenian-populated areas of mountainous Garabagh within Azerbaijan SSR. The inclusion of the larger western part of Zangazur *uezd* of Garabagh in Armenia in 1921 was also connected with the Bolshevik aim of Sovietisation of Armenia, which could have been jeopardised by not giving partial satisfaction to the demands of the Dashnak rebels in the mountains of Zangazur. In general, the area of Armenia increased from about 10,000 square kilometres (about 3,860 square miles) in June 1918 to 29,800 square kilometres (about 11,506 square miles) owing to the sovietisation.

Neither confederation nor federation ideas put forward to solve the territorial problems between the South Caucasian republics could prove themselves in practice. Under the Wilsonian principles, only cultural rights could be applied to Armenians living in Azerbaijan, including Mountainous Garabagh. Instead of being settled under minority rights with the recognition of cultural rights, Mountainous Garabagh was given territorial autonomy in Azerbaijan, although Armenians already had their national entity, and Mountainous Garabagh did not border with Armenia. This compromise, which was one-sided as it was not made vis-a-vis Azerbaijanis compactly residing in Armenia, led to further political demands on the annexation of the region to Armenia. This contributed to the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan in 1991 and the occupation of not only Mountainous Garabagh Autonomous *Oblast*, but also the surrounding districts, including those that constituted the part of Zangazur *uezd* which was left in Azerbaijan in 1920, by Armenia.

Armenian nationalism was ethnic nationalism and aimed to include in Armenia as much Armenian-populated territory as possible and build an Armenian ethno-nation. Once again, the 'ethno-symbolist' approach to nationalism proves to be particularly useful in the analysis of the Armenian case.

Chapter 9

Case study: Nakhchyvan

The chapter explores the territorial conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the Nakhchyvan region. It analyses the historical background of the Armenian aspirations vis-a-vis Nakhchyvan, the positions of both countries on the region, and the arguments of the Armenian Government submitted to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 to substantiate its vision of territorial delimitation between the two republics with regard to the region. The chapter also examines the positions of the Ottoman Empire, the Allied Powers, Bolshevik Russia and Kemalist Turkey on the Nakhchyvan problem and assesses the impact of their stance on the settlement of the issue.

It should be noted that ‘Nakhchyvan’ refers to Nakhchyvan and Sharur-Daralayaz *uezds* of the Erevan *guberniya*.⁸⁹⁷

9.1 Historical background

The origins of the modern national Armenian aspirations regarding the Nakhchyvan region go back to 1828, when Russia created an Armenian *oblast* on the basis of Nakhchyvan and Iravan (Erevan) khanates (see Maps 6 and 7). The claim was based on an Armenian historical narrative which included Nakhchyvan in ‘ancient Armenia’ (see Map 4). The Armenian *oblast* of 1828-1840 was transformed into the Erevan *guberniya* in 1849 with minor territorial changes (compare Maps 7 and 8). In July 1917, the *guberniya* was on the Russian Interior Ministry’s list for undergoing administrative-territorial readjustment with the aim of constructing compact Armenian units, as in the case of Elizavetpol *guberniya*, discussed in the previous chapter. Apart from Erevan *guberniya*, the administrative-territorial readjustment project involved the southern parts of Tiflis *guberniya* and Kars and Batumi *oblasts*.

⁸⁹⁷ Note: Before the occupation by Russia in 1828, the area of these *uezds* constituted the Nakhchyvan khanate, which was turned into the Nakhchyvan province after the occupation in 1828 and into the Nakhchyvan *uezd* in 1840, whereas Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd* was created out of Nakhchyvan *uezd* in 1873 (*Sbornik statisticheskikh svedeniy o Kavkaze*, tom 1, Tiflis: Tipografii Glavnago Upravleniya Namestnika Kavkazskago i Melikova i Ko, 1869, otdel’ 1, chast’ 3; *Geograficheskoye-statisticheskoye slovo* Rossiyskoy Imperii, tom 5, Saint Petersburg: Tipografiya ‘V. Bezobrazov i Kompaniya’, 1885, p 857) (compare Maps 6, 7 and 8).

According to the official Russian statistics of 1916, in Erevan *guberniya*, Armenians formed a significant majority in Alexandropol (89.6%), Echmiadzin (68.6%) and New Bayazid (68.5%) *uezds*, and 52% in Erevan *uezd*. They were a significant minority in Nakhchyvan *uezd* (39.6%), not constituting a compact area and being dispersed among the Muslim population. In Tiflis *guberniya*, the Armenians were a majority with 77% in Akhalkalaki *uezd* and a minority with 37.6% in Borchaly, 29% in Akhaltsikh and 13.6% in Gori *uezds*. In Kars *oblast*, they were 32.5%, with 31% in Kaghyzman and 28.7% in Kars *okrugs*. In Batumi *oblast* they were 12.4% with 7% in Batumi and 25% in Artvin *okrugs* (see Annex II and Maps 8 and 12).

The Muslims constituted a majority in the *uezds* of Sharur-Daralayaz (67%), Nakhchyvan (59.7%) and Surmali (58%) and a significant minority in Erevan *uezd* (45.5%) of Erevan *guberniya*. Moreover, they formed 79% in Ardahan and 34.5% in Kars *okrugs* of Kars *oblast*. In Batumi *oblast*, they were 70.3% with 70.4% in Batumi and 70% in Artvin *okrugs* (see Annex II and Maps 8 and 12).

The Provisional Government aimed to construct one compact Armenian *guberniya* in the form of Alexandropol *guberniya*. The projected *guberniya* would include: Alexandropol *uezd*, to incorporate a great portion of Alexandropol *uezd* and part of Echmiadzin *uezd* of Erevan *guberniya*; Akhalkalaki *uezd*, to incorporate the whole of Akhalkalaki *uezd*, parts of Borchaly and Gori *uezds* of Tiflis *guberniya*; Lori *uezd*, to incorporate a great part of Borchaly *uezd* of Tiflis *guberniya*; and Kars and Kaghyzman *okrugs* of Kars *oblast*, without redrawing the borders of these *okrugs*⁸⁹⁸ (compare Maps 8 and 9).

Analysis of the projected Alexandropol *guberniya* shows that the Armenians in this unit would have significant predominance, constituting a majority in all its projected *uezds* (see Table 9.1 and Map 9). Comparing the Russian Interior Ministry report of 21 July 1917 on the administrative-territorial readjustment project in the South Caucasus with the memorandum presented by the Republic of Armenia to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 reveals exactly

⁸⁹⁸ Note: The Alexandropol *guberniya* was projected to be created by taking Akhalkalaki *uezd*, three village communities of Trialet *uchastok* (Nardevan, Ashkalin and Avramly) and Lori *uchastok* of Borchaly *uezd* from the Tiflis *guberniya* with cutbacks from Borchaly and Ekaterinin *uchastoks* of the same *uezd* and two villages of Gori *uezd* (Gyzylkilsa and Molit); Kars and Kaghyzman *uezds* from Kars *oblast*; and finally Alexandropol *uezd* (without its first *uchastok*) and the fourth *uchastok* of Echmiadzin *uezd*, annexing it to the former from Erevan *guberniya* (STsIA, fn 2080, l 1, fl 707, p 9op).

the same arguments: complaints on the official administrative division on the grounds that the mountainous parts were populated by Armenians and the plains by Muslims, so the separation of mountainous parts from plains was necessary on historical, ethnic and cultural grounds; and the reasonability of creating ethnic units. This creates an impression that the Russian official report on this project was informed by the arguments of the Armenian side.

Table 9.1 Population distribution in the officially projected Alexandropol *guberniya*⁸⁹⁹

Uezds	Armenians	Muslims	Others	Total
<i>Alexandropol</i>	170,000 – 83%	22,000 – 11%	12,000 – 6%	204,000
<i>Akhalkalaki</i>	94,000 – 79%	10,000 – 8%	16,000 – 12%	120,000
<i>Lori</i>	92,000 – 77%	14,000 – 12%	14,000 – 11%	120,000
<i>Kars</i>	83,000 – 43%	49,000 – 25%	61,000 – 32%	193,000
<i>Kaghyzman</i>	35,000 – 43%	26,000 – 32%	21,000 – 25%	82,000
	474,000 – 66%	121,000 – 17%	124,000 – 17%	719,000

Moreover, the report stated that in Kars and Kaghyzman okrugs of Kars *oblast*, the Armenians allegedly constituted a ‘relative majority with a bit less than the half’ and Muslims about one fourth.⁹⁰⁰ Comparison of the official Russian statistics of 1916 and those of the above-mentioned project demonstrates that the Armenians in these *okrugs* constituted 29.4% (see Annex II and Maps 8 and 12). The remaining *okrugs* of the Kars *oblast*, Ardahan and Oltu were also proposed to be annexed to Alexandropol *guberniya* rather than to Batumi *oblast* on the grounds of homogenous topography and climate, the same way of life and convenient communication lines with Alexandropol. This meant that these arguments were preferred to the religious and cultural lines between the Muslims of Ardahan and Oltu and those of Batumi *oblast*⁹⁰¹ (compare Maps 8, 12 and 9).

While preferring to include the Armenian-dominated part of Borchaly *uezd* with 37.6% of its population in the projected Alexandropol *guberniya*, the Russian Interior Ministry preferred to retain the rest of the *uezd* in Tiflis *guberniya*,⁹⁰² not proposing the annexation of the Muslim-dominated part of Borchaly *uezd* with 30.3% of its population to the neighbouring Gazakh *uezd* of the Muslim-dominated Elizavetpol *guberniya* (see Annex II and Maps 8 and 12). Instead the argument was that the separation of the Armenian-dominated part would

⁸⁹⁹ *STsIA*, fn 2080, l 1, fl 707, p 10

⁹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p 7

⁹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p 9op

⁹⁰² *Ibid.*, p 7

serve to increase the Georgian element in Borchaly *uezd*,⁹⁰³ ignoring the Muslims. The rest of Erevan *guberniya*, after the exclusion from it of a great portion of Alexandropol *uezd* and part of Echmiadzin *uezd*, was projected to undergo an internal administrative readjustment through redrawing the borders of most of its *uezds* (see Table 9.2 and Map 9):

Table 9.2 Population distribution in the officially projected Erevan *guberniya*⁹⁰⁴

Uezds	Armenians	Muslims	Others	Total
<i>Echmiadzin</i>	95,000 – 72%	36,000 – 27%	1,000 – 1%	132,000
<i>Erevan</i>	154,000 – 65%	73,000 – 31%	11,000 – 4%	238,000
<i>New Bayazid</i>	100,000 – 68%	45,000 – 32%	1,000 – 1%	146,000
<i>Sharur</i>	18,000 – 19%	80,000 – 81%	–	98,000
<i>Nakhchyvan</i>	58,000 – 41%	84,000 – 58%	1,000 – 1%	143,000
<i>Surmali</i>	34,000 – 31%	63,000 – 58%	12,000 – 11%	109,000
	459,000 – 53%	381,000 – 44%	26,000 – 3%	866, 000

In the projected Erevan *guberniya*, Armenians would have a majority of 53% against 44% Muslims. In six projected *uezds*, Armenians and Muslims would have a majority in three *uezds*. In Erevan *uezd*, the centre of which would serve as the capital of the first Armenian Republic, the ratio of Armenians would increase from 52% to 65%, whereas that of Muslims would decrease from 45.5% to 31%. Two of three projected *uezds* with Muslim majorities would be Sharur and Nakhchyvan *uezds*, projected on the basis of Sharur-Daralayaz, Erevan and Nakhchyvan *uezds*. The third *uezd* with a Muslim majority would be Surmali *uezd*, the ratio of the Muslims and Armenians remaining unchanged (compare Maps 8 and 9).

In comparison with the existing Sharur-Daralayaz and Nakhchyvan *uezds*, which together had 62.5% Muslims and 36.7% Armenians, the projected Sharur and Nakhchyvan *uezds* would have 68% Muslims and 30.7% Armenians. Muslims constituted 59.7% as against 39.6% Armenians in the existing Nakhchyvan *uezd*; in the projected one, this would be 58% and

⁹⁰³ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁴ Note: Internal administrative readjustment of Erevan *guberniya* would include the following changes: 1) Echmiadzin *uezd* without the fourth *uchastok*; 2) Erevan *uezd* without the fourth *uchastok* with the annexation of the first and second *uchastoks* from the New Bayazid *uezd* separating from the latter the villages of Pashakand, Noraduz and Ayrivang of the Aghzybir village community; 3) New Bayazid *uezd*, which would contain the rest of the second *uchastok* (the abovementioned villages from Aghzybir village community and the villages of Aghzybir, Bayli-Huseyn, Saryjly and Hajy-Mughan), the third and fourth *uchastoks* with the annexation of the second *uchastok* of Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd*, excluding Martiros village community and parts of Gendyvaz village community, namely the villages of Gayaly, Chaykand, Arynj and Terp; 4) Sharur *uezd* would contain the first *uchastok* of the Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd* and the fourth *uchastok* of Erevan *uezd*; 5) Nakhchyvan *uezd* would constitute Nakhchyvan *uezd*, Martiros village community and the villages of Gayaly, Chaykand, Arynj and Tarp of Gendyvaz village community of Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd*; 6) Surmali *uezd* (Ibid., pp 10-10op).

41%. Muslims dominated the existing Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd* with 67% as against 32% Armenians; in the projected Sharur *uezd*, Muslims would have a significant majority of 81%, with 19% Armenians (compare Maps 8 and 9).

According to the Russian Interior Ministry's report, the projected readjustment of Erevan *guberniya* would create three Armenian-dominated mountainous *uezds* on the one hand, and three predominantly Muslim *uezds*, mostly on the plains, on the other. Moreover, the administrative-territorial readjustment would create national balance and simplify local administration and judicial affairs.⁹⁰⁵ At first sight the internal readjustment of Erevan *guberniya* would appear to create an ethnic balance, with three Armenian-dominated and three Muslim-dominated *uezds*, where 'Muslims and Armenians would be in an equal position'.⁹⁰⁶ Careful study of the project reveals a different picture. The projection of Armenian-dominated *uezds* on the border of Erevan and Elizavetpol *guberniyas* would leave the Muslim-dominated *uezds* of the Erevan *guberniya* in the centre of the projected Armenian-dominated area from Kars to Mountainous Garabagh and dissociated from the Muslim-dominated Elizavetpol *guberniya*. If realised, the Muslim-dominated Nakhchyvan *uezd* would border with the Armenian-dominated Zangazur *uezd* of the projected Gandzak *guberniya* instead of bordering with the Muslim-dominated Zangazur *uezd* of Elizavetpol *guberniya*; Muslim-dominated Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd* would be distributed among three *uezds* of the Erevan *guberniya*, denying it a border with Muslim-dominated Zangazur and Javanshir *uezds* of the Elizavetpol *guberniya*: instead, the projected Armenian-dominated New Bayazid *uezd* would border with the projected Armenian-dominated Shusha, Gandzak and Karavansaray *uezds* of the projected Gandzak *guberniya* (compare Maps 8 and 9). As argued in the previous chapter, the realisation of the Russian Interior Ministry's project would implement the *Dashnaktsutiun* plan on the formation of three Armenian provinces: Gandzak, Alexandropol and Erevan.

The rationale behind the projection of Alexandropol, Erevan and Gandzak *guberniyas* was to strengthen the Armenian element in the pre-war Ottoman-Russian border in addition to increasing their number in the occupied Ottoman territories in Eastern Anatolia on one hand, and to decrease the number of Muslim-dominated administrative units in the western half of

⁹⁰⁵ Ibid., p 10op

⁹⁰⁶ Ibid., p 11

the South Caucasus by redrawing their borders so as to turn them into Armenian-dominated units wherever it was possible to do so on the other. When it was impossible to apply this to Muslim-dominated *uezds*, Armenian-dominated *uezds* were to encircle the Muslim-dominated ones to disrupt their compact neighbourhood with each other (compare Maps 8 and 9). Although the project did not envisage redrawing the borders of Kars and Kaghyzman *okrugs* in Kars *oblast*, comparison of the Russian official statistics of 1916 and the project's figures on both *okrugs* reveals a decrease in the number of Muslims and an increase in Armenians (compare Maps 8 and 9). As mentioned in Chapter 6, this decrease in the Muslim population of both *okrugs* was the result of their exile at the beginning of the war by the Russian authorities and the influx of Armenian refugees. The projection of Alexandropol *guberniya* meant that the Russian authorities did not intend to return the displaced Muslims; on the contrary, the Provisional Government tried to use this situation to contain the Muslim element even more in its border with the Muslim Ottoman Empire. The predominantly Muslim Surmali *uezd* on the pre-war Ottoman-Russian border was projected to be encircled by the projected Erevan *uezd* with a decreased number of Muslims and increased number of Armenians through redrawing its borders.

The Special Transcaucasian Committee resolution of 15 October 1917⁹⁰⁷ and the Transcaucasian Commissariat decree of 1 December 1917 declared Erevan *guberniya* disputed, as they did Elizavetpol *guberniya*.⁹⁰⁸

It is worth noting that Akbar agha Sheikh-ul-Islamov, voicing the views of Muslims, favoured the creation of cantons (administrative units smaller than *uezds*) in both of the disputed Elizavetpol and Erevan *guberniyas*. In Hovannisian's opinion, the realisation of the canton project would make Muslims dominant in four of Erevan *guberniya*'s seven *uezds* and the Armenians would be limited in size and surrounded by Muslim cantons.⁹⁰⁹ Irrespective of the canton project, under the existing Russian administrative division of Erevan and Elizavetpol *guberniyas*, the Armenians were already surrounded by Muslim-dominated areas. It was this

⁹⁰⁷ Ibid., p 160p

⁹⁰⁸ ARDA, fn 970, l 1, fl 87, p 1

⁹⁰⁹ Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, p 92; Note: Since I could not find a geographical description of the canton project in the Erevan *guberniya*, I have not prepared its map. I could only find a description of the canton project in the Elizavetpol *guberniya*, on the basis of which I have prepared Map 10.

actual division that the Armenians tried to change with their projects on relatively large *uezds*. The aim was to create a barrier of Armenian-dominated *uezds* in the Muslim-dominated borders of the existing Erevan and Elizavetpol *guberniyas*.

The Armenian-favoured Erevan and Alexandropol *guberniya* projects were never adopted because of the opposition of the Georgians and Muslims.⁹¹⁰ The involvement of Akhalkalaki and Borchaly *uezds* of Tiflis *guberniya* in these projects provoked the opposition of the Georgians, who argued that these were connected to Tiflis *guberniya* from historical, geographical and economic points of view. The Armenians claimed Akhalkalaki *uezd* to be Armenian both geographically and ethnically, being a natural continuation of the ‘Armenian plateau’ and predominantly Armenian. They argued the same about Lori *uchastok* (circuit) of Borchaly *uezd*, which they claimed to be ethnically Armenian.⁹¹¹ The Muslims did not see any need for the administrative-territorial readjustment, and in the case of readjustment, they preferred the canton project, which was opposed by the Armenians.

Thus, the Nakhchyvan and Sharur-Daralayaz *uezds* of Erevan *guberniya* entered a new stage of political development with the declaration of the Azerbaijan and Armenian Republics without administrative-territorial changes. After the establishment of the Republic of Armenia, the Armenians tried to realise almost the same project. This means that the Azerbaijani Government was already familiar with the Armenian claims and arguments. However, according to the Batumi treaties of 4 June 1918 between the Ottoman Empire and each of the South Caucasian republics, two-thirds of Nakhchyvan *uezd*, the western Sharur part of Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd* and the southern part of Erevan *uezd* were left to the Ottoman Empire,⁹¹² (see Map 11) whereas the eastern Daralayaz part of Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd* and Ordubad part of Nakhchyvan *uezd* at its east end, which were not left to the Ottomans, were claimed by both Azerbaijan and Armenia.

As noted in Chapter 7, Hovannisian, in his ‘Armenia on the road to independence, 1918’, published in 1967, did not include Daralayaz in the area of the Armenian Republic.⁹¹³ But in

⁹¹⁰ Hovannisian R, *The Republic of Armenia. Volume I*, p 81

⁹¹¹ Note: For the Georgian and Armenian arguments on the issue see *STsIA*, fn 2080, l 1, fl 627, pp 3-12.

⁹¹² Note: See the description of the borders of the Ottoman Empire in Article 2 of the Batumi Treaties of 4 June 1918.

⁹¹³ Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, p 195

his 'The Republic of Armenia. Vol I. The First Year, 1918-1919', published in 1971, he added it to the republic's territories.⁹¹⁴

Daralayaz was claimed by the Armenian delegation in Istanbul in their interviews with Enver Pasha in summer 1918, but this was opposed by the Azerbaijani delegation on the grounds that Daralayaz was populated mostly by Muslims.⁹¹⁵ The Armenian delegation also laid claim to Nakhchyvan *uezd*, including its Ordubad area,⁹¹⁶ which was not occupied by the Ottomans and was also claimed by the Azerbaijani delegation in Istanbul.⁹¹⁷ The efforts of the Armenian delegation in Istanbul to include Nakhchyvan and Sharur-Daralayaz *uezds* in the Armenian Republic did not succeed. The signing of the Mudros Armistice on 30 October 1918 and the replacement of Ottoman control with British in the South Caucasus created grounds for the active campaign by the Armenians to annex these *uezds*.

9.2 Armenian arguments on Nakhchyvan

As with Garabagh, the Republic of Armenia tried to substantiate its claims to Nakhchyvan and Sharur-Daralayaz *uezds* with ethnic, historical, economic, geographical and security arguments in the memorandum presented to the Paris Peace Conference on 17 May 1919.

Ethnic argument

According to the official Armenian memorandum, the Azerbaijani Government wanted to annex Nakhchyvan and Sharur 'under the pretext of the relative majority of the Muslim population' and 'so penetrate the heart of Armenia'.⁹¹⁸

In order to substantiate its argument, the memorandum presented ethnic data, not only on Nakhchyvan and Sharur, but also on Zangazur, Erevan and Echmiadzin. Presenting these

⁹¹⁴ Hovannisian R, *The Republic of Armenia. Volume I*, p 37

⁹¹⁵ *ARDA*, fn 894, l 10, fl 31, p 27

⁹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp 20-21

⁹¹⁷ Topchibashev A, *Memorandum pred'yavlenniy nakhodyashchimsya v Konstantinopole pochyotnym predstavityam derzhav Antanty chlenom pravitel'stva Azerbaydzhanskoy Respubliki, chrezvychaynim ministrom-poslannikom pri pravitel'stvakh Blistatel'noy Porty, Armenii i Gruzii Ali Mardanbekom Topchibashevym (noyabr' 1918)*, p 20

⁹¹⁸ FO 608/82, pp 342-343

uezds as the ‘border districts of the Araz valley’, the memorandum noted that ‘it would be enough to study the ethnographic data in the bordering districts of the Araz valley to be convinced that the facts speak in favour of Armenia’⁹¹⁹ (see Table 9.3).

Table 9.3 Statistics provided by the Armenian memorandum in 1919

Uezds	Total	Armenians	Muslims	Kurds	Other Christians
<i>Zangazur</i>	152,000	100,000	50,000	-	2,000
<i>Nakhchyvan</i>	119,000	51,000	68,000 (inc.Kurds)	-	-
<i>Sharur</i>	90,000	30,000	58,000	-	2,000
<i>Erevan</i>	199,000	106,000	86,000	7,000	-
<i>Echmiadzin</i>	167,000	115,000	41,000	11,000	-
	727,000	402,000	303,000	18,000	4,000

Thus, the Armenian memorandum added *Zangazur uezd*, which was part of Garabagh in the Elizavetpol *guberniya*, to the list of *Nakhchyvan* and *Sharur* in the *Erevan guberniya*, although the subject was Azerbaijani claims to *Nakhchyvan* and *Sharur*. Adding *Zangazur uezd*, which bordered *Nakhchyvan* from the east, was not enough to turn the Armenians into a majority in these three *uezds* on the basis of either the official Russian data of 1916 (265,466 Muslims and 184,429 Armenians – see Table 9.4) or Armenian memorandum figures of 1919, which excluded the Muslim-dominated *Daralayaz* part of the *Sharur-Daralayaz uezd* (176,000 Muslims and 181,000 Armenians – see Table 9.3). For that reason, *Erevan* and *Echmiadzin uezds* on the north of the *Sharur-Daralayaz uezd* were added to the list in order to construct the claim that Muslim-dominated *uezds* were located well into the centre of the Armenian populated areas and the total number of Muslims was less than that of the Armenians in these five *uezds*, excluding the *Daralayaz* part of *Sharur-Daralayaz uezd* (see Map 9).

Table 9.4 Official Russian statistics of 1916⁹²⁰

Uezds	Total	Armenians	Muslims	Others
<i>Zangazur</i>	226,398	101,055	123,395	1,948
<i>Nakhchyvan</i>	136,859	54,209	81,714	936
<i>Sharur</i>	90,250	29,165	60,357	728
<i>Erevan</i>	205,617	106,933	93,554	5,130
<i>Echmiadzin</i>	167,786	115,026	50,963	1,797
	826,910	406,388	409,983	10,539

⁹¹⁹ Ibid., p 342

⁹²⁰ *Kavkazskiy kalendar' na 1917 god*, Tiflis: Tipografiya Kantselyarii Namestnika Y.I.V. na Kavkaze, 1916, pp 194-197, 214-221

The construction of the suitable border areas continued with the construction of ethnic data by playing with figures. Thus, in the same memorandum, figures on Zangazur *uezd* differed from each other. In the claims to Garabagh, Zangazur's population was 127,000 with 90,000 Armenians and 37,000 Muslims;⁹²¹ in the claims to Nakhchyvan, the total population of Zangazur was increased to 152,000 with 100,000 Armenians and 50,000 Muslims, whereas according to the official Russian statistics of 1916, the total population of the *uezd* was 226,398 with 101,055 Armenians and 123,395 Muslims (see Table 9.4 and Map 8).

The figures on Nakhchyvan also did not correspond to the official Russian figures of 1916: the total population of Nakhchyvan was shown as 119,000 by the memorandum, whereas in the official statistics it was 136,859 (see Table 9.4 and Map 8). If the decrease was the result of the Ottoman occupation of the area in June-October 1918, then it should have increased the number of Muslims from 81,714 in 1916 in the *uezd*, not reduced it to 68,000 as shown in the memorandum. It should have decreased the Armenian population significantly from 54,209 in 1916, not to 51,000 as shown in the memorandum. The reason for such argument is that as a result of the Ottoman occupation of Surmali *uezd* and parts of Nakhchyvan, Sharur-Daralayaz, Echmiadzin and Erevan *uezds*, about 100,000 Muslims of other parts of the Erevan *guberniya* under Armenian control moved to the territories occupied by the Ottoman Empire and the Armenians who lived in the latter areas moved to those outside the Ottoman Empire.⁹²² The population move from both sides increased the number of Muslims in Nakhchyvan, Sharur, the southern part of Erevan *uezd* and Surmali *uezd* on the one hand and that of the Armenians in Echmiadzin, the rest of Erevan *uezd* and Daralayaz part of Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd*, Muslim-dominated until then, on the other. Moreover, the activities of Andranik in Zangazur compelled its Muslim population to find refuge, among other places, in Nakhchyvan. This means that if the memorandum took the population move into account, the Muslims should have had majority in Nakhchyvan; and if the memorandum did not take the population move into account, the Muslims should again have dominated. In other words, there is no logical explanation for the reduced number of Muslims in Nakhchyvan given in the memorandum.

⁹²¹ FO 608/82, p 325

⁹²² *Azerbaydzhanskaya Respublika. Dokumenty i materialy 1918-1920 gg.*, dok 95, p 137

Regarding Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd*, the memorandum only included ethnic data on Sharur (excluding Daralayaz). After the signing of the Mudros Armistice and the replacement of Ottoman control with British in the South Caucasus, armed bands of Ottoman Armenians from Sasun and Mush had settled 15,000 Armenian refugees (Hovannisian gives the number of Armenian refugees in Daralayaz as 36,000⁹²³) in the lands and properties of the expelled Muslims in Daralayaz in November and December 1918.⁹²⁴ Although Daralayaz was part of Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd* and Azerbaijan made claims to the whole *uezd* on the grounds of its Muslim predominance, the memorandum did not consider it: owing to the occupation by the Ottoman Armenians, the Republic of Armenia found Daralayaz, which was necessary to connect Erevan with Zangazur and Mountainous Garabagh, to be part of it and avoided its consideration in its memorandum. In addition to this, despite the Muslim population influx into and Armenian exodus from Sharur, as with Nakhchyvan, increasing the already existing Muslim majority in Sharur, the Armenian memorandum data again reduced the number of Muslims here, instead of increasing that of Armenians.

The comparison of the ethnic data for Erevan and Echmiadzin *uezds* in the 1916 official Russian source and 1919 Armenian memorandum reveals almost the same figures for the Armenian population, whereas the number of Muslims in Erevan *uezd* decreased from 93,554 in 1916 to 86,000 in 1919 and in Echmiadzin *uezd* from 50,963 in 1916 to 41,000 in 1919 (compare Tables 9.4 and 9.3). This shows that the memorandum took Muslim displacement from these *uezds*, as well as from Zangazur (though with contradictory data), into account, whereas it did not apply the same approach to Nakhchyvan and the Sharur part of Sharur-Daralayaz *uezds*, where the Armenian population also decreased.

In total, in these five *uezds* (Zangazur, Nakhchyvan, Sharur(-Daralayaz), Erevan and Echmiadzin), in the memorandum's calculations, there were 402,000 Armenians and 303,000 Muslims (see Table 9.3). The memorandum claimed that the figures it had presented were provided 'by the old imperial governing body of Russia (Caucasian Calendar), where censorship did its best to reduce the exact figures of the Armenian population to a minimum in order to stifle any ambition towards independence'.⁹²⁵ In reality, the figures provided by

⁹²³ Hovannisian R, *The Republic of Armenia. Volume I*, p 127

⁹²⁴ Ibid., p 229

⁹²⁵ FO 608/82, p 343

this calendar, referred to in this thesis, including this section (see the source of Table 9.4), differed from the Armenian figures in the memorandum. According to this source, there were 406,388 Armenians and 409,983 Muslims in these five *uezds* in 1916 (see Table 9.4). Comparison of the official Russian statistics on these *uezds* with those of the memorandum reveals a 4,388 decrease in the Armenian population and a 106,983 decrease in the number of Muslims.

Concerning the memorandum's claim that the Russian authorities intentionally reduced the number of Armenians to stifle national ambitions, it should be mentioned that it was because of Russia that the number of Armenians increased in the South Caucasus. Moreover, the territorial-administrative readjustment project of the Russian Interior Ministry of July 1917, discussed elsewhere, disproves this argument: it was pro-Armenian biased rather than against Armenian intentions to create compact Armenian units. The fact that the project favoured the construction of compact Armenian units was not connected with the favourable attitude of Russia towards Armenians. This should be explained by the Russian intention of disrupting the compactness of the Muslims in the South Caucasus, including in the border areas with the Muslim Ottoman Empire, which could only be achieved with the help of the Christian Armenians, since they were the most numerous Christians in the neighbourhood of the Muslims in the region, including in the border with the Ottoman Empire. This policy had been applied since the Russian occupation of Muslim-populated areas of the South Caucasus in the early nineteenth century.

Regarding the number of Muslims, as also mentioned previously, in the opinion of Alimardan bay Topchubashov, Head of the Azerbaijani Delegation at the Paris Peace Conference, 'Russian statistics of population were always incorrect from the Tartar point of view, as in order to avoid taxation and the possibilities of military service the Tartars always understated the number of their sons and for other reasons did not include a number of their unmarried women'.⁹²⁶ Topchubashov's argument is more convincing than that of Avetis Aharonian, Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia at the Paris Peace Conference, who submitted the memorandum, and this suggests that not the number of Armenians but the number of Muslims was lower in the Russian official statistics than in reality.

⁹²⁶ FO 608/84, p 100

The memorandum continued, 'it is also important to understand that these figures are based on the old Russian administrative system with its artificial divisions, because if the neighbouring districts of the Araz valley were divided according to the geographical and ethnographical conditions of the country, we would obtain the following figures for the five districts under discussion: 446,000 Armenians and 309,000 Muslims. We also take these figures from official sources.'⁹²⁷ If this 'official source' was the 'Caucasian Calendar', as mentioned in the memorandum, then the official source was distorted by the memorandum, since this calendar did not contain the figures cited there. Moreover, the Armenian document did not follow the 'old Russian administrative system with its artificial divisions', as it claimed, but cut off the Daralayaz part of the Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd*.

Trying to substantiate the reasons behind the lower number of Armenians than Muslims, the memorandum also argued that this was due to the Safavid Shah Abbas who in the early seventeenth century 'forced all the Armenians of the Araz valley to emigrate to the interior of Persia'.⁹²⁸ Armenian historians give different totals for the number of Armenians deported in the early seventeenth century, ranging between indefinite expressions such as 'large numbers' and 20,000 to 500,000.⁹²⁹ Following the logic of the memorandum that Shah Abbas wanted to

⁹²⁷ FO 608/82, p 343

⁹²⁸ Ibid., p 343; Note: Referring to the French traveller, Tavernier, the memorandum argued that '27,000 Armenian families (i.e. 200,000 Armenians in today's terms [in 1919 – I.K.]) were forced by Shah Abbas to settle in Gilan alone. A more considerable number of Armenians were sent to Isfahan. A third group was dispersed between Shiraz and Isfahan. The whole part of the country between Erevan and Tauris was completely ruined by Shah Abbas to make it useless to the Ottoman army as supply centres. He wanted to make the country a desert. All the Julfa inhabitants were deported to Persia' (Ibid., pp 343-344).

⁹²⁹ Ch'amch'yants' M, *History of Armenia: From B.C. 2247 to the Year of Christ 1780 or 1229 of the Armenian Era* (translated from the original Armenian text by Johannes Avdall), Volume II, pp 356-357; Gregorian V, 'Minorities of Isfahan: The Armenian Community of Isfahan 1587-1722', *Iranian Studies*, vol 7, no 3/4, 1974, p 664; Bournoutian G, 'Eastern Armenia from the Seventeenth Century to the Russian Annexation' in Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Volume II, p 96; Kouymjian D, 'Armenia from the Fall of the Cilician Kingdom (1375) to the Forced Emigration under Shah Abbas (1604)' in Hovannisian (ed.), *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Volume II, p 25; Payaslian S, *The History of Armenia*, p 106; Nalbandian L, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement: The Development of Armenian Political Parties through the Nineteenth Century*, pp 17-18; Herzig E, 'The Armenian Merchants of New Julfa, Isfahan: A Study in Pre-modern Asian Trade', *Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Oriental Studies for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Oxford*, 1991, pp 60-61; Here it should also be mentioned that while talking about the deportation of Armenians, Armenian authors include in this story, as well as in the number of deported Armenians, the Caucasian Albanians, who were of the same confession as Armenians, presenting them as Armenians and narrating all events related to them as part of Armenian history. As for non-Armenian historians, one being John Perry, based on primary sources, he concluded that about 3,000 families of Georgians, Armenians and Turks, who survived the deportation initiated by Shah Abbas, were settled at New Julfa by Isfahan and on lands around the capital and in the Bakhtiari foothills, where their descendants still live. Five hundred Armenian families were sent to Shiraz at the request of the governor. However, according to the memorandum, the number of Armenians who were settled in Isfahan was even greater than the number of

turn the area between Erevan and Tauris (modern Tabriz in Iran) into a desert,⁹³⁰ Shah Abbas would have had to deport not only the Armenians, but the whole population in this area, including Muslims. The British scholar on the Safavid period, Edmund Herzig, referring to one colophon of 1604, echoed by other colophons and supported by European sources, wrote that Shah Abbas's decision was 'to deport the entire civilian population (Christian and Muslim)' when he realised that he could not face the Ottoman forces in the field.⁹³¹ This suggests that if the Armenian population had been decreased by Shah Abbas's deportation, the number of Muslims could also be expected to decrease.

This argument is further strengthened by the facts offered by John R. Perry, the American scholar of Iranian studies. Thus, with reference to Abbasgulu agha Bakhykhanov, he wrote that Shah Abbas moved 30,000 Turkic Gajar families from Ganja (in present-day Azerbaijan) to Marv and Astarabad in Iran.⁹³² Referring to Iskandar Munshi, he mentioned that in 1615, Shah Abbas 'continued his depopulation of Transaraxian Azerbaijan':⁹³³ many of the settled populace, 'who had fled from war-torn Qarābāgh and Shirvān to Georgia were extradited and sent to Mazandaran, together with both peasants and tribesmen still in Qarābāgh and Shirvān who were suspected of having collaborated with the Ottomans. Again, those who resisted – as the Ahmadlū of Qarābāgh – were massacred. Some 50,000 families were thus resettled at Abbas' favourite Caspian resort of Farahābād, "both to develop that province and to requite their ingratitude." The following winter they were joined by 2-3,000 Georgian and Ganja'i prisoners, survivors of Abbas' campaign against the "rebel" Tahmūras.'⁹³⁴ Based on Marie-Félicité Brosset and Alexandre Manvelichvili, Perry also wrote about the deportation of 6,000 families of Georgians and 12,000 Turks from Tiflis in 1735 by Nadir Shah of Iran. Referring

those settled in Gilan, i.e. more than 27,000 families, whereas Perry's data suggests that this figure should have been fewer than 3,000 families. Out of this number, 500 Armenian families were sent to Shiraz to engage in viticulture (Perry J, 'Forced Migration in Iran during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *Iranian Studies*, vol 8, no 4, 1975, p 207).

⁹³⁰ FO 608/82, p 344

⁹³¹ Herzig E, 'The Armenian Merchants of New Julfa, Isfahan: A Study in Pre-modern Asian Trade', *Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Oriental Studies for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Oxford*, 1991, p 53

⁹³² Perry J, *op cit.*, p 206

⁹³³ Note: According to Perry, 'Greater Iran' was divided into 'six mega-provinces: Azarbaijan (including all Transaraxian territories); Kurdistan (including Luristan and the Bakhtiari mountains); Central Iran (Isfahan, eastern Irāq-i Ajam and the Caspian littoral); Fars (including Khuzistan, Dashtistān and Lār); Khurasan (including Gurgān and Mary, but excluding Herat); and Afghanistan (effectively Herat and Qandahār provinces)' (Ibid., p 204).

⁹³⁴ Ibid., p 207

to Ann S. K. Lambton, he continued that Agha Mahammad Shah Gajar of Iran also 'contributed to the chronic depopulation of northern Azarbaijan in his irredentist campaigns against Georgia' at the end of the eighteenth century.⁹³⁵

The above-mentioned facts show that the forced deportations realised by Safavid Shah Abbas in the seventeenth century and by Nadir Shah Afshar and Agha Mahammad Shah Gajar in the eighteenth century affected not only Armenians, but other peoples as well, and resulted in a decrease in the numbers of Muslims and Georgians in the South Caucasus as well. For that reason, the Armenian memorandum's argument, which connected the lower number of the Armenians than Muslims in the region with Shah Abbas's deportations, is unsustainable.

According to the same memorandum, it was only after the Turkmanchay Treaty in 1828 that 'Armenia' could live a 'more or less free life and its population reached the aforementioned figures'.⁹³⁶ This treaty was indeed the starting point of the increase of the Armenian population in the South Caucasus (see Table 9.5). Because of the settlement process, discussed in Chapter 4, the Armenians increased from 17% in 1828 (Nakhchyvan khanate) to 36.7% in 1916 (Nakhchyvan and Sharur-Daralayaz *uezds*), whereas Muslims decreased from 83% to 62.5% (compare Table 9.5 and Annex II). Comparison of the data reveals a more than doubling in the number of Armenians in 1828-1916 against a 24.7% decrease in the number of Muslims in the same period. Although the Armenian population, despite intensive settlement, could not form a majority in the region, nevertheless, with its scattered distribution, it violated the compact distribution of the Muslim population and ethnic proportion, which Armenian nationalists tried to use in their claims (see Map 9).

The existence of peasantry constitutes a powerful claim to territory.⁹³⁷ This claim in the Armenian case in the Nakhchyvan region started to be created in the early nineteenth century, and means that in 1918, in the Nakhchyvan region, though distanced and isolated because of Muslim-dominated lands, the Armenians had some compact lands. Despite the Armenian minority and dispersed distribution, these lands formed the basis of the Armenian claims to the whole area of these two *uezds*.

⁹³⁵ Ibid., pp 209, 211

⁹³⁶ FO 608/82, p 344

⁹³⁷ Burghardt A, 'The Bases of Territorial Claims', *Geographical Review*, vol 63, no 2, 1973, p 232

Table 9.5 Statistics on the Armenians in the Nakhchyvan region in the early 19th century⁹³⁸

Names	Muslims	Local Armenians	Armenian settlers		Armenians in total	Total
Nakhchyvan province and Ordubad okrug ⁹³⁹	24,385 (59%)	5,078 (12%)	12,019 (29%)		17,097 (41%)	41,482
			11,992 <i>from Persia</i> (99.8% of all Armenian settlers and 29% of total population)	27 <i>from Ottoman Empire</i> (0.2% of all Armenian settlers and 0.06% of total population)		
Villagers	17,482 (54% of total villagers and 42% of total population)	4,359 (13% of total villagers and 10% of total population)	10,727 (33% of total villagers and 26% of total population)		15,086 (46%) (88% of total Armenian population and 36% of total population)	32,568 (78% of total population)
			10,700 <i>from Persia</i> (99.7% of all Armenian settler villagers and 33% of total villagers)	27 <i>from Ottoman Empire</i> (0.25% of all Armenian settler villagers and 0.07% of total villagers)		

⁹³⁸ Note: The table has been prepared on the basis of Shopen I, *Istoricheskiy pamyatnik sostoyaniya Armyanskoy Oblasti v epokhu eya prisoedineniya k Rossiyskoy Imperii*, pp 635-638.

⁹³⁹ Note: These two units were created on the basis of the former Nakhchyvan khanate after the creation of the Armenian *oblast* as its parts.

Finalising the ethnic argument, the memorandum noted that ‘today, as we have already said, the Armenian population of the five neighbouring districts of the Araz valley, Zangazur, Nakhchyvan, Sharur, Erevan and Echmiadzin, is 436,000, while the Muslim population is only 296,000’.⁹⁴⁰ First, these figures were different from those which the memorandum had ‘already said’. Those figures for these five *uezds* were 402,000 Armenians and 303,000 Muslims, whereas by the end, the number of Armenians had increased to 436,000 and that of the Muslims was reduced to 296,000. A similar issue occurred with the ethnic arguments on the Armenian claims to the mountainous parts of the Elizavetpol *guberniya* in the same memorandum.⁹⁴¹

Historical argument

As in the case of Garabagh, the official Armenian memorandum presented historical arguments. It argued that the ‘valley of Araz has been for centuries the scene of Armenian history. Our civilisation and the politics of our past were formed around this valley. It is there that we find the centres, the metropolises of the intellectual life of Armenia. It is there that the city of Vagarshabad, the residence of Tiridates the Great, the first to convert to Christianity, was located. Armavir, Artashat and Dvin were also situated there. This valley was also the natural centre around which our moral and religious life were organised. The famous Echmiadzin Cathedral – the headquarters of the Catholicos – was established there in 303-305.’⁹⁴² It continued: ‘It is in the valley of Araz that Armenian art manifested itself in all its brilliance. Many admirable historical monuments, many convents, churches, tombs, inscriptions, most of which had been conserved up until today despite being through so many tests, testify to a powerful and rich Armenian civilisation that flourished around this valley. The economic life was as flourishing as the spiritual culture. Many cities and villages prospered around the edges of Araz.’⁹⁴³

With regard to these arguments, first it should be mentioned that the ‘Araz valley’ extended along the Araz River, starting in Erzurum province in Eastern Anatolia, covering the areas in

⁹⁴⁰ FO 608/82, p 344

⁹⁴¹ Ibid., pp 318, 325

⁹⁴² Ibid., pp 344-345

⁹⁴³ Ibid., p 345

Surmali, Echmiadzin, Erevan, Sharur-Daralayaz and Nakhchyvan *uezds* of Erevan *guberniya* up to Zangazur *uezd* of Elizavetpol *guberniya* in the South Caucasus. The memorandum did not clarify in which particular part of the Araz valley these historical place names were localised. The fact is that only two of the five place names mentioned by the memorandum, namely Echmiadzin and Vagarshabad, could be found on the official Russian maps by that time. Concerning the rest of the place names, as was discussed in Chapter 4, the archaeological excavations undertaken in the area in the late nineteenth century could not localise ‘Armavir’ in the place suggested by the Armenians on the borders of Echmiadzin and Surmali *uezds*, whereas no archaeological investigations were conducted with the purpose of localising Artashat and Dvin in the Tsarist period: they were made in the Soviet period. Although no archaeological investigation was undertaken with regard to the localisation of Vagarshabad either, it has been suggested that Vagarshabad’s ‘localisation’ closer to Echmiadzin on the official maps of the late nineteenth century could be explained by the impact of the Armenian nationalist movement.

The statement made by Avetis Aharonian, Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia at the Paris Peace Conference, at the meeting of the Council of Ten on 26 February 1919, was more specific in terms of the ‘localisation’ of the mentioned place names than the above-mentioned memorandum he presented on 17 May 1919 to the Conference. Thus, while talking about the historical importance of the South Caucasus for the Armenians, he had noted, ‘the ecclesiastical centre for all Armenians is situated within the territory of the Republic at Echmiadzin, on the banks of the Arax. Within this territory are also to be found nearly all the capitals of the various dynasties of Great Armenia, i.e. Armavir, Vagharchapat, Dvin, Artachat, Yervandakert, Yervandachat and Ani.’⁹⁴⁴ Aharonian had included three more place names in his list, namely ‘Yervandakert, Yervandachat and Ani’, in February 1919 and localised them together with those in the memorandum ‘within the territory of the [Armenian] Republic’, which did not include either Sharur-Daralayaz or Nakhchyvan *uezd* in February. As for Ch’amch’yants’, the area where he ‘localised’ Vagarshabad, Armavir, Artashat and Dvin on his map of the late eighteenth century corresponded to the Echmiadzin and Erevan *uezds* of Erevan *guberniya* in 1919, with Ani in the border of Kaghyzman and Kars *okrugs* of the Kars *oblast*, whereas neither ‘Yervandakert’ nor ‘Yervandachat’ can be found on his map.

⁹⁴⁴ *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Paris Peace Conference, 1919*. Volume IV, Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1943, p 151

Concerning ‘Armenian tradition’ with regard to Nakhchyvan, it was considered to be the ‘residence of Noah after the landing of the ark’.⁹⁴⁵ Lloyd Bailey, scholar of the Old Testament, wrote that an attempt to trace the tradition of the landing place of Noah’s ark atop Aghry Daghy to the first century AD is made by quoting Josephus Flavius that “the ark rested on the top of certain mountain in Armenia ... both he [Noah] and his family went out ... the Armenians call this place ‘The Place of Descent’.”⁹⁴⁶ He argued against the interpretation of William Whiston (translator of the ‘Antiquities of the Jews’ by Flavius in 1737), who seemed to identify this “place of descent” with modern ‘Nakhichavan’ as meaning “the *first* place of descent”.⁹⁴⁷ Bailey, based on Joseph Hübschmann, wrote that the earliest form of this place name is ‘Naxcavan, which, contrary to the often quoted opinion of Whiston, does *not* mean “place of descent” and thus cannot be equated with anything in Josephus’ text. Rather, the name consists of a place name, Naxč (or ‘Naxuč’) plus *avan*, “market town”’.⁹⁴⁸

This issue was discussed in Friedrich Murad’s volume ‘Ararat und Masis’, published in 1901. According to Hübschmann, Murad ‘attempted to present evidence for a native Armenian flood story [...] which supposedly gave rise to the designation Naxčavan for a city lying approximately 100 kilometres southeast of the mountain’.⁹⁴⁹ The evidence provided by Murad was a quotation from Flavius and the interpretation of the word ‘Naxčavan’ through the Armenian language: Naxčavan (=Naxijavan), which means “first settling place” (from *nax*, “at first, before, prime”, and *ijawan*, “shelter, temporary quarters, station, stopping place”).⁹⁵⁰ Hübschmann argued that the forms ‘Naxijavan, Naxijevan, Naxjavan, [and] Naxjuan (along with Naxčavan and Naxčuan), are traceable in documents only after the tenth century’.⁹⁵¹ Discussing the issue, the scholar wrote that ‘Josephus merely leaves us with his statement that the ark’s location was “in Armenia, on the peak of a mountain”’, and speaks neither of the province of Ararat nor of the mountain of Masis nor of the city of Nakhchyvan.⁹⁵²

⁹⁴⁵ Bailey L, *Noah: The Person and the Story in History and Tradition*, Columbia: University of South Carolina, 1989, p 190

⁹⁴⁶ Ibid., pp 71-72

⁹⁴⁷ Ibid., p 72

⁹⁴⁸ Cited in Bailey L, *op cit.*, p 73

⁹⁴⁹ Ibid., p 190

⁹⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁹⁵¹ Ibid., pp 191-192

⁹⁵² Ibid., p 195

In the context of debates among the 19th-early 20th century scholars about the location of the mountain on which Noah's ark came to rest, the Armenian nationalists supported the geographical vision which located the mountain not on the south of Lake Van (one possible and dominant interpretation), but on the north, on the border of the South Caucasus and Eastern Anatolia, as this geography aided the construction of a new Armenian national historical narrative. This 'localisation' was also instrumental in the construction of such notions as the 'plain of Ararat or, in a most limited sense, the valley of Araz' by the official Armenian memorandum.⁹⁵³

Mass Armenian settlement in the South Caucasus, as discussed in Chapter 4 and this chapter, dated back to the 19th-early 20th centuries, which created some small compact, but dispersed Armenian areas in Nakhchyvan. However, even these settlements were distanced from the compact Armenian areas in Alexandropol, Echmiadzin and Erevan *uezds* (see Map 12). The reference to historical arguments by the Armenian memorandum was guided by the aim of strengthening the validity of the claims to Nakhchyvan on the grounds of a long-term Armenian presence in the area, presenting it as the border region of the 'Araz valley', although not giving any specific historical place name in Sharur-Daralayaz and Nakhchyvan *uezds*.

The rejection of an Armenian primordialist interpretation does not lead to its replacement by an Azerbaijani primordialist interpretation. This is linked to the process of the establishment of the first Azerbaijan Republic and the formation of the Azerbaijani national identity, the major factors instrumental in which were outlined in the earlier chapters of the thesis.

Economic argument

According to the memorandum, the Araz valley, where the Nakhchyvan and Sharur-Daralayaz *uezds* were located, was the most vital artery for the economic life of Armenia, through which exchanges of goods between the mountainous districts took place and helped support economic relations with neighbouring nations. Moreover, it was argued that as Armenia was a mountainous country, it had little land suitable for agriculture. For that reason,

⁹⁵³ FO 608/82, pp 336-337

the Araz valley was presented as the only place where the Armenians could practise subtropical cultivation: the Araz River watered the land, so it was fertile. The memorandum argued that Azerbaijan had eighteen times more fertile lands than the lands that could be farmed in the Araz valley, so Azerbaijan did not need the valley. Emphasizing the importance of the Araz valley for Armenia, the document also noted that without it Armenia would be divided into many mountainous units and provinces without any link between them, economically poor and backward. The population would be obliged to emigrate, and Armenia would soon become a desert.⁹⁵⁴

The economic importance of the valley for Armenia was underlined by the railway line between Alexandropol and Erevan, following the course of the Araz River, which connected Kars, Erevan and Alexandropol to Nakhchyvan, to Zangazur and through Zangazur to Mountainous Garabagh. Moreover, according to the memorandum, so-called Turkish Armenia and Russian Armenia were connected by the Araz valley and if the Armenians were deprived of this valley up to Zangazur, not only would the link between the two main parts of Armenia be broken, but so-called Russian Armenia would be devoid of all means of communication.⁹⁵⁵

Regarding the economic arguments of the Azerbaijani Government, irrigation systems (in some cases flowing from Garabagh through the mountains), common routes of livestock transhumance and pastures, the same way of economic life, and the same fields of speciality crop (cotton, rice, etc) united Nakhchyvan and Garabagh into one inseparable unit in an economic sense. Already existing trade relations between the two regions would be strengthened even more with the finalisation of the construction of the Baku-Julfa railway.⁹⁵⁶

According to Yuriy Barsegov, ethnic, language, economic, historical and other factors should be combined while delimitating national territories. Under economic factors, he included economic and trade relations, division of labour between different provinces of the national territory, presence of markets and raw material reserves, access to the sea or to international water arteries taking into account the character of national transport systems and their

⁹⁵⁴ Ibid., pp 338-339

⁹⁵⁵ Ibid., p 338

⁹⁵⁶ ARDA, fn 970, l 1, fl 227, p 20

importance for the economy of the country. However, his consideration of the economic factor excluded the possibility of territorial expansion with reference to the economic needs of establishment of 'vital space' for some countries.⁹⁵⁷

The area claimed by the Armenians in Eastern Anatolia had two major rivers, the Tigris and Euphrates and access to the Mediterranean and Black Seas (see Maps 5 and 13). Moreover, the Kars-Julfa railway passed through Kars *okrug* and Alexandropol, Echmiadzin and Erevan *uezds*, which were mostly under Armenian control (see Map 8). This means that even without the Nakhchyvan region the economic needs of Armenia could be satisfied, since apart from the above-mentioned advantages of Eastern Anatolia with its access to two major rivers and seas, the fertile Araz valley started in the Armenian-claimed Eastern Anatolia, in Erzurum province (see Map 5). Through the latter, it could also have a border with Persia. Moreover, Armenia already had access to a railway, which could be extended from Kars *okrug* through Erzurum province to trade with Persia. Also taking into account the fact that Garabagh and Nakhchyvan were not as fertile as Eastern Anatolia and could not be considered economically advantageous areas, the Armenian memorandum's reference to the Nakhchyvan region derived from the aim to connect Garabagh through Nakhchyvan to the Erevan *uezd* and further to Eastern Anatolia under the Araz valley-related economic argument. For that reason, the Armenian claims could be placed within Barsegov's 'vital space' category, and can be considered not economic, but land-related.

Geographical and security arguments

The memorandum presented the Araz valley as part of 'Upper Armenian plateaus'. Trying to make another link to Armenia, the memorandum added that 'the Araz valley formed the major route through the Armenian mountains up to Zangazur', and 'had all the characteristics of the mountainous countries without any link whatsoever with the plain that extends to the Caspian Sea'.⁹⁵⁸ According to this document, the divisions of the Russian administrative system were artificial and not based on ethnic and geographical considerations.⁹⁵⁹

⁹⁵⁷ Barsegov Yu, *Territoriya v mezhdunarodnom prave: yuridicheskaya priroda territorial'nogo verkhovenstva i pravoviye osnovaniya rasporyazheniya territoriy*, Moscow: Gosyurizdat, 1958, p 137

⁹⁵⁸ FO 608/82, p 337

⁹⁵⁹ Ibid., p 343

The ethnic figures on Armenians and Muslims have been analysed earlier and demonstrated that Muslims constituted a majority in the region, despite their possibly reduced ethnic data in the Russian statistics. It was also argued that the Russian administrative divisions were not artificial and were not a Russian construction, as was claimed by the Armenian memorandum. The boundaries between Elizavetpol and Erevan *guberniyas* in the area concerning the current case almost corresponded to the boundaries between the khanates of Garabagh (western border of the Zangazur *uezd*) and Nakhchyvan (eastern borders of the Nakhchyvan and Sharur-Daralayaz *uezds*) (compare Maps 6 and 8). As for the connection which the memorandum tried to create between the 'Araz valley' and the 'Armenian plateau', as was argued in Chapter 8, the latter was a politically-motivated construction.

According to the memorandum's security arguments, the Araz valley was also the only means of defence of Armenia: 'Anyone who possesses the Araz valley from Zangazur up to Surmali or Nakhchyvan will be the master of the heart of Armenia, Ararat and Erevan'.⁹⁶⁰ From a strategic point of view, the Araz valley was argued to be 'not a frontier to Armenia, but its vital centre'. It was also argued that even in the future, when another city became the capital of Armenia, Erevan would remain the unique centre of northern Armenia around which the Armenians of Kars, Kaghyzman, Alexandropol, Pambak, Elizavetpol, Lori, Gazakh, Mountainous Garabagh and Zangazur would be united with a population of 1,300,000 inhabitants. Without this valley the idea of a united Armenia, in the words of the memorandum, would always remain an unachievable dream. It was argued that the desire of Azerbaijan to annex the Araz valley was motivated by the intention to prevent the Armenians from achieving their territorial unity by dividing Armenia into two parts. Control over the Araz valley was considered to be important to deter the menace of pan-Islamism and pan-Turanism and deny Caucasian Tartars from having a common border with Turkey.⁹⁶¹

On one hand, Armenia presented 'pan-Turanism' as a danger, on the other hand claiming the Nakhchyvan region which was predominantly Muslim or, by the logic of the Armenian memorandum, predominantly pan-Turanist. This means that the inclusion of the region in Armenia would not solve but create security problems. Taking into account that the Nakhchyvan region was located between Garabagh and other Armenian-claimed areas to the

⁹⁶⁰ Ibid., p 340

⁹⁶¹ Ibid., pp 340-341

west, the Armenian claims to Nakhchyvan were related to its geographical position as a bridge to Garabagh. However, taking into account also the fact that while making claims to the Nakhchyvan and Sharur-Daralayaz *uezds*, the Armenian memorandum excluded Daralayaz, since considered as an integral part of Armenia, this bridge could have been established through Daralayaz as well without any need for other parts of the Nakhchyvan region. With regard to another role of the Nakhchyvan region for Armenia, i.e. in cutting off the border between the Ottoman Empire and Azerbaijan, it should be noted that even with the Nakhchyvan region, Azerbaijan would not have a common border with the Ottoman Empire since they would be dissociated through Eastern Anatolia, also claimed by Armenia, and British-controlled Persia.⁹⁶² These arguments demonstrate that the Armenian concerns were not security, but land-related.

The Azerbaijani desire to annex the region was based on more valid considerations: the area being predominantly Muslim was the continuation of other Muslim-populated areas in the east, which were economically and geographically connected with each other and all of the primary roads of these areas led towards Baku, not towards Erevan, as mentioned previously.

9.3 Nakhchyvan and the Ottoman Empire, the Allied Powers, the Soviets and Kemalist Turkey

As mentioned earlier, a great part of the Nakhchyvan *uezd* and Sharur part of the Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd* were left to the Ottoman Empire under the Batumi treaties of 4 June 1918. Only a small part of Nakhchyvan *uezd*, the Ordubad area, and the Daralayaz part of Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd* were left outside the Ottoman-South Caucasian border (see Map 11). This section examines the positions of major external powers involved in the South Caucasus from the Batumi treaties to 1921 on the Nakhchyvan and Sharur-Daralayaz *uezds* and assesses the impact of their stance on the fate of these *uezds*.

⁹⁶² Note: Persia considered the declaration of the republic of 'Azerbaijan' on the north of the Araz River in 1918, which was the same as the name of the province on the south of the Araz River in Persia, as a political challenge to its territories. For that reason, relations between Azerbaijan and Persia could not be regarded as cordial.

*Nakhchyvan and the Ottoman Empire*⁹⁶³

According to Vehib Pasha, Commander of the Third Ottoman Army, whom Hovannisian considered a 'moderate' element of the Committee of Unity and Progress, Armenia could consist of New Bayazid and parts of the Erevan, Echmiadzin and Alexandropol *uezds*.⁹⁶⁴ the Ottoman Empire did not consider either Daralayaz or Ordubad as parts of the Armenian Republic. Moreover, Ordubad, which connected other parts of Nakhchyvan with Garabagh, which the Ottoman Government considered as part of Azerbaijan, could not be regarded by the Ottoman Empire as part of Armenia anyway, since otherwise there would be no direct connection between Azerbaijan and the Ottoman Empire, which would impede the realisation of its strategic aims in the region.

Nakhchyvan and the Allied Powers

The British occupation of the South Caucasus after the Mudros Armistice brought a new development in the Nakhchyvan region. According to Article 11 of the Armistice, 'part of the South Caucasus' had already been ordered to be evacuated by the Ottoman forces and the evacuation of the rest would be decided after consideration of the situation on the ground.⁹⁶⁵ Although the article did not state exactly which part of the South Caucasus had already been ordered to be evacuated, the establishment of the British military representation on 26 January 1919 together with the 'local Tartar Government as an administrative Council' in Nakhchyvan⁹⁶⁶ 'to preserve law and order until the Paris Peace Conference had decided on the future of the district'⁹⁶⁷ showed that it was no longer under Ottoman control.

According to Hovannisian, the Armenian Government yielded to the establishment of British military representation together with the local Tartar Government, since it lacked the

⁹⁶³ Note: As already mentioned, a great part of the Nakhchyvan region was included in the Ottoman Empire under the Batumi treaties and the smaller part was claimed by Armenia and Azerbaijan during Ottoman control of the South Caucasus from June to October. Since the period was very short and there is no evidence on the change of the Ottoman position on the area under consideration, the section is short.

⁹⁶⁴ Hovannisian R, *Armenia on the Road to Independence, 1918*, p 195

⁹⁶⁵ Erim N, *Devletlerarası hukuku ve siyasi tarih metinleri*, cilt I (Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Andlaşmaları), p 521

⁹⁶⁶ FO 608/84, p 392; FO 371/3670, p 539

⁹⁶⁷ Hovannisian R, *The Republic of Armenia. Volume I*, p 231

necessary military power to subject the region.⁹⁶⁸ British military rule together with Muslim government did not last long, and on 6 April 1919, the British military authorities decided to hand over Nakhchyvan to the Armenian Government.⁹⁶⁹ This decision corresponded to the British memorandum of 7 February 1919, according to which, in the case of integration of the 'Armenian provinces of the Caucasus' into the new Armenian state to be established in the territory of the Ottoman Empire, the boundary was to encompass the districts of Oltu, Kars, Alexandropol, Erevan and Julfa (including Nakhchyvan).⁹⁷⁰ Taking into account the plans of the Allied Powers with regard to the establishment of Armenia consisting of Eastern Anatolian and South Caucasian provinces and also that 'district' meant *uezd* or *okrug* and there was no *uezd* or *okrug* called 'Julfa', it may be suggested that the British memorandum meant a great part of Nakhchyvan *uezd* until Julfa and the Sharur part of Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd*.

According to the Wilsonian principles, the fate of disputed border areas should be decided by plebiscite. Although Muslim-dominated Nakhchyvan and Sharur-Daralayaz *uezds* bordered Armenia, a plebiscite was not considered by the British and the region was handed over to Armenia. The Azerbaijani Government protested against this decision to the British Command on 30 April 1919 and spoke out against the comparison of the Garabagh case with that of Nakhchyvan. The protest noted that 'both the geographical position of these territories and the ethnic composition of their population in percentages are different': Zangazur, Javanshir, Shusha and Jabrayil *uezds* (Garabagh) were 'located well into the centre of Azerbaijan, surrounded by a solid Muslim population and the Armenian population in the territory of Garabagh lived in small groups, nowhere comprising a solid mass, which was not the case in Nakhchyvan, Surmali and Sharur-Daralayaz *uezds*, where the Muslim population formed a solid mass' (see Map 12). Moreover, Zangazur, Javanshir, Shusha and Jabrayil *uezds* were in the Azerbaijani Government's sphere of administration, and only a small part of this province, seized by Andranik, was temporarily taken from the administration of the Azerbaijani Government. For that reason, the transfer of the administration of the mentioned districts to Azerbaijan was just the restoration of the previous normal order. Nakhchyvan, Sharur-Daralayaz, Surmali and parts of Erevan *uezd* had never constituted part of the

⁹⁶⁸ Ibid., pp 230-231

⁹⁶⁹ FO 371/3670, p 539

⁹⁷⁰ Hovannisian R, *op cit.*, p 270

Armenian Government, so the transfer of the administration of these districts to the Armenian Government would not restore the previous situation, but would create a new one.⁹⁷¹

The Azerbaijani protest went unheeded. Armenian jurisdiction over Nakhchyvan was declared publicly on 3 May 1919.⁹⁷² However, at the end of June, reports started coming in about the strained relations between the Armenians and the Muslims. On 18-20 July a Muslim uprising started in Nakhchyvan: unable to cope with the situation, the Armenians fled the town during the night of 25 July.⁹⁷³

The document on the situation in Nakhchyvan which the acting British High Commissioner forwarded to Earl Curzon on 11 August 1919 characterised Armenian rule in Nakhchyvan as tactless. According to this document, instead of obtaining the cooperation of the existing Tartar administrative bodies, which had worked under the British governor, the Armenian governor immediately dismissed the local councils and abolished the Tartar administrative arrangements. Moreover, attempts to disarm the Muslim population, especially the country folk, many of whom were stock owners who needed the arms to protect their property, was another main concern, which brought bloodshed and compelled the British authorities to advise the Armenian Government to repeal this order. The acting British High Commissioner summarised that the situation therefore could not be called satisfactory, although the British military representatives prevented the Armenian authorities from pursuing a policy of open aggression against the Tartars. He warned that this state of determined opposition to the Armenians on the part of the majority of the population would come to a head.⁹⁷⁴ In early August, the Tartars declared Nakhchyvan as an integral part of the Azerbaijan Republic.⁹⁷⁵

⁹⁷¹ Imranli K, *op cit.*, pp 117-118; the source cited by Imranli K: *ARDA*, fn 2898, l 1, fl 6, pp 41-41op; Note: Muslim notables of Nakhchyvan in their interview with Percy Cox, British Minister in Tehran, on 11 May 1919 begged to lay their case before the British Government. They said that 'when the British first came to Nakhchyvan they promised that until the fate of Caucasus had been decided at the Paris Peace Conference, they would be left to govern themselves but that now the Armenian Government had published notice saying that with approval of British military authorities they were taking over the country as far as Julfa and would shortly be in Nakhchyvan'. They complained that the British Government had no idea 'how impossible it was for them to live with and be governed by Armenians, whom they outnumbered by at least 4 to 1' (FO 608/11, p 155).

⁹⁷² Hovannisian R, *op cit.*, p 243

⁹⁷³ FO 608/78, p 287

⁹⁷⁴ FO 371/3670, pp 539-540

⁹⁷⁵ Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 120; the source cited by Imranli K: *ARSPIHDA*, fn1, l 1, fl 132, pp 1-1op

Meanwhile, on 5 July 1919, the Supreme Council appointed an American Colonel, William Haskell, as Allied High Commissioner in Armenia on behalf of the US, British, French and Italian Governments to take charge of all measures in Armenia by the various relief organisations.⁹⁷⁶ According to the telegram from the British Secretary of State to the Civil Commissioner in Baghdad of 17 July, the area covered by Haskell's Commission was 'intentionally not defined, but may for working purposes be regarded as comprising area in Caucasus now under control of Armenian Government at Erivan, *plus* six vilayets in Turkey'.⁹⁷⁷ It is impossible to understand from this which territories in the Caucasus were considered to be under the control of the Armenian Government.

On 29 August 1919, during his meeting with the members of the Azerbaijani Government, Haskell stated that Nakhchivan and Sharur-Daralayaz should be declared a neutral zone, whereas Zangazur and Mountainous Garabagh should remain part of Azerbaijan.⁹⁷⁸ On 1 September 1919, Haskell forwarded to the Prime Minister of Armenia the conditions on which the neutral zone was to be established in Sharur-Daralayaz and Nakhchivan *uezds*.⁹⁷⁹

According to the Armenian Prime Minister Khatisian's letter of 5 September 1919, the Armenian Government found it useful and agreed to the establishment not of a neutral zone, but an American Governor-Generalship.⁹⁸⁰ However, Khatisian found it impossible to include in this, according to the first point of the agreement of 29 August 1919, the Daralayaz part of Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd*. Presenting the former as a separate *uezd* and the latter as a former *uezd*, the letter argued that Daralayaz was already cut off from Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd*, which was 'incontestably and quietly ruled by the Government of Armenia even during the occupation of Armenia by Turks'. The inclusion of Daralayaz in the zone, in the opinion of the Armenian Government, completely cut off Zangazur from Armenia, and by this act Zangazur was included in Azerbaijan. With these considerations, the Armenian side opposed Point 12, which stated that 'the Azerbaijan Government agrees to facilitate in every way such relief measures as may be taken in Shusha and Gerusi [Zangazur – I.K.] districts by the Near

⁹⁷⁶ FO 608/80, pp 67-68

⁹⁷⁷ FO 371/3671, p 253

⁹⁷⁸ ARDA, fn 970, l 1, fl 144, annex 2; FO 371/3663, p 78

⁹⁷⁹ FO 608/78, pp 638-641; ARDA, fn 894, l 10, fl 99, pp 10-12; Note: The English text of the project consisted of twenty one points, whereas the Russian text had twenty points, since Points 15 and 16 in the English text were under Point 15 in the Russian text. The discussion on the issue is based on the English text.

⁹⁸⁰ FO 608/78, p 643

East Relief”, finding such a decision, even temporary, impossible.⁹⁸¹ The Armenian Government also opposed Point 3 of the agreement, which stated that the ‘local Government shall be Tatar except in localities where the Armenian population predominates’. It found it necessary ‘to add’ that ‘in the Central Council attached to the Governor, Tatar and Armenians participate proportionately to their number in the whole Governorship’.⁹⁸²

Khatisian was also against Point 15, according to which the railway under construction from Baku to Julfa should have been under the exclusive control of Azerbaijan and its construction should not have been interfered with; the frontier between the neutral zone and Armenia along the railway should have been at the place called ‘*Gurd gapysy*’ (Wolf’s Gap) on the border of Sharur-Daralayaz and Erevan *uezds*. According to the Armenian Government, ‘the railway must be built by the Government of Azerbaijan in the limits of Azerbaijan and by the Government of Armenia in the limits of Armenia or on the principle of special agreement between the two Governments’.⁹⁸³ The Armenian premier also objected to Point 17 on the supply by the Azerbaijani Government of money for the expenses of the administration of the zone, saying that Points 15 and 17 would give the Azerbaijani Government privileged conditions in comparison with the Armenian Government, and that ‘the Government of Azerbaijan must have no relation with the American Governor-Generalship’.⁹⁸⁴

The Armenian Government argued that ‘if one of the two Governments must be in privileged position in relation to the zone, then of course it must be the Armenian Government: first, according to the rights given to it by the British High Command; second, by the reason of immediate neighbourhood and third by the reason of vital and economic ties which bind this region with the Republic of Armenia and with Persia who is friendly to Armenia. It has still more right, because the Government of Azerbaijan partook in the organisation of the uprising in this region and violated by this its duties towards the Conference of Paris and towards the neighbouring Republic.’⁹⁸⁵

⁹⁸¹ Ibid., pp 643-644, 640

⁹⁸² Ibid., p 645

⁹⁸³ Ibid., pp 643, 645

⁹⁸⁴ Ibid., pp 643-644

⁹⁸⁵ Ibid., p 643

Although the Armenian Government mentioned that Persia was friendly to it, the position of Persia on the Nakhchyvan issue was unequivocal: it also made claims to Nakhchyvan and had protested against the British decision to hand the region over to Armenia in May 1919.⁹⁸⁶ As for the participation of the Azerbaijani Government in the uprising of the Nakhchyvan Azerbaijanis, Azerbaijan supported the revolt with its organisation, i.e. giving military advice and material support to the local Muslim population. The difference between the Azerbaijani opposition to the Armenian rule in Nakhchyvan and the Armenian opposition to the Azerbaijani rule in Garabagh is that in the former case it involved the local Muslim population, which was hostile towards the Armenians and their rule, whereas in the latter case the opposition was instigated and directed by the Armenian Republic and the Ottoman Armenians. The evidence is that the situation in Mountainous Garabagh could be stabilised after the departure of Andranik and his men. The agreement was signed between the Azerbaijan Government and the Mountainous Garabagh Armenians in August 1919, recognising the Azerbaijani jurisdiction in Mountainous Garabagh, despite the continuing protest and strong opposition of the Armenian Government. Although British support was important in the signing of this agreement, the same British support to Armenia in the Nakhchyvan case could not subdue the Nakhchyvan Azerbaijanis to Armenian rule. Ovannes Kachaznuni, the first premier of the Armenian Republic, would mention in his memoirs that in Sharur and Nakhchyvan, the Armenians could not establish their rule even with arms.⁹⁸⁷ In the Nakhchyvan case, opposition was based on the local Muslim population, whereas in the Garabagh case, the opposition was alien, so it could not last long and brought about peace only with the removal of the source of instability, until it appeared again.

The Armenian Government's considerations were sent to the Azerbaijani Government for approval by Haskell. The Azerbaijani Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mammad Yusif Jafarov, in his letter to Haskell, noted his government's concerns about the modification of the draft agreement with Azerbaijan, which necessitated a new exchange of views on the issue and the satisfaction of the Azerbaijani claims based on the right of people to self-determination. This met with a sharp reaction from Haskell, who warned that 'no measures will be taken for the

⁹⁸⁶ FO 608/11, pp 154, 160

⁹⁸⁷ Kachaznuni Ov, *Dashnaktsutyun bol'she nechego delat'!*, p 121

establishment of a neutral zone with Denikin or for the settlement of other issues unless a neutral zone consisting of Nakhchyvan and Sharur districts are established'.⁹⁸⁸

The Azerbaijani Government's 29 September reply to this warning was the same, repeating that it was not against the 'establishment of a special General-Governorship in Sharur-Daralayaz and Nakhchyvan *uezds* of the Erevan *guberniya*', but some points of the proposed conditions caused objections.⁹⁸⁹ Haskell's reaction to this telegram on 1 October was again very tough, noting that the 'Peace Conference does not recognise the rights of Azerbaijan to dictate conditions for the administration of the zone of American governorship [...] This zone will be created and will consist of Sharur and Nakhchyvan *uezds*'. Haskell added that he was leaving for Paris soon, where he was going to present Azerbaijani claims to the full possession of the disputed areas on the condition that the Azerbaijani Government supported this temporary agreement.⁹⁹⁰

The Azerbaijani Minister of Foreign Affairs in his reply of 4 October noted that they did not oppose the High Commissioner's project on the administration of the mentioned *uezds*, which constituted an inseparable part of the Azerbaijan Republic and hoped that the just claims of the Azerbaijani people would be supported by him before the Peace Conference in accordance with the principles declared by Wilson on the rights of peoples and in accordance with the *de facto* established will of the Azerbaijani people.⁹⁹¹

On 25 October 1919 a zone of Allied Governorship was created in Sharur and Nakhchyvan with Colonel Edmund Delli as governor-general.⁹⁹² Before the declaration of the establishment of the Allied Governorship in the form of a neutral zone, Colonel James Rhea, Haskell's deputy, who replaced Haskell after he left for Paris, visited Baku. During his visit he asked the Azerbaijani Government to send its representative to Nakhchyvan in order to demonstrate that the Azerbaijani Government agreed to the establishment of an American-ruled neutral zone. The Azerbaijani Government refused on the grounds that it could not mislead the population and would not participate in the establishment of the order, which was

⁹⁸⁸ *ARDA*, fn 894, l 10, fl 99, p 8; *ARDA*, fn 970, l 1, fl 93, p 7

⁹⁸⁹ *ARDA*, fn 970, l 1, fl 93, p 8

⁹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p 9

⁹⁹¹ *ARDA*, fn 894, l 10, fl 99, p 9

⁹⁹² Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 131; the source cited by Imranli K: *ARSPIHDA*, fn 277, l 2, fl 57, p 392

not approved by the Azerbaijani Government and which did not correspond to the project worked out by them. This did not prevent Colonel Rhea from returning to Nakhchyvan alone and declaring the establishment of the neutral zone on the basis of the Armenian considerations until the settlement of the claims to the area by Armenia and Azerbaijan at the Paris Peace Conference. Despite Azerbaijani disapproval of the project points, the declaration stated that the zone was created with the 'agreement and support' of both the Azerbaijani and Armenian Governments. However, Colonel Rhea had to leave his representative, not a governor-general, in the area, whom the population refused to accept.⁹⁹³ Galust Galoian wrote that Haskell had to abandon the neutral zone in January 1920, as he did not have sufficient troops to keep the governorship and suppress the resistance of the local population.⁹⁹⁴

Thus, neither the British Military Governorship, the British-arranged Armenian rule nor the American-ruled neutral zone could last long. None of the arrangements could settle the problem and the Muslim population overthrew the imposed orders. Until the Bolshevik seizure of power in Baku on 28 April 1920, the Allies did not apply any other form of administration to the Nakhchyvan region.

Nakhchyvan, the Soviets and Kemalist Turkey

According to the 24 June 1920 telegram from Sardar Bunyatzada, plenipotentiary of the Eleventh Red Army of Bolshevik Russia, to Nariman Narimanov, head of the Azerbaijani Bolshevik Government, Soviet rule was established in Nakhchyvan, which joined the Soviet Azerbaijan.⁹⁹⁵ Five days earlier, Sergo Orjonikidze, head of the Caucasian Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist (Bolshevik) Party, in his letter to Georgiy Chicherin, People's Foreign Affairs Commissioner of the RSFSR, had already written that Azerbaijan made claims to Nakhchyvan and Sharur-Daralayaz and that the former was in the hands of Muslim rebels, but he had no information about the situation in Sharur-Daralayaz.⁹⁹⁶ However, on 15 July 1920, the session of the Bureau of the Central Committee of the

⁹⁹³ Imranli K, *op cit.*, pp 132-131; the source cited by Imranli K: *ARDA*, fn 970, l 1 , fl 144 , p 430; FO 371/3664, p 467

⁹⁹⁴ Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 133

⁹⁹⁵ *K istorii obrazovaniya Nagorno-Karabakhskoy Avtonomnoy Oblasti Azerbaydzhanskoy SSR (1918-1925). Dokumenty i materialy*, p 51

⁹⁹⁶ Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 140; the source cited by Imranli K: *ARSPHDA*, fn 609, l 1 , fl 21, p 100

Azerbaijani Communist (Bolshevik) Party decided to give up their claims to Nakhchyvan and Sharur-Daralayaz and propose their occupation by Russian forces.⁹⁹⁷

The Azerbaijani communists changed position in response to Orjonikidze, who, under pressure from Chicherin and the Armenians, compelled Azerbaijan to give up its claims to Nakhchyvan and Sharur-Daralayaz in return for Mountainous Garabagh and Zangazur.⁹⁹⁸ These proposals had earlier met with a sharp reply from Narimanov, declaring that Nakhchyvan was entirely populated by Muslims, and had got rid of and defended itself against the Dashnak Government.⁹⁹⁹

According to the agreement between Soviet Russia and the Armenian Republic of 10 August 1920, military operations between RSFSR and the Republic of Armenia were declared to be stopped. Under the same agreement, the northern part of Nakhchyvan *uezd* and the whole of Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd* came under Armenian control. The rest of Nakhchyvan *uezd*, alongside with Mountainous Garabagh and Zangazur, was declared disputed.¹⁰⁰⁰

The same day, Alibay Bektashi, head of the Revolutionary Committee of Nakhchyvan *uezd*, in his letter to Narimanov, wrote that with the decision of the absolute majority of the population of Nakhchyvan, it was recognised as an inseparable part of the Azerbaijan SSR.¹⁰⁰¹

On 10 August, as mentioned in Chapter 7, Dashnak Armenia signed the Sevres Treaty between Turkey and the Allied Powers, according to which Turkey recognised Armenia as an independent country and both agreed to the arbitration of their borders by the US President, Wilson. The borders between Armenia and Azerbaijan would be determined by direct agreement between the two countries. If they failed to determine the border by agreement by

⁹⁹⁷ *K istorii obrazovaniya Nagorno-Karabakhskoy Avtonomnoy Oblasti Azerbaydzhanskoy SSR (1918-1925). Dokumenty i materialy*, p 57; *ARSPIHDA*, fn 1, l 1, fl 18, p 13op

⁹⁹⁸ *K istorii obrazovaniya Nagorno-Karabakhskoy Avtonomnoy Oblasti Azerbaydzhanskoy SSR (1918-1925). Dokumenty i materialy*, pp 32-34

⁹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p 35; *ARSPIHDA*, fn 609, l 1, fl 21, p 122

¹⁰⁰⁰ *Velikaya Oktyabr'skaya sotsialisticheskaya revolyutsiya i pobeda sovetskoy vlasti v Armenii (Sbornik dokumentov)*, dok 270, pp 384-385

¹⁰⁰¹ Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 120; the source cited by Imranli K: *ARSPIHDA*, fn 609, l 1, fl 69, p 27

the date of the decision on the Turkish-Armenian borders, the border line would be determined by the Allied Powers.¹⁰⁰²

However, as also mentioned in Chapter 7, on 26 November 1920, Armenia issued a declaration rejecting the Sevres Treaty as a Turkish prerequisite for the start of peace negotiations, which were concluded with the signing of the Gumru (Alexandropol) Treaty on 2 December 1920. Under this treaty, Dashnak Armenia declared the Sevres Treaty annulled and gave up its claims to Nakhchyvan and Sharur, which, apart from Nakhchyvan *uezd* and the Sharur part of Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd*, included the south of Erevan *uezd*. Armenia would not interfere in the administration of these areas, which was to be decided by means of plebiscite and temporarily placed under the protection of Turkey.¹⁰⁰³

Meanwhile, after the rejection of the Sevres Treaty by Dashnak Armenia, Soviet rule was declared in Armenia on 29 November 1920.¹⁰⁰⁴ The Bolsheviks entered Armenia ‘without any resistance’,¹⁰⁰⁵ owing to the military failure of the Armenians and their desire to draw the Soviet Russia into a war with Turkey.¹⁰⁰⁶ The next day, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan adopted a decision on the transfer of Nakhchyvan, together with Zangazur, to Soviet Armenia.¹⁰⁰⁷ On 1 December, Nariman Narimanov, Head of the Azerbaijani Revolutionary Committee, made a declaration on the establishment of Soviet rule in Armenia, stating the above-mentioned transfer of Nakhchyvan to Armenia,¹⁰⁰⁸ and on 2 December, in the agreement between RSFSR and the Armenian Republic, which declared Armenia an ‘independent socialist republic’, Russia recognised, among others, Erevan *guberniya* as undisputed part of the Armenian SSR.¹⁰⁰⁹

¹⁰⁰² *Application by the Armenian Republic for Admission to the League. Memorandum by the Secretary-General*, League of Nations. Assembly Document №56, pp 5-6

¹⁰⁰³ Imranli K, *op cit.*, pp 145-146; the source cited by Imranli K: *Velikaya Oktyabr'skaya sotsialisticheskaya revolyutsiya i pobeda sovetской vlasti v Armenii (Sbornik dokumentov)*, dok 294, pp 438-439; *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin anlaşmaları*, cilt 1, pp 3-4

¹⁰⁰⁴ Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 147; the source cited by Imranli K: *Velikaya Oktyabr'skaya sotsialisticheskaya revolyutsiya i pobeda sovetской vlasti v Armenii (Sbornik dokumentov)*, dok 291, p 433

¹⁰⁰⁵ Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 147

¹⁰⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p 156

¹⁰⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p 147; the source cited by Imranli K: *ARSPIHDA*, fn 1, l 1, fl 24, p 54op

¹⁰⁰⁸ Imranli K, *op cit.*, pp 147-148; the source cited by Imranli K: Newspaper *Kommunist* (Baku), 2 December 1920, p 1

¹⁰⁰⁹ Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 148; the source cited by Imranli K: *Mezhdunarodnaya politika noveyshego vremeni v dogovorakh, notakh i deklaratsiyakh. Chast' III (Ot snyatiya blokady s Sovetskoy Rossii do desyatiletiya*

The inclusion of Nakhchyvan and Zangazur in Armenia was in line with Stalin's policy, declared on 9 November 1920 at a meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist (Bolshevik) Party. According to his view, transfer of Nakhchyvan and Zangazur to Armenia would be possible only if Soviet rule was established there.¹⁰¹⁰ Although Soviet rule in Armenia was established to annul the Gumru Treaty, on 25 December 1920, Turkey rejected its re-consideration.¹⁰¹¹ It can be suggested that it was the tough position of Kemalist Turkey on the rejection of the annulment of the Gumru Treaty that compelled the Revolutionary Committee of Armenia to issue a declaration on 26 December 1920 on Nakhchyvan, stating that Soviet Armenia 'sees its power in the clearly expressed will of the [Nakhchyvan] population itself' and believing that the working masses of Nakhchyvan could give their organised opinion on desirable relations with Soviet Armenia.¹⁰¹² The declaration was followed by another declaration issued on 28 December, in which Armenia recognised Nakhchyvan as an independent republic and gave up territorial claims to Nakhchyvan.¹⁰¹³ Based on the archival document from the Nakhchyvan Autonomous Republic, Ismayil Musayev wrote that in early 1921, representatives of RSFSR, the Azerbaijan SSR and the Armenian SSR held a poll in Nakhchyvan on the opinion of the region's population on the above-mentioned declarations of the Azerbaijan and Armenian Revolutionary Committees on Nakhchyvan. Ninety per cent of the population of Nakhchyvan voted for the region to be granted autonomy within Azerbaijan.¹⁰¹⁴ Behbud Shahtakhtinski was appointed a Commissar of Nakhchyvan by the decision of the Revolutionary-Military Council of the Organisational and Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist (Bolshevik) Party on 12 January 1921.¹⁰¹⁵

Oktyabr'skoy Revolyutsii). Vyp 1 (Akty Sovetskoy diplomatii), dok 41, pp 75-76; *Velikaya Oktyabr'skaya sotsialisticheskaya revolyutsiya i pobeda sovetskoy vlasti v Armenii (Sbornik dokumentov)*, dok 295, pp 441-442

¹⁰¹⁰ Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 150; the source cited by Imranli K: *ARSPIHDA*, fn 1, l 1, fl 14, p 19

¹⁰¹¹ Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 151; the source cited by Imranli K: *Dokumenty vneshney politiki SSSR*, tom 4, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoy literatury, 1960, p 711

¹⁰¹² Imranli K, *op cit.*, pp 151-152; the source cited by Imranli K: Newspaper *Kommunist* (Erevan), 26 December 1920, p 1

¹⁰¹³ Musayev İ, *Azərbaycanın Naxçıvan və Zəngəzur bölgələrində siyasi vəziyyət və xarici dövlətlərin siyasəti (1917-1921)*, pp 341-342; the source cited by Musayev İ: *Journal Azərbaycan kommunisti*, 1990, no 11, p 71

¹⁰¹⁴ Musayev İ, *op cit.*, p 342; the source cited by Musayev İ: *Naxçıvan Muxtar Respublikası Milli Dövlət Arxivi*, fn 1, l 3, fl 13, p 79

¹⁰¹⁵ Musayev İ, *op cit.*, p 342; the source cited by Musayev İ: *ARSPIHDA*, fn 1, l 2, fl 18, p 12; fn 1, l 74, fl 123, p 17

None of the Allied Powers or the Supreme Council had considered a plebiscite as a means of settling the problem of Nakhchyvan. The same was true of the Soviets, who compelled Narimanov to apply the right of self-determination to the Garabagh Armenians, on the basis of which Mountainous Garabagh was declared an autonomous *oblast* within Azerbaijan, but they did not consider a plebiscite as a way of solving the border problem over Nakhchyvan, and, like the British, included Nakhchyvan in Armenia. Only Turkey included this right of the Nakhchyvan population in the Gumru Treaty.

The failure of Armenian expectations that Soviet rule would lead to an expansion of the Armenian territories was instrumental in the Dashnak takeover in Erevan on 18 February 1921.

On 26 February 1921, a conference started with the participation of Soviet Russia and Kemalist Turkey in Moscow. The Turks opposed the participation of Azerbaijan in the conference on the grounds that Turkey and Azerbaijan did not have any disputed issue and a treaty with Azerbaijan would be signed separately. The Turks were against the participation of Armenia as well, since they considered the Gumru Treaty in force and did not want to give it up.¹⁰¹⁶ During the consideration of Turkish borders with Armenia at the Political Commission session on 10 March 1921, the Turkish delegation stated that it was ready to transfer the protection of Nakhchyvan to Azerbaijan ‘on the condition that Azerbaijan would give a guarantee that it would not concede it to a third state’.¹⁰¹⁷ The Russian delegation proposed the formula that ‘Nakhchyvan province would be permanently connected to Azerbaijan and would enjoy autonomy under Azerbaijan’s protectorate’. At the request of the Turkish side, the formula was edited to read ‘on condition that Azerbaijan would not concede this protectorate to a third state’.¹⁰¹⁸

The Russian-Turkish Conference finished with the signing of the Moscow Treaty between Soviet Russia and Turkey on 16 March 1921, which stipulated that Nakhchyvan would have autonomy under the Azerbaijani protectorate on condition that Azerbaijan would not concede

¹⁰¹⁶ *ARSPIHDA*, fn 609, l 1, fl 94, p 2

¹⁰¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p 45

¹⁰¹⁸ *Ibid.*

this protectorate to a third state. The area of Nakhchyvan corresponded exactly to the area claimed in the Gumru Treaty for the autonomy of Nakhchyvan.¹⁰¹⁹

The status of Nakhchyvan was also reflected in the Kars Treaty of 13 October 1921 signed by Russia, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia. According to Article 5 of the treaty, the governments of Turkey, Soviet Azerbaijan and Armenia agreed that the Nakhchyvan province was an autonomous territory under the 'patronage' of Azerbaijan.¹⁰²⁰ Thus, the 'protectorate of Azerbaijan' of the Moscow Treaty was turned into 'patronage of Azerbaijan' in the Kars Treaty, without the condition that it could not be conceded to a third state. Moreover, the area of the autonomy was decreased in comparison with that in the Moscow Treaty. The area between Ararat Mountain, Saraybulag Mountain and Arazdayan station, allocated to Nakhchyvan in the Moscow Treaty, was conceded to Armenia in the Kars Treaty. The aim of this rectification was to shorten the length of the border between Turkey and Azerbaijan, as efforts to cut it off completely, by Russia in the Moscow negotiations and Armenia in general, failed. On 9 February 1924, the Nakhchyvan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was established in Azerbaijan SSR (see Map 15), which until then was an autonomous *krai* within Azerbaijan.

Later during Soviet rule, the area of Nakhchyvan ASSR was further decreased in favour of Armenia as, in comparison with 5,979 km² in 1924, Nakhchyvan ASSR had an area of 5,500 km² in 1989, a decrease of 479 km². By contrast, an area of Mountainous Garabagh increased from 4,159 km² in 1924 to 4,388 km² in 1989, i.e. 129 km².¹⁰²¹

Conclusion

The origins of the modern nationalist Armenian claims to the Nakhchyvan region were laid down in 1828 by Russia, and adopted and adapted by Armenian nationalists and politicians in the early twentieth century during the *zemstvo* conferences. The territorial-administrative readjustment project of the Provisional Government with the aim of constructing ethnic

¹⁰¹⁹ Imranli K, *op cit.*, pp 161-162; the source cited by Imranli K: *Dokumenty vneshney politiki SSSR*, tom 3, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoy literatury, 1959, dok 342, pp 598-599, 604

¹⁰²⁰ Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 167; the source cited by Imranli K: *Dokumenty vneshney politiki SSSR*, tom 4, dok 264, pp 423, 429

¹⁰²¹ Imranli K, *op cit.*, p 174

Armenian units in the western half of the South Caucasus could not be realised because of Muslim and Georgian opposition. The Armenian-favoured readjustment project could not be adopted during the *de facto* Transcaucasian government rule either and the borders of Nakhchyvan and Sharur-Daralayaz *uezds* were left unchanged until the declaration of the Azerbaijan and Armenian Republics.

During Ottoman control of the region between the Batumi treaties and Mudros Armistice, Armenia did not make active claims to the Nakhchyvan region, most of which had been left to the Ottoman Empire under the Batumi treaties, with the rest claimed by Armenia and Azerbaijan. After the Mudros Armistice, Armenia started making active claims to the region, presenting ethnic, historical, economic, geographical and security arguments to substantiate its claims at the Paris Peace Conference using distorted and misleading information. All of these arguments lacked strong substantiation, were politically constructed and unconvincing. According to Wilsonian principles, the Nakhchyvan problem, as a province with an Azerbaijani majority on the Armenian border, should have been settled on the basis of ethnic principles through a plebiscite. Neither Britain nor the US, as Allied Powers, nor the Soviets wanted to apply this right to Nakhchyvan, which Britain and the Soviets preferred to be included in Armenia. The decision was opposed by both the Azerbaijan Republic and the Nakhchyvan population, who protested against Armenian rule and declared the region to be part of the Azerbaijan Republic. Despite this clearly expressed will of the Nakhchyvan population, the region was not included in Azerbaijan by the Allied Powers and Soviets, contrary to their declarations on the rights of people to self-determination.

Kemalist Turkey, unlike other states, gave this right to the Nakhchyvan population in the Gumru Treaty. It can be argued that it was this treaty and Turkish insistence that brought about the declaration of the Armenian Revolutionary Committee on the future fate of Nakhchyvan, and it was on the basis of this declaration that the poll of the Nakhchyvan population was held, leading to the Moscow and Kars Treaties on the autonomous status of Nakhchyvan within Azerbaijan.

Conclusion

This thesis studied the process leading to the construction of the first Armenian Republic in 1918 and its territorial conflicts with Azerbaijan in 1918-1921. It also examined the main theoretical issues around nations, nationalism, state-building and territorial delimitation. The thesis resulted in empirical and theoretical findings.

The thesis's findings showed that the Armenian nationalist movement was initiated in the Armenian diaspora communities. Examination of the origins of the Armenian nationalist movement in the Ottoman Empire revealed that it was facilitated by the gradual decline of the Empire; the success of the nationalist movements in the Balkans; the national 'awakening' of the Armenians; the Russian success in the 1877-1878 Ottoman-Russian war; and the Berlin Treaty of July 1878. These factors were instrumental in raising Armenian confidence in their control of their own destiny, to be expressed through establishing Armenian autonomy in Eastern Anatolia. The Berlin Treaty did not bring about the realisation of the Armenian project, which failed because of the scattered Armenian minority distribution over the projected area, the clash of interests of the Berlin Treaty powers-signatories and related absence of Great Power sponsorship.

The notion of the 'Armenian homeland' was reconstructed in the early twentieth century by *Dashnaktsutiun*, the major Armenian political and nationalist party, which included the construction of ethnic Armenian units in the South Caucasus in its second programme in 1907. This derived from the work on Armenian history of Mik'ayel Ch'amch'yants' (1738-1823), an Armenian Catholic monk, at the end of the eighteenth century. He constructed an Armenian national territory in the area from the Mediterranean to the juncture of the Kur and Araz Rivers. Another factor in the notion's reconstruction was the mass settlement of Armenians from Persia and the Ottoman Empire in the Russian Empire (South Caucasus) in the 19th-early 20th centuries. This led to the emergence of compact Armenian masses in parts of the South Caucasus and became instrumental in the inclusion of the area of Erevan *guberniya*, the western half of Elizavetpol *guberniya* and southern parts of Tiflis *guberniya* in the reconstructed 'Armenian homeland'. An additional factor was the liquidation of the Albanian Catholicosate in the early nineteenth century and the subordination of its dioceses to

the Armenian Echmiadzin Catholicosate, which turned the monophysite Albanians into adherents of the Armenian church. Under the Armenian nationalist movement, Armenian church identity became synonymous with Armenian ethnic identity and played an important role in the inclusion of the larger western part of Elizavetpol *guberniya* in the notion of the reconstructed 'Armenian homeland'.

The Armenian nationalists considered the First World War to be conducive for the realisation of their project, for the purpose of which they sided with the Allied Powers, including Russia, against the Ottoman Empire. The 1915 Armenian revolts in Eastern Anatolia, which created anarchy on the Ottoman-Russian front, ensured the advancement of the Russian army, together with Armenian volunteer units, and the occupation of a great portion of the Ottoman territories by Russia. The Ottoman Government regarded the behaviour of the Ottoman Armenians as treachery, resulting in a strong Ottoman counter-reaction, including relocation of the Armenians outside Eastern Anatolia in the period between the retreat of the Russian troops and their re-occupation of the area in summer 1915. The relocation resulted in the killing of a great number of Armenians, as well as their deaths and other sufferings from starvation, illness and weather conditions. The number of Armenians who died as a result of the relocation is a very controversial topic, the figures varying between 300,000 and more than 1,000,000. The territories on which the Armenian nationalists had been striving to construct an 'Armenian homeland' since the Berlin Treaty were divided between Russia and France in April 1916. Thus, the events of 1915 and the lack of Great Power support led to another failure of 'Armenian homeland' construction in the Ottoman Empire in 1914-1916.

The overthrow of the Tsarist regime in February 1917 gave new hopes for the realisation of the project in Eastern Anatolia, with the Provisional Government's 'Act on the arrangement of administration in the Russian-occupied parts of Turkish Armenia'. The act, which by 'Russian-occupied parts of Turkish Armenia' meant Erzurum, Van and Bitlis provinces, envisaged the adoption of measures for the gradual return to the area of the Armenian refugees of the First World War and previous wars. The Provisional Government's administrative-territorial readjustment project on the construction of ethnic Armenian units in the western half of the South Caucasus was another source of hope. The realisation of both projects would have facilitated the construction of an 'Armenian homeland' in the area

extending from Van to Garabagh. Although the Provisional Government was overthrown in October 1917, the Armenian project in Eastern Anatolia was given new hope with the coming of the Soviets, but this also faded away with the Brest-Litovsk Treaty of March 1918, which returned Eastern Anatolia to the Ottoman Empire. The *de facto* Transcaucasian government, which was established in the South Caucasus after the October Revolution and did not recognise the Bolshevik regime, protested against this treaty and entered into direct peace negotiations with the Ottoman Empire on the initiative of the latter. However, the insistence of the latter and the refusal of the former to accept the Brest-Litovsk Treaty led to the Ottoman-Transcaucasian war in April 1918 and resulted in the failure of Transcaucasia. The war was fought on the Transcaucasian side by the Armenians and Georgians, who had replaced the Russian troops on the Ottoman-Russian front in the late 1917. Transcaucasia had to give up its claims for Armenian autonomy in Eastern Anatolia within the Ottoman Empire and declare its independence from Russia in the form of the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic in April 1918.

Further territorial demands on the part of the Ottoman Empire, combined with the Soviet danger and internal disagreements within the Transcaucasian Republic, led to its dissolution and the declarations of independence of Georgia, then Azerbaijan. Armenia was left with no alternative but to declare independence and sign the Batumi Peace Treaty with the Ottoman Empire in June 1918. Ottoman government officials did not oppose the establishment of the Armenian Republic, provided it did not turn into a British and Russian tool against the Ottoman Empire and did not make claims on Ottoman territories. Despite mutual Ottoman-Armenian hatred and Armenian dissatisfaction with the Batumi Treaty, the Ottoman Government was the first to recognise Armenia as an independent state. It was not recognised by Soviet Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary or Bulgaria. It was with the help of the Ottoman Government that the Armenian delegation in Istanbul strove to expand the Armenian Republic in the South Caucasus.

Although the Brest-Litovsk and Batumi Treaties deprived the Armenians of claims to Eastern Anatolia, the Mudros Armistice and Sevres Treaty gave new hopes for the extension of the Armenian Republic into Eastern Anatolia. Armenia was recognised as an independent state by Turkey under the Sevres Treaty of August 1920, and the US President defined the borders

between the two countries, giving Armenia four Eastern Anatolian provinces with access to the Black Sea in November 1920. But Kemalist Turkey, defeating the Armenians in the South Caucasus, compelled the Armenian Republic to give up the Sevres Treaty. Owing to the absence of Great Power will to support the Armenian project and the US Senate's refusal of the Mandate for Armenia, the Armenians declared it annulled under the Gumru Treaty of December 1920 with the Kemalists. The Sevres Treaty was not ratified and was replaced by the Lausanne Treaty in July 1923, which made no mention of Armenia. This meant the failure of the extension of the area of the Armenian Republic into Eastern Anatolia.

The thesis made a detailed examination of the Armenian territorial claims to Garabagh and Nakhchivan. It was argued that the Armenian claims to Garabagh were articulated by the Provisional Government's project to construct compact Armenian units in Elizavetpol *guberniya*, which could not be realised because of Muslim opposition. The latter saw the project as an intention to replace Muslim-dominated *uezds* in the border between Elizavetpol and Erevan *guberniyas* with Armenian-dominated ones. Javanshir, Shusha, Jabrayil (Garyagin) and Zangazur *uezds*, which constituted Garabagh in Elizavetpol *guberniya*, did not undergo administrative-territorial redrawing, and their borders were left unchanged until the declaration of the Armenian and Azerbaijan republics in 1918.

'Mountainous Garabagh' was a politically constructed notion, the aim of which was to separate the areas populated by Armenians from Muslim-dominated Garabagh in order to construct predominantly Armenian units. Mountainous Garabagh could not be included in Armenia because of both its geographical location, isolated from compact Armenian areas in the northern part of Erevan *guberniya*, and failure to get Ottoman, British and Bolshevik Russian support. The Ottoman Empire considered Garabagh to be part of the Azerbaijan Republic. Britain also recognised Garabagh as part of Azerbaijan. In order to Sovietise Armenia, the Bolsheviks decided to partially satisfy the Armenian demands, granting territorial autonomy to the Armenian-populated areas of mountainous Garabagh within the Azerbaijan SSR in July 1921 and thus becoming instrumental in the construction of the Mountainous Garabagh Autonomous *Oblast* in July 1923. The inclusion of the western, larger, part of the Zangazur *uezd* of Garabagh in Armenia in 1921 was also connected with the

Bolshevik aim of Sovietising Armenia, which might fail without the partial satisfaction of the demands of the Dashnak rebels in Zangazur.

The modern Armenian political claims to the Nakhchyvan region were laid down in 1828 by Russia, which constructed an Armenian *oblast* in the territories of the occupied Nakhchyvan and Iravan (Erevan) khanates, and were activated during the *zemstvo* conferences in 1917. Despite the Provisional Government's territorial-administrative readjustment project with the aim of constructing ethnic Armenian units in the western half of the South Caucasus, the project could not be realised because of the opposition of the Muslims and Georgians, and the borders of Nakhchyvan and Sharur-Daralayaz *uezds* were left unchanged until the declaration of the Azerbaijan and Armenian republics.

Under the Batumi treaties of June 1918, two thirds of Nakhchyvan *uezd* and the Sharur part of Sharur-Daralayaz *uezd* were left to the Ottoman Empire and the rest was claimed by Armenia and Azerbaijan. After the Mudros Armistice of October 1918 and Ottoman withdrawal from the region, Armenia, emboldened by the British control of the region, started making active claims to the entire area of both *uezds*. Britain supported the Armenian claim to the region and handed it over to Armenia, whereas the US tried to realise a neutral zone project. Bolshevik Russia also intended to include the region in Armenia. These decisions were opposed by both the Azerbaijan Republic and the Nakhchyvan population, who revolted against the Armenian rule designed by Britain, the neutral zone projected by America and the inclusion of Nakhchyvan in Soviet Armenia intended by Russia, and declared the region part of Azerbaijan. Kemalist Turkey gave the right to self-determination to the Nakhchyvan population in the Gumru Treaty of December 1920 between the Armenian Republic and Kemalist Turkey. This treaty and Turkish insistence led to a poll among the Nakhchyvan population, the results of which defined the autonomous status of the region within Azerbaijan in the Moscow and Kars Treaties of March and October 1921 respectively.

The thesis's empirical findings were conceptualised through the prism of primordialist, modernist and ethno-symbolist theories. It looked into the issues of nations, nationalism and state-building and the delimitation of the borders of newly emerged states. The primordialist theory about the existence of nations from time immemorial and about direct links between

peoples of the past and the present times, modernist theory defining nations as a construct following the emergence of states, and ethno-symbolist theory containing elements of both primordialist and modernist views with emphasis on the role of ethnic and/or ethno-religious communities in the formation of nations were explored and applied to the Armenian case. The typology of nationalism offered by the 'modernist' Ernest Gellner and 'ethno-symbolists' Anthony Smith and Miroslav Hroch were also examined. Ethnic, historical, economic, geographical and security arguments of the Armenian Republic in support of its claims on Garabagh and Nakhchyvan were analysed in detail. The positions of external powers were explored in order to assess their role in the delimitation of the Armenian-Azerbaijan borders and thus in the practical implementation of the above-mentioned principles.

By applying the diaspora nationalism concept put forward by Gellner and Smith and 'long-distance nationalism' proposed by Benedict Anderson, it was concluded that Armenian nationalism had its origins in diaspora nationalism. Exploring the whole process of the Armenian national movement and applying Hroch's A, B and C phases of national movements, it was argued that, although Armenian nationalism had features of the three phases, they did not occur in Hroch's chronological order. Elements peculiar to Phase A could be found in the eighteenth and second half of the nineteenth century. Moreover, features of Phases A, B and C could take place simultaneously, or Phase C could take place in one diaspora community earlier than Phases A and B in other diaspora communities. For that reason, it was argued that the Hroch approach is only partially applicable to the Armenian case.

It was argued that Mik'ayel' Ch'amch'yants' was the founder of Phase A, disseminating an 'Armenian awareness' of 'Armenian history', and constructing 'golden ages' of 'his' people with 'national territory' from the Mediterranean to the juncture of the Kur and Araz Rivers. He laid the basis of the subsequent construction of the Armenian ethnic identity. The case of the Armenian nationalists proved Smith's approach that nationalists enquired into their history, not for its own sake, but for the reappropriation of a mythology of the territorialised past of 'their people'; where history was deficient for the pursuit for their aims, they reconstructed and even invented it. The case of Ch'amch'yants' showed how nationalists politicised cultural heritage through the cultivation of its poetic spaces and the

commemoration of its golden ages. The Armenian case also confirmed Anderson's opinion on the role of maps in the construction of historical narratives of the realm by the colonial states and their adoption and adaptation by the nation-states.

The views of many scholars on the formation of the Armenian people have been primordialist: they tend to argue that the Armenian people was formed more than two thousand years ago and a continuous historical narrative can be written about it, although an empirical study of the issue demonstrates that the Armenians of the second half of the first millennium BC were not the Armenians of the late nineteenth century. Other specialist, notably Ronald Suny, takes a modernist approach. Applying the modernist approach, it was argued that the construction of the Armenian state in 1918 did not make any change in the composition of the Armenian nation, since it did not include other peoples living in its area. Applying the ethno-symbolist approach, it was shown that the new Armenian identity was constructed in the nineteenth century through the mixing of the Armenians with the Caucasian Albanians, as well as through the dissemination of different visions of the Armenian 'national homeland'. The construction of the new Armenian identity preceded the construction of the Armenian Republic in 1918, since it was due to the Armenian church in the nineteenth century, not the Armenian state in 1918, that the new Armenian identity could be constructed. Part of this Armenian ethno-religious community turned into the Armenian nation after the emergence of the Armenian Republic. Applying primordialist, modernist and ethno-symbolist approaches to the Azerbaijani and Georgian cases, it was argued that only the ethno-symbolist approach is useful in studying these cases. The reason was that not all citizens of these republics identified themselves with the respective nations, with only peoples of religious or ethnic kin identifying themselves as members of the Azerbaijani or Georgian nations.

Comparing the Armenian and Azerbaijani cases by applying Hroch's phases of national movements, it was shown that the Azerbaijanis were well behind the Armenians, being still in Phase A, when the Armenians had passed all three phases. The reason for the late national 'awakening' of Azerbaijanis was considered to be Islam, which was a unifying factor rather than a separating one like nationalism, whereas the early national 'awakening' of Armenians was connected with the European-influenced Armenian diaspora. It was the last decades of the nineteenth century that the Armenian political parties made national-territorial autonomy

demands in the Ottoman Empire their immediate objective, adding the South Caucasus to the list in 1907. The realisation of the 'Armenian homeland' necessitated solving the land problem in Eastern Anatolia and the South Caucasus. The efforts made to solve this problem in the South Caucasus were stimulated by the February and October Revolutions in 1917 and were instrumental in the territorial 'awakening' of the Azerbaijanis and their demand for national-territorial autonomy. The latter might have been not made if not for the important national and political 'awakening' process that had been taking place since the end of the nineteenth century, especially in the early twentieth century. Unlike the Armenian case, Hroch's phases of national movements for Central and Eastern European countries apply directly to the Azerbaijani case: all three phases occurred almost in chronological order, whereas Hroch's typology of national movements for European countries is useful in studying both the Armenian and Azerbaijani cases: in the former, the national movement acquired a mass character under the old regime, which produced armed insurrections; and in the latter, national agitation also got under way under the old regime, but the transition to a mass movement was delayed after a constitutional revolution in Russia.

Not all states are the products of nationalist movements, as seen with Liberia, and not all nationalist movements end in the emergence of states, as was the case with the Kurds. The success or failure of both cases depended on Great Power support, since it was US support which brought about the construction of Liberia and it was lack of Great Power support that meant that the Kurdish nationalist movement did not end in a Kurdish state. Without British support, Jews would not have been able to establish a homeland in Palestine in 1919, where they were a very small minority. Despite their dispersed minority distribution in Eastern Anatolia, Armenians were more numerous than Jews in their respective locations, but unlike Jews, the Armenian nationalist movement did not bring about the construction of autonomy in Eastern Anatolia until the First World War, since there was no Great Power sponsorship. Although wars and the collapse of empires are considered opportunities for the creation of national states, in the Armenian case this did not happen in Eastern Anatolia because of the events of 1915 and the absence of the US mandate. This means that the diaspora nationalism discussed by Gellner and Smith may not end in state construction in the 'historical homeland' if there is no Great Power support.

The acquisition of lands was considered the main problem for diaspora nationalism by Gellner, using the example of the Jews. In the Armenian case, the land problem started to be solved about a century before the declaration of the Armenian Republic, by possessing Muslim lands in the South Caucasus after 1828: in the early twentieth century this was no longer an issue, owing to the settlement of about one million Armenians in the region throughout the 19th-early 20th centuries. The declaration of the Armenian Republic in parts of these settlements showed that diaspora nationalism can also end in the declaration of state in areas where there is no historically contiguous mass presence of a people in a particular territory, if there is strong external power support. For that reason, the Armenian case could be viewed as a distinct case between the cases of Liberia, as a dispersed people who established their state without a nationalist movement, not in what could be constructed 'historical homeland', and with US support, and Israel, as a diaspora nationalism whose nationalist movement, mostly outside their 'homeland', resulted in the construction of a state in what was viewed by the Jewish national movement as the 'historical homeland', with British support.

Ethnic, historical, economic, geographical and security principles were applied to the Garabagh and Nakhchyvan cases while discussing the delimitation of the borders of the Armenian and Azerbaijani republics. The discussions revealed that the ethnic principle was the main principle supported by the Armenian Republic, since its aim was to include as much Armenian-populated territory as possible, leaving only a small Armenian minority outside its borders, and to build an Armenian ethno-nation, despite the fact that both Garabagh and Nakhchyvan were Muslim-dominated and distanced from the compact Armenian areas in Erevan, Echmiadzin and Alexandropol *uezds*. This once again showed the usefulness of the ethno-symbolist approach, demonstrating that the Armenian nationalism was ethnic nationalism. In order to strengthen its claims to Nakhchyvan and Garabagh, the elites of the Armenian Republic constructed a notion of the national 'Armenian territory' from time immemorial in both regions, based on arguments about the historical ethnic connection between the regions and the Armenian people and a long-term Armenian presence in the area. Thus, the Armenian case once again demonstrated the usefulness of the ethno-symbolist approach, since the Armenian Republic tried to substantiate its claims based on the constructed ethno-national historical narrative.

The Armenian Government made claims to Garabagh and Nakhchyvan, based on the economic needs of Armenia, although none of these regions were rich economically; the Armenians of Garabagh had earned money in the Baku oil fields, and the Eastern Anatolian part of the Araz valley had more fertile lands than its Nakhchyvan part. Apart from access to the Araz valley and Kars-Erevan railway in the South Caucasus, with the territories it claimed in Eastern Anatolia, the Armenian Republic had access to the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers and the Mediterranean and Black Seas. This suggests that Armenia could satisfy its economic needs without the Garabagh and Nakhchyvan regions. It could also establish a border with Persia through Eastern Anatolia and build future trade relations by extending the railway from Kars to Persia through this region. The analysis of the Armenian economic arguments demonstrated that Armenian claims to these regions were not, in fact, economic, but land-related.

The Armenian geographical argument aimed to construct historical geographical boundaries from the Mediterranean through Nakhchyvan in the Araz valley to the Lesser Caucasus Mountains in Garabagh, connecting this with a 'pan-Turanism' security argument regarding the Turks and Azerbaijanis. On one hand, Armenia tried to substantiate its claims to Garabagh and Nakhchyvan with references to the 'pan-Turanism' menace; on the other hand it wanted to include the Garabagh and Nakhchyvan regions in Armenia, despite a very strong Muslim presence there. Rather than solving security issues, the inclusion was likely to create new ones.

The Ottoman Empire and the Allied Powers recognised Garabagh as part of Azerbaijan, whereas Britain handed Nakhchyvan over to Armenia and the US tried to apply its neutral zone project to Nakhchyvan. These powers were not guided by common principles while settling territorial problems, but by political considerations. Without the Bolshevik threat, the Allied Powers might not have given *de facto* recognition to the South Caucasian republics, including Azerbaijan and Armenia, in January 1920. The Sevres Treaty of August 1920 envisaged the establishment of borders between Armenia and Azerbaijan by direct agreement between the two countries. If this agreement could not be achieved by the time of the definition of the Turkish-Armenian borders by the US President Wilson, they would be established by the Allied Powers. But Azerbaijan was already subject to Soviet control in

April 1920, and the treaty itself was given up by the Armenian Republic on the insistence of Kemalist Turkey under the Gumru Treaty of December 1920. The territorial problems between the two countries were settled by the Soviets: Mountainous Garabagh was given ethno-territorial autonomy within Azerbaijan, the western part of Zangazur *uezd* in Garabagh was given to Armenia, and Nakhchyvan was granted autonomous status within Azerbaijan.

Comparing the ways in which the Garabagh and Nakhchyvan issues were settled, it was concluded that the Soviets were also not guided by the principles discussed above, but by political considerations. They carved the territories populated by Armenians out of Garabagh and organised them into Mountainous Garabagh Autonomous *Oblast*, meaning that the Armenians of Garabagh were granted ethno-territorial autonomy despite the facts that the area did not border Armenia and the Armenians already had their national entity. This compromise was not made vis-a-vis Azerbaijanis compactly residing in Armenia. As for the autonomy status of Nakhchyvan within Azerbaijan, if the Turks had not demanded that a poll be held in Nakhchyvan, the results of which were instrumental in its inclusion in Azerbaijan on autonomy rights grounds, Nakhchyvan would have been given to Armenia. Not satisfied with this outcome, the Soviets tried to delimit the borders of Nakhchyvan in an attempt to shorten the border connection between Azerbaijan and Turkey.

In the end, neither the confederation nor federation ideas put forward to solve the territorial problems between the South Caucasian republics could be realised in practice. The territorial settlement of the Garabagh problem led to war between Armenia and Azerbaijan in 1991 and the occupation by Armenia of not only Mountainous Garabagh Autonomous *Oblast*, but also the surrounding districts, including those that constituted part of Zangazur *uezd*, which was left in Azerbaijan in 1920. In doing so, Armenia deepened the territorial gap between Nakhchyvan and other parts of Azerbaijan with the intention of including Nakhchyvan in Armenia in the future, as projected by Armenian nationalists during the *Dashnaktsutiun* and *zemstvo* conferences in the early twentieth century.

Comparing different world cases, it can be argued that the Armenian case has most similarities with that of Israel. In both cases, the nationalisms were diaspora nationalisms, with one difference: Israel was constructed in its 'historical homeland', Armenia in diaspora.

In both cases there were population settlements in the territory of the state-to-be: in Israel, Jews from different parts of the world came to Israel after it was declared a homeland with British support in 1919 and continued when the State of Israel was declared in 1948; and in the Armenian case, a great number of Armenians from Persia and the Ottoman Empire moved to the South Caucasus in the Russian Empire from the early nineteenth century until the early twentieth century, where the Armenian Republic was declared in 1918. The construction of both states was influenced by wars: the First World War and events of 1915 in the Armenian case, and the Second World War and Holocaust in the case of Israel. Moreover, neither state was satisfied with its borders and both started expanding their areas. In the case of Israel, the need to accommodate population increase through natural growth and migration led to claims for a larger territory and the creation of settlements in the disputed territories. Armenia increased its area significantly under Soviet rule, and in addition, after 1991, it occupied the territories of Azerbaijan, i.e. Mountainous Garabagh and the surrounding districts. As in the case of Israel, Armenia encouraged the settlement of Armenians from different parts of the world in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Another similarity is that a great number of the local populations have become refugees from the territory of these states and have become internally displaced peoples, and the non-acceptance of the occupation of their territories by the occupied countries and their populations, as well as at the international level. Both Israel and Armenia have tried to substantiate their expansion with reference to the need for economically viable and secure borders, with the support of some Great Powers. One more similarity is that Armenia achieved the disconnection of Nakhchivan from other parts of Azerbaijan, and Israel achieved the non-connection of Gaza with other parts of Palestine.

The thesis presented a full analysis of the issues raised which goes beyond the limitations of the existing historiography. Its contribution to the conceptualisation of the process of state-formation and territorial delimitation can be summarised as follows: Armenian nationalism was to a large extent diaspora nationalism. The theory of phases of national movements proposed by Miroslav Hroch for Central and Eastern European countries are only partly applicable to the Armenian case, whereas it is almost fully applicable to the Azerbaijani case. The typology of national movements offered by Hroch for European countries is applicable to both the Armenian and Azerbaijani cases. The ethno-symbolist approach to nationalism and nations is particularly useful to studying the Armenian case, since Armenian nationalism was

an ethnic nationalism and the construction of an Armenian state did not make any change to the composition of the Armenian nation, so the Armenian nation is an ethno-nation. Not all nationalist movements end in state construction in the 'historical homeland' if there is no Great Power support. States can also be constructed without nationalist movements, if there is Great Power support, and diaspora nationalism can also end in state construction within the diaspora, if there is external power support.

Moreover, the ethnic principle in practice is usually not the main principle of delimitation of the borders of newly emerged states. When an ethnic minority within one state already has a national state, the ethno-territorial autonomy option for that ethnic minority may not solve, but instead develop, ethnic problems, and can lead to separatist claims. For that reason, ethnic minority problems for those peoples who have national states are usually better solved by guaranteeing their cultural rights without establishing ethno-territorial autonomy.

The implications of the delimitation of borders between Armenia and Azerbaijan have been felt up to the present day. The ethno-territorial autonomy granted to the politically constructed Mountainous Garabagh Autonomous *Oblast*, which mostly included the Armenian-populated parts of Garabagh, laid the basis of further Armenian territorial claims to Azerbaijan. The conflict, which still continues, resulted in about one million Azerbaijani refugees and internally displaced people in 1987-1994 from Armenia and occupied Azerbaijani territories in Garabagh, and a great number of Armenian refugees from Azerbaijan. However, unlike the Armenian refugees, who mostly moved to Russia and other countries, the Azerbaijani refugees and displaced people gathered in Azerbaijan, with resulting serious problems for the country. The most important lesson of the current thesis is the bitter consequences of extreme ethnic nationalism and its dangers. Another important lesson is the consequences of one-sided political compromise: Armenian ethno-territorial autonomy in Azerbaijan without granting the same status to Azerbaijanis in Armenia.

Annex I. Population distribution in Elizavetpol *guberniya* in 1916¹⁰²²

Administrative division	Muslims					Armenians (all confessions)	Christian Kartvelians (Georgians)	Others	Total
	Sunni and Shi'a (Azerbaijanis)	Kurds	Kartvelians	Other	Total				
Elizavetpol guberniya	783,065 – 61.41%	3,802 – 0.298%	287 – 0.02%	10,726 – 0.84%	797,880 – 62.57%	418,859 – 32.84%	743 – 0.058%	57,649 – 4.52%	1,275,131
<i>Shusha uezd</i>	85,622 – 45.36%	–	–	49 – 0.025%	85,671 – 45.38%	98,809 – 52.35%	60 – 0.03%	4,205 – 2.22%	188,745
<i>Garyagin (Jabrayil) uezd</i>	65,587 – 73.21%	45 – 0.05%	9 – 0.01%	–	65,641 – 73.27%	21,755 – 24.28%	–	2,188 – 2.44%	89,584
<i>Javanshir uezd</i>	50,798 – 67.07%	–	–	2,200 – 2.9%	52,998 – 69.98%	22,008 – 29.06%	–	724 – 0.95%	75,730
<i>Zangazur uezd</i>	119,705 – 52.87%	3,638 – 1.6%	–	52 – 0.02%	123,395 – 54.5%	101,055 – 44.63%	62 – 0.027%	1,886 – 0.83%	226,398
<i>Elizavetpol uezd</i>	177,355 – 65.09%	84 – 0.03%	122 – 0.04%	89 – 0.032%	177,650 – 65.19%	68,714 – 25.2%	335 – 0.12%	25,778 – 9.46%	272,477
<i>Gazakh uezd</i>	67,950 – 49.58%	35 – 0.025%	–	231 – 0.168%	68,216 – 49.77%	61,597 – 44.94%	279 – 0.2%	6,957 – 5.07%	137,049
<i>Nukha uezd</i>	136,958 – 73.73%	–	156 – 0.083%	8,105 – 4.36%	145,219 – 78.18%	25,760* – 13.86%	–	14,769 – 7.95%	185,748
<i>Arash uezd</i>	79,090 – 79.56%	–	–	–	79,090 – 79.56%	19,161 – 19.27%	7 – 0.007%	1,149 – 1.15%	99,400

¹⁰²² *Kavkazskiy kalendar' na 1917 god*, Tiflis: Tipografiya Kantselyarii Namestnika Y.I.V. na Kavkaze, 1916, pp 190-197

* Note: The statistics included Armenians and Udis, both monophysites.

Annex II. Population distribution in the western half of the South Caucasus in 1916¹⁰²³

Administrative division	Muslims					Armenians (all confessions)	Christian Kartvelians (Georgians)	Others	Total
	Sunni and Shi'a (Azerbaijanis)	Kurds	Kartvelians	Other	Total				
Erevan guberniya	373,582 – 33.34%	36,508 – 3.25%	–	59 – 0.005%	410,149 – 36.61%	669,871 – 59.79%	374 – 0.03%	39,848 – 3.55%	1,120,242
<i>Erevan uezd</i>	86,741 – 42.18%	6,763- 3.28%	–	50 – 0.02%	93,554 – 45.49%	106,933- 52.005%	206 – 0.1%	4,924 – 2.39%	205,617
<i>Nakhchivan uezd</i>	81,191 – 59.32%	517 – 0.37%	–	6 – 0.004%	81,714 – 59.7%	54,209 – 39.6%	168 – 0.12%	768 – 0.56%	136,859
<i>Sharur- Daralayaz uezd</i>	58,493 – 64.81%	1,861 – 2.06%	–	3 – 0.003%	60,357 – 66.87%	29,165 – 32.31%	–	728 – 0.80%	90,250
<i>Alexandropol uezd</i>	9,180 – 4.06%	71 – 0.03%	–	–	9,251 – 4.09%	202,505 – 89.57%	–	14,324 – 6.3%	226,080
<i>New Bayazid uezd</i>	50,713 – 26.85%	2,964 – 1.56%	–	–	53,677 – 28.4%	129,347 – 68.48%	–	5,835 – 3.08%	188,859
<i>Echmiadzin uezd</i>	41,310 – 24.62%	9,653 – 5.75%	–	–	50,963 – 30.37%	115,026 – 68.55%	–	1,797 – 1.07%	167,786
<i>Surmali uezd</i>	45,954 – 43.85%	14,679 – 14.007%	–	–	60,633 – 57.86%	32,686 – 31.19%	–	11,472 – 10.9%	104,791

¹⁰²³ *Kavkazskiy kalendar' na 1917 god*, Tiflis: Tipografiya Kantselyarii Namestnika Y.I.V. na Kavkaze, 1916, pp 182-185, 198-201, 206-221

Tiflis guberniya ¹⁰²⁴	106,499 – 7.22%	10,629 – 0.72%	61,679 – 4.18%	4,131 – 0.28%	182,938 -12.4%	411,747 - 28%	331,828- 22.5%	546,795 – 37.1%	1,473,308
<i>Gori uezd</i>	174 – 0.07%	–	73 – 0.03%	80 – 0.033%	327– 0.13%	32,822 – 13.61%	164,363 – 68.19%	43,504 – 18.05%	241,016
<i>Akhalsikh uezd</i>	16,680 – 17.2%	1,801 – 1.85%	35,212 – 36.32%	3 – 0.003%	53,696 – 55.38%	28,225 – 29.11%	10,280 – 10.6%	4,746 – 4.89%	96,947
<i>Akhalkalaki uezd</i>	5,431 – 5.06%	904 – 0.84%	2,877 – 2.68%	16 – 0.014%	9,228 – 8.6%	82,772 – 77.23%	7,427 – 6.92%	7,746 – 7.22%	107,173
<i>Borchaly uezd</i>	51,230 – 30.25%	–	–	86 – 0.05%	51,316 – 30.3%	63,702 – 37.61%	10,419 – 6.15%	43,914 – 25.93%	169,351
Kars oblast	102,748 – 28.2%	67,450 – 18.5%	5 - 0.001%	901 – 0.25%	171,104 – 46.97%	118,217 – 32.45%	131 – 0.035%	74,762 – 20.52%	364,214
<i>Ardahan okrug</i>	45,430 – 51%	24,679 – 27.71%	5 - 0.005%	–	70,114 – 78.7%	1,036 – 1.16%	26 – 0.29%	17,860 – 20.05%	89,036
<i>Kaghyzman okrug</i>	3,621 – 4.35%	26,709 – 32.09%	–	32 – 0.038%	30,362 – 36.49%	25,826 – 31.03%	–	27,020 – 32.47%	83,208
<i>Kars okrug</i>	49,320– 25.69%	15,996 – 8.33%	–	869 – 0.45%	66,185 - 34.47%	55,087 – 28.69%	105 – 0.054%	70,593 – 36.77%	191,970
<i>Oltu okrug</i>	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data
Batumi oblast	15,056 – 12.25%	552 – 0.449%	70,241 – 57.19%	471 – 0.38%	86,320 – 70.28%	15,192 – 12.37%	8,598 – 7%	12,701 – 10.34%	122,811
<i>Batumi okrug</i>	14,649 – 17.15%	552 – 0.646%	44,697 – 52.3%	182 – 0.2%	60,080 – 70.35%	5,764 – 6.75%	7,411 – 8.67%	12,142 – 14.2%	85,397
<i>Artvin okrug</i>	283 – 0.75%	–	25,544 – 68.27%	289 – 0.77%	26,116 – 69.8%	9,428 – 25.12%	1,187 – 3.17%	683 – 1.82%	37,414

¹⁰²⁴ Note: This table contains statistics on four *uezds*, which were considered for administrative-territorial readjustment in 1917, out of nine in Tiflis *guberniya*.

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