Between Host-Countries and Homeland: Institutions, Politics and Identities in the Post-Genocide Armenian Diaspora (1920s to 1980s)

by

Vahe Sahakyan

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Doctoral Committee:

Professor Kevork B. Bardakjian, Chair
Associate Professor Carol B. Bardenstein
Emeritus Professor Gerard J. Libaridian
Associate Professor Ara Sanjian, University of Michigan - Dearborn
Professor Ronald G. Suny
Professor Khachig Tölölyan, Wesleyan University

To my parents

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Note on Translation and Transliteration

Excerpts from Armenian, Russian and French sources quoted in this dissertation are translated by the author.

In general, this dissertation uses the transliteration scheme for Armenian adapted by the *Journal of Society for Armenian Studies* from the Library of Congress's *Cataloging Service, Bulletin* 121, Spring, 1977. It is based on Classical Armenian and Eastern Armenian pronunciation.

Ա ա	A a
Բ բ	B b
Գ գ	G g
Դ դ	D d
Ե ե	E e
Զ զ	Z z
Է է	Ē ē
Ը ը	Ĕ ĕ
Թ թ	T‘ t‘
Ժ ժ	Zh zh
Ի ի	I i
Լ լ	L l
Խ խ	Kh kh
Ծ ծ	Ts ts

Կ կ	K k
Հ հ	H h
Ձ ձ	Dz dz
Ղ ղ	Gh gh
Ճ ճ	Ch ch
Մ մ	M m
Յ յ	Y y
Ն ն	N n
Շ շ	Sh sh
Ո ո	O o
Չ չ	Ch‘ ch‘
Պ պ	P p
Ջ ջ	J j
Ռ ռ	Ṙ ṙ
Ս ս	S s
Վ վ	V v
Տ տ	T t
Ր ր	R r
Ց ց	Ts‘ ts‘
Ւ ւ	W w
Փ փ	P‘ p‘
Ք ք	K‘ k‘
Եւ եւ	Ew ew (or Ev ev)
Օ օ	Ō ō
Ֆ ֆ	F f
Ու ու	U u

The following categories are exceptions from this general approach:

a. Western Armenian proper names, which are transcribed in their accepted forms in English or French (e.g. Hratch Dasnabedian as opposed to Hrach Tasnapetian, Sarkis Varzhabedian as opposed to Sargis Varzhapetian, Sarkis Dkhruni as opposed to Sargis Tkhruni, and so on); the transliterated forms of such names are given in parentheses following their first time use.

b. Titles of Armenian language newspapers or organizations in Lebanon, France and the United States, which are transliterated according to their official English or French forms (e.g. *Haratch* as opposed to *Harach'*, *Mardgotz* as opposed to *Martkots'*, *Gotchnag* as opposed to *Koch'nak, Achkhar* as opposed to *Ashkharh, Aztag* as opposed to *Azdak, Nor Seround* as opposed to *Nor Serund* and so on).

c. Names of the Armenian political parties, which are transcribed as Hnchak/Hnchakyans (instead of Hnch'ak/Hnch'akyan), Dashnak/Dashnaktsutyun (as opposed to Dashnakts'ut'yun) and Ramkavar (as opposed to Ṙamkavar).

No changes are made in direct quotes. Therefore, sometimes the names of Armenian political parties or Armenian proper names may be spelled differently in direct quotes (e.g. Dashnag, Tashnag, Tashnak as opposed to Dashnak; Ramgavar as opposed to Ramkavar; Hunchak, Hnchag as opposed to Hnchak).

For Russian language titles, this dissertation uses the transliteration scheme of the Library of Congress.

А а	A a
Б б	B b

В в	V v
Г г	G g
Д д	D d
Е е	E e
Ё ё	Ë ë
Ж ж	Zh zh
З з	Z z
И и	I i
Й й	Ĭ ĭ
К к	K k
Л л	L l
М м	M m
Н н	N n
О о	O o
П п	P p
Р р	R r
С с	S s
Т т	T t
У у	U u
Ф ф	F f
Х х	Kh kh
Ц ц	TS ts
Ч ч	Ch ch
Ш ш	Sh sh
Щ щ	Shch shch
ъ	″ (hard sign)
ы	y
ь	′ (soft sign)
Э э	Ė ė
Ю ю	IU iu
Я я	IA ia

Abstract

This dissertation explores the conditions and actions that led to the transformation of a post-genocide Armenian dispersion into a transnational diaspora. Over time, banishment and mistreatment had forced large numbers of Armenians to abandon their ancestral homes in the Ottoman Empire. The most decisive manifestation of such displacement was the deportations and wholesale massacres during WWI, retrospectively defined as genocide, which resulted in large concentrations of survivors in the Middle East, Europe and the Americas. Using histories of Armenian communities and institutions, the Armenian language periodical press, and the information acquired through in-depth interviews with notable diaspora Armenians in Lebanon, France and the United States, this study analyzes the formative impact that changing international and host-country specific socio-political conditions have had on the ways in which Armenian elites and institutions defined and redefined their attitudes towards Soviet Armenia; how competing discourses on conceptions of the Armenian homeland, diasporic identities and incompatible ideologies and orientations towards Soviet Armenia clashed and led at once to the emergence of different forms of Armenian identity and to a transnational schism in the Armenian diaspora. It suggests that while genocide recognition after the fiftieth anniversary of the Armenian genocide in 1965 introduced a shared ground between the formerly hostile Armenian camps, by the mid-1980s, the prevailing institutional divisions produced homeland-centered and diaspora-centered paradigms of diasporic belongings. Throughout, this research considers the ways in which institutions and leaders aspired to forge and project transnationally coherent,

aspirational Armenian identities, to which they worked to rally their constituencies, and juxtaposes these efforts to the actual subjectivity and fluidity of Armenian diasporic identities and self-images of subsequent generations, shaped under different host-country contexts.

This study draws on theoretical and methodological principles developed in diaspora studies, as well as transnationalism and globalization. It contributes to social constructivist perspective in diaspora studies by stressing the role of elites and institutions in the formation of the post-genocide Armenian diaspora and diasporic identities, and equally emphasizing the influences of changing international and host-country conditions and the policies of a state, projecting itself as the homeland.

Introduction

In the course of the second millennium CE, the Armenians lived through three major traumatic and cataclysmic experiences of chiefly involuntary exodus, forcible exile and violent deportation and dispersion, each of which, in the course of time, evolved into a distinct diaspora of quite dissimilar entities. In the first instance, a very large number of Armenians left their homeland, some voluntarily but most involuntarily as a result of the policy of annexation Byzantium pursued towards the medieval Armenian kingdoms in the eleventh century. The second exile and deportation from ancestral homes was experienced in 1604, during the Ottoman-Safavid wars, when Shah Abbas the Great of Persia forcibly drove the Armenians of the borderland regions to the interior of his realm. The third and perhaps the largest dispersion of Armenians occurred during WWI, due to the forced deportations and genocidal policies of the Ottoman Young Turk government.

In the first dispersion, moving in a westerly and southwesterly directions, the Armenians settled in Cappadocia and Cilicia, along the northeastern tip of the Mediterranean. A few ambitious Armenian soldiers seized a number of Byzantine fortresses in the region and some managed to set up a political structure, a principality in Cilicia, which in 1199 was recognized as a kingdom. This was a new home away from home, a diaspora state par excellence, and a rare feat in the history of diasporas. Shortly before and following the collapse of this kingdom in 1375, smaller

Armenian communities rose in towns stretching from Armenia proper to the western shores of Asia Minor, other Armenian settlements emerged in Cyprus, Greece and Italy. Parallel flows of Armenians to the north and northwest, gave birth to many Armenian diasporic settlements in Russia and Eastern Europe.

The second dispersion of the Armenians occurred after the expanding Ottoman and Safavid empires in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries absorbed Armenia proper and Armenian communities in Asia Minor. The exile during Shah Abbas the Great created Armenian diasporic settlements in Isfahan and northwestern parts of Iran. New Julfa, the Armenian suburb in Isfahan, shone as a leading mercantile and cultural center in the seventeenth century. Later on, with the deteriorating conditions in Iran, some Julfa Armenians moved eastward, establishing Armenian settlements in India, China and elsewhere in Asia. When the treaty of Zuhab of 1639, concluded between the Safavids and the Ottomans, finally put an end to their decades-long rivalry and wars in the region of historic Armenia, the Armenians to the west of the line of demarcation (the Western Armenians) remained under Ottoman control, and those to its east (the Eastern Armenians) under Persian dominion. Peace in the region was disrupted four major times in the ensuing 275 years: in the 1720s, during the local rebellion of Davit‘ Bek in the southeast of contemporary Armenia; in 1826-28, when the Russians wrested from Persia the Khanate of Erivan (its area roughly corresponded to that of contemporary Republic of Armenia); during the Russo-Ottoman war of 1877-78 (with the Russians seizing control of Kars and Ardahan in the east); and, in WWI, when the dispersed survivors of the genocide formed a new, diaspora, which constitutes the very topic of this dissertation.

The massive dispersion of Armenians surviving the deportations and genocide in the Ottoman Empire during WWI gave birth to Armenian settlements in many countries and increased the numbers of already settled Armenians in others. In a relatively short span of time some of these settlements turned into identifiable communities in many host countries. By focusing on countries where Armenians have maintained significant presence since their establishment in large numbers through the twentieth century, namely on France in Europe, Lebanon in the Middle East and the United States, this dissertation analyzes, from a historical-sociological perspective, the process of the transformation of the post-genocide Armenian dispersion into a diaspora. It in particular examines, in a comparative framework, the complex (inter)relations between host-countries, the Armenian homeland and the Armenian dispersion in the course of the twentieth century until the era of *perestroika* in the USSR in the mid-1980s,[1] and explores how these (inter)relations, host-country conditions and different perceptions of homeland by diasporic elites, institutions and organizations, influenced the ways in which various Armenian refugee groupings and organizations developed shared perceptions of Armenianness, and discourses and relations extending beyond the boundaries of host-countries. Rather than taking the concepts of homeland and host-countries as unchanging and given realities, this work explores the changing international and national conditions in host-countries and the dynamics in the perceptions of homeland under the influence of these changing contexts and in response to certain developments and policies in Soviet Armenia and the USSR in general.

[1] The era of *perestroika* was a series of economic and political reforms introduced by the last leader of Soviet Union, Michail Gorbachev. It is widely believed that these reforms eventually led to the dissolution of the USSR in 1991. The political relaxation in the USSR under Gorbachev's *perestroika* created conditions for the resurfacing of nationalist movements in many constituent republics. The movement in Soviet Armenia, initially rallied around the demands for the unification of Armenian populated region of Nagorno-Karabagh within the structure of neighboring Soviet Azerbaijan, gradually grew into independence movement. In September 1991 Armenia was declared independent. All these events created qualitatively new conditions in Armenia-Diaspora relations, which is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

This dissertation is the first extensive scholarly work that analyzes the post-genocide Armenian diaspora through the recent conceptual frameworks in diaspora studies. The academic field of diaspora studies is relatively new, and most of the scholarly contributions to the field have been made since the 1980s and proliferated particularly in the 1990s (Cohen 2008, xv; Braziel and Mannur 2003, Tölölyan 1996b, 3-4; Sheffer 2003, 5). Theorizing diaspora has since been a task and challenge for many scholars. Debates are still ongoing as to whether theoretical abstractions on diaspora are, first of all, possible; secondly, whether they can have any meaningful practical application because of the enormous diversity of people and groups that are designated as diasporas;[2] and, lastly, on the limits and contexts of the application of the term diaspora in the scholarly debate and in public discourse.[3]

Several different approaches have been made to define the term "diaspora."[4] The essentialist or ideal-type approaches offer some characteristics, which distinguish diasporas from all other forms of dispersions (Safran 1991; cf. Butler 2001; Cohen 2008).[5] The social constructivist

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[2] Jana Braziel and Anita Mannur think diaspora studies "need to move beyond theorizing how diasporic identities are constructed and consolidated and must ask, how are those diasporic identities practiced, lived, and experienced" (Braziel and Mannur 2003, 9). In a similar vein Brent Edwards questions the applicability of theoretical abstractions in the case of the African diaspora and in his analysis focuses instead on discursive practices that "frame blackness as an object of knowledge beyond nation-state" (Edwards 2009, 12-13; 67).

[3] In one of his articles Khachig Tölölyan expresses concern about some "wholly inappropriate" applications of the term *diaspora*, among which he mentions "the Californian diaspora in Seattle," or "the egg cream diaspora" referring to a bottling of a beverage to serve new markets beyond New York (Tölölyan 1996b, 10).

[4] The term 'diaspora' derives from Greek *dia-* (*across*) and *spierien* (*saw*, *disperse*, or *scatter seeds*). It was initially used in the Septuagint – the Greek translation of the Torah – and in the Greco-Roman world with reference to the Jews, who were scattered around because of the Babylonian conquest of Palestine and the destruction of the First Temple in 586 BCE, which was rebuilt in 516BCE, and the subsequent rebellion against the Romans, and the destruction of the Second and the last Jewish Temple in 70 CE. Until recently, to nearly the 1960s, the Jewish centered definition prevailed in the scholarly discourse (cf. Tölölyan 1996b: 10-12). The Armenian word for 'diaspora' is 'sp'iwṙk'' (or 'sp'yuṙk'' in Eastern Armenian orthography). It is the plural form of 'sp'ir/sp'iwr' (to disperse, to saw) (Achaṙyan 1979, 287, Jahukyan 2010, 698)

[5] Safran (1991: 83-84) particularly suggested that all "expatriate minority communities" may constitute a diaspora, if the members of that community share the following features:

perspective in diaspora studies, which developed more recently, rejects all essentialist approaches and calls for focusing on the formation of diasporic identities instead (cf. Cohen 2008, 11). Such works have suggested a rethinking of the term "diaspora."[6] The proponents of this approach concentrate on issues such as how and against what diasporas define themselves (Clifford 1994, 307); how diasporic identities are "produced and reproduced," but "never complete, always in process" (Hall 1990, 235), or how they are "practiced, lived and experienced" (Braziel and Mannur 2003, 2-3; Tölölyan 1996b, 9); how discursive practices construct diaspora identities and frame them "as an object of knowledge beyond nation-state" (Edwards 2009, 12-13, 67); or, how those transnational practices form diasporic identities and belongings (Gilroy 1993, 15-6; Gopinath 1995, 304; Lazarus 1995, 332). Rather than constructing definitions, Kim Butler proposes a type of diasporan study, with its focus on "reasons for, and conditions of, the dispersal; relationship with the homeland; relationship with hostlands; interrelationships within communities of the diaspora; and comparative studies of

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1. "they or their ancestors have been dispersed from a specific original "center" to two or more "peripheral," or foreign, regions
2. they retain a collective memory, vision, or myth about their original homeland – its physical location, history, and achievements;
3. they believe that they are not – and perhaps cannot be – fully accepted by their host society and therefore feel partly alienated and insulated from it;
4. they regard their ancestral homeland as their true, ideal home and as the place to which they or their descendants would (or should) eventually return – when conditions are appropriate;
5. they believe that they should, collectively, be committed to the maintenance or restoration of their original homeland and to its safety and prosperity; and
6. they continue to relate, personally or vicariously, to that homeland in one way or another, and their ethnocommunal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such relationship."

[6] One of the pioneers of the "rethinking" is Khachig Tölölyan. In 1996 Tölölyan (1996b: 3) argued that there is a shift in the last few decades after 1960s, when communities formerly known as exile groups, overseas communities, ethnic and racial minorities, now are re-named as diasporas. He explains the reasons *why* this transformation occurred, which he finds to be "the result of change in the politics of discursive regimes as well as the product of extra-discursive phenomena." In this and many other articles he goes on to discuss the "discursive" as well as "extra-discursive" practices that transform dispersions into diasporas (cf. Tölölyan 1996a; 1996b; 2000; 2002; 2006). Based on such rethinking, he comes to conclude that dispersion communities can transform into a diaspora "only when they insist on sustaining a community and maintaining a traditional identity or, if that fails, retaining traits that underscore their difference from the majority society around them and emphasize their similarity to kin in other dispersed communities and in the homeland" (Tölölyan 2006: 2).

different diasporas" (2001, 195). If the purpose of the "ideal type" instrumentalist definitions was the *differentiation* of diaspora from other forms of dispersion such as migrant communities, ethnic, racial and religious minorities and so on, the purpose of the new approach is not so much the differentiation as the description of the *process of transformation* from dispersion to diaspora. The representatives of the latter approach now focus both on the fact that not all refugee and migrant communities develop into a diaspora, and on the ways in which they too, conversely, get transformed into a diaspora. Such rethinking shifted the focus onto the ways and conditions under which dispersions transform into diasporas (cf. Tölölyan 2007, 648-51). It is from this perspective, that the present dissertation addresses the transformation of the post-genocide dispersion of Armenians into a diaspora. By exploring the dynamics of diaspora formation and by emphasizing the social constructedness of the Armenian homeland, diaspora and diasporic identities, it engages the ongoing rethinking in diaspora studies.

The major contribution of this work on the Armenian diaspora is, in general, to the literature of diaspora studies. Some prominent scholars have addressed the Armenian as one of the earliest diasporas, mostly in comparison to the Jewish archetypal diaspora. Although some scholars hesitate to consider the Armenian an archetypal diaspora, it is still considered as one of the oldest 'archetypal' diasporas (Armstrong 1976, 394; Safran 1991, 84-85; Sheffer 2003, 48). In his typology of diasporas Robin Cohen (2008, 16-18) distinguishes between five types of diasporas: victim, labor, imperial, trade and deterritorialized diasporas. He classifies the Armenians as a "prototypical" and "victim" diaspora along with the Jews and the Africans, all of which share two main elements: "the traumatic dispersal from an original homeland" and "the salience of the homeland in the collective memory of a forcibly dispersed group" (*ibid.*, 2-4). Gabriel Sheffer

(2003, 48) agrees with Cohen that Armenian, Jewish, and Greek diasporas share certain similarities as "historical" diasporas, but argues that they cannot be categorized according to "static sociological/functional criteria so as to regard them as "labor," "middlemen," "trade," or "imperial" diasporas."[7] Instead, Sheffer differentiates between the stateless and state-linked diasporas and argues that until the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Armenians represented a "stateless" diaspora (2003, 148-9, 154-5). Such generalized perceptions and classifications of diasporas, even if for analytical purposes, often overemphasize certain continuities and overshadow the dynamics and discontinuities within diasporas. In the case of the Armenian diaspora, as this work will demonstrate, the post-genocide dispersion, accompanied by the fall of the Republic of Armenia (1918-1920), first of all produced certain ruptures with the historical Armenian diaspora. The massive outflow of Armenians from ancestral lands created many Armenian settlements in the countries of Western Europe, the Americas and elsewhere, where Armenians had not had any significant communal and institutional presence prior to the twentieth century. The establishment and active role of Armenian political parties in the emerging Armenian settlements produced certain continuities peculiar to the post-genocide Armenian diaspora. The rest of the diaspora, particularly that of the USSR, remained largely detached from these developments. Secondly, the existence of Soviet Armenia (1920-1991) and its intermittent political involvement in the diaspora led to the emergence of certain traits of both state-linked and stateless Armenian diasporas, as in Sheffer's framework, but contrary to his perception that Armenians were a stateless diaspora.

[7] While it is undeniable that the Armenian diaspora was formed as a result of mostly forced deportations of Armenians from their ancestral lands, classifying them as a "victim" diaspora obscures some other aspects of the Armenian diaspora, part of which, for example, developed certain traits of a "trade" diaspora in the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries (cf. Aslanian 2011).

The second major contribution of this dissertation is to the body of literature focusing exclusively or substantially on the Armenian diaspora. The Armenian diaspora has attracted the attention of many historians, sociologists, anthropologists, and political scientists. Works in this field can be divided into five major categories:

1. Historical surveys of Armenian expatriate communities;
2. Histories of Armenian communities in certain countries, regions/states, cities/towns;
3. Histories of the Armenian church and Armenian political, compatriotic, and other organizations, active outside Armenia;
4. A few sociological, psychological, anthropological, political science and comparative studies on particular Armenian communities in certain countries;
5. Histories and theorizations of the Armenian diaspora.

General histories of Armenian colonies/communities include *Hay gaght'akanut'yan patmut'yun* [The History of Armenian Diaspora[8] [*sic*]] by Hrach'ya Achaṙyan,[9] *Patmut'yun hay gaght'akanut'yan* [History of Armenian Migrations] in 3 volumes (1941, 1955, 1961) by Arshag Alboyajian (Arshak Alpoyachian), *Hamarot urvagits hay gaght'avayreri patmut'yan* [A Concise Outline of the History of Armenian Colonies] in 2 volumes (1964, 1967) by Ashot Abrahamyan, *Hamarot patmut'iwn hay gaght'avayreru* [A Concise History of Armenian Colonies] (1983) by Hagop Atigian (Hakob Atikian), and *Ejer hay gaght'avaireri patmut'yan* [Notes on the History of Armenian Colonies] under the editorship of V. Barkhudaryan and Z. Yekavian (1996), and *Hay gaght'ashkharhi patmut'yun (mijnadarits' minchev 1920t'.)* [History of Armenian Colonies

[8] *History of Armenian Emigrations* would be a more accurate translation, but the English version of the title in the book is *The History of Armenian Diaspora*.
[9] The work was completed probably in the 1940s, but was first published in 2002.

(From the Middle Ages to 1920] under the editorship of Vardges Mikʻayelyan (2003). All these works focus predominantly on the pre-genocide Armenian diaspora and describe in great detail the formation of historical Armenian diasporic settlements, Armenian institutions, printing and the periodical press in various countries or parts of the world. The post-genocide dispersion is briefly touched upon only in some of these works (see Abrahamyan (1967), Mikʻayelyan (ed.) (2003)). To this body of literature should be attributed *Hay Spʻyurkʻ hanragitaran* [Encyclopedia of the Armenian Diaspora] (2003). Each of the essays briefly outlines the history of Armenian settlement in the country under discussion and provides details on the numbers and concentrations of Armenians in various towns, cities and regions of the country, as well as on Armenian religious, cultural, educational, political and other communal institutions and organizations operating in those communities. Articles on various countries are complemented with special essays on major Armenian institutions and organizations operating in the Armenian diaspora. All of the essays are mostly factual, informative and descriptive, serving as a source of general reference.

The second cluster of literature on the Armenian diaspora includes histories of specific Armenian diasporic settlements. These works range from scholarly articles on Armenian settlements in certain towns and cities to larger volumes on Armenian diasporic settlements in certain states, regions and host-countries, some by scholars, some by journalists or other intellectuals.[10] *The Armenians in America* by Vartan Malcom (c1919), *Torn Between Two Lands: Armenians in*

[10] See, for example, Hagop Deranian, "Worcester is America" (1987), Thomas Greenshields, "The Settlement of Armenian Refugees in Syria and Lebanon 1915-39" (1981), Martine Hovanessian, "Présence arménienne en France: une immigration en exile, la diaspora du XXe siécle" (2003), Robert Mirak, "The Armenians in America" (1997), Ara Sanjian, "The Armenian minority experience in the Modern Arab World" (2001), Anahide Ter-Minassian, "Les Arméniens de Paris depuis 1945" (1994).

America, 1980 to World War I by Robert Mirak (1983) and *Amerikayi Miats'yal Nahangneri hay gaghut'i patmut'yunĕ* [History of the Armenian Community in the United States] by K'narik Avagyan (2000) are based on archival material and provide detailed histories of Armenians' settlement and community building in the United States especially in the course of the nineteenth century and through the early 1920s. *The Armenian Community: The Historical Development of a Social and Ideological Conflict* by Sarkis Atamian (1955) is another interesting contribution to the history of the Armenians in the Untied States. Methodologically, this work is based on sociological and social-psychological theories, but it lacks impartiality. In his analysis of the Armenian intra-communal conflict in the United States, Atamian held biased views, as he was an active representative of one of the conflicting sides. His political affiliations undermine his occasionally insightful analysis of the conflict. *The Armenian Americans* by David Waldstreicher (1989) also provides a brief but valuable overview of the Armenian-Americans in the twentieth century. Apart from these general studies of Armenians in the United States, some specific works on Armenians in certain regions and states, like New England (Mamigonian 2004) or California (Kooshian 2002; Jendian 2008), or even towns, like Fresno (Bulbulian 2000), also have also appeared recently.

Armenian diasporic communities in Europe, particularly in France, have also attracted the attention of several intellectuals and scholars. One of the more comprehensive histories of the Armenian diaspora in France is provided by Levon Ch'ormisian (1975) in the fourth volume of his multivolume study of the History of Western Armenians from the 1870s to the 1970s. As a self-trained historian, a notable social-political activist in the Armenian diaspora in France and the editor of several Armenian newspapers, Ch'ormisian produced a nuanced history of the

establishment and functioning of the Armenian community in France with an impressive analysis of conflicts and disagreements within the community. Ch'ormisian's involvement in several French Armenian organizations, the shift in his political views and affiliations from anti-Soviet to pro-Soviet in the 1940s, left its imprint on his perceptions and, often, on his impartiality, but his work still presents quite a valuable source on the Armenian diaspora in France. *La Communauté arménienne de France. 1920-1950* by Cyril Le Tallec (2001) is a more balanced scholarly account of Armenians in France. The book provides the history of Armenians' settlement in France in the 1920s, describes in great detail the difficulties of Armenian integration into the host society, the establishment of Armenian institutions and organizations in France, the activities of Armenians during WWII and the community's relations with Soviet Armenia. A more recent *Les Arméniens en France: du chaos à la reconnaissance* by Claire Mouradian and Anouche Kunth (2010) deals with the question of Armenians' integration into French society. In the first part of the book, Mouradian discusses the history of the Armenians' settlement in France from the first arrivals to the large influx of refugees following the genocide in the Ottoman Empire during WWI. The book demonstrates how Armenian genocide survivors went from rejection to assimilation and successful integration into the French society, how their identities were shaped and reshaped, and how Armenianness was defined and redefined in France. It also demonstrates how the French Armenian diaspora should be understood as a composite whole, across multiple divisions - social, political, regional, and subject to constant reconfiguration (*ibid.*, 27). Apart from these general works, a number of other studies have been devoted to Armenian settlements in Marseille (Boghossian 2004, 2005; Belmont 2004), the Rhône-Alpes region (Boudjikanian-Keuroghlian 1978), Alfortville (Ananian 1999), Saint

Étienne (Lauras 2006), Decines (Bardakdjian 1989), Issy-Les-Moulineaux (Hovanessian 1992), Paris (Ter-Minassian 1994) and elsewhere in France.

The Armenian communities in the Middle East have been studied too. *Siriayi yev Libanani haykakan gaght'ojakhneri patmut'yun (1841-1946)* [History of Armenian Colonies in Syria and Lebanon (1841-1946)] by Hovhannes Top'uzyan (1986) provides details on Armenian emigration to Syria and Lebanon since Ottoman times, through the genocide in WWI. It has sections on the demographic distribution of Armenian refugees and on cultural, educational, political and other Armenian organizations. It discusses the problems of social-economic and political integration of Armenians, as well as the internal disagreements, tensions and conflicts. Nicola Migliorino's *(Re)Constructing Armenia in Lebanon and Syria. Ethno-Cultural Diversity and the State in the Aftermath of a Refugee Crisis* (2008) provides a balanced account of Armenian communities in Syria and Lebanon. The book focuses on the formation of the post-genocide Armenian communities in Lebanon and Syria and addresses the issues of social, political, economic and cultural integration of Armenians in both countries. It seeks to answer the question of "how a community of 'different' people" could successfully find its place "in the contemporary Middle East without being either assimilated or excluded" (p. 2). Emphasizing the peculiarities of the integration of Armenians in Lebanon and Syria, Migliorino's analysis falls short of addressing the problems of homeland in the perceptions of Armenians in Lebanon. In spite of mentioning (*Re)-Constructing Armenia* in the title of the book, the author does not engage in analyzing identity construction in host-countries like Lebanon or Syria and does not consider whether the (re)-construction of Armenia was in any way in conflict with the existence of Soviet or independent Armenia.

The third cluster of research on the Armenian diaspora includes various histories of Armenian institutions and organizations active outside Armenia. This category includes histories of Armenian compatriotic societies,[11] general histories of Armenian political and charitable, athletic and other organizations,[12] and histories of the Armenian Church in the diaspora.[13] Works in this category, while not addressing the Armenian diaspora directly, provide invaluable details on the transnational network and activism of Armenian institutions and organizations, crucial for understanding the functioning of a diaspora. They have to be acknowledged in general as relevant secondary sources for Armenian diaspora studies, but the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of individual works lies beyond the scope of this brief literature review, as these works only indirectly address the overall issues of the Armenian diaspora.

The fourth cluster of literature encompasses some sociological, anthropological and political science studies focusing on particular aspects of various Armenian diasporic settlements and communities. *Symbol, Myth, and Rhetoric: The Politics of Culture in an Armenian-American Population* (1989) by Jenny Phillips provides an insightful anthropological account of the

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[11] See Alboyajian, *Patmut'iwn hay Kesarioy* [A History of Armenian Caesarea (Kayseri)] (1937); Eghiayan, *Adanayi hayots' patmut'iwn*. [History of Adana Armenians] (1970) and Minassian, *Patmagirk' Kiwrini.* [History Book of Gürün] (1974). Most of these works only partially are relevant in addressing the post-1915 period.

[12] See Antreassian, *Patmut'iwn Ramkavar azatakan kusakts'ut'ean Amerikayi arewmtean shrjanaki* [History of the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party Western Region USA] (1981), Dallak'yan, *Ramkavar azatakan kusakts'ut'yan patmut'yun*. [History of Liberal Democratic Party] (1997, 2007), Dasnabedian, *History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation Dashnaktsutiun 1890/1924* (1990); Djizmedjian (Chizmechian), *Patmut'iwn amerikahay k'aghak'akan kusakts'ut'eants': 1890-1925.* [History of the American-Armenian Political Parties: 1890-1925] (1930); Kitur, *Patmut'iwn S. D. Hnchakean kusakts'ut'ean, 1887-1962* [History of the Social-Democratic Hnchakyan Party] (1962-63); Melk'onyan, *Haykakan baregortsakan ĕndhanur miut'yan patmut'yun* [History of the Armenian General Benevolent Union] (2005), and other works.

[13] Such as Arzumanian, *Azgapatum: History of the Armenian Nation* (1997); Eghiayan, *Zhamanakakits' patmut'iwn kat'oghikosut'ean hayots' Kilikioy 1914-1972* [Contemporary History of the Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia] (1975); Tootikian, *Hay awetaranakan ekeghets'i 1846-1996* [Armenian Evangelical Church 1986-1996] and other works.

Armenian-American community. By analyzing symbols, myths and rhetoric, as well as conflicts and schisms produced by Armenian political factions in the United States, her work sheds an important light on how the political tensions and conflicts between the Armenian political parties affected everyday relations of their sympathizers or people and families not involved in Armenian political affairs at all. Through interviews with representatives of various Armenian-American diasporic organizations as well as with Armenians born and raised in the Middle East and the Untied States, Phillips was able to address the conflicting perceptions of Armenianness produced in the Middle East and the United States with all the attendant consequences of stereotyping and exclusions.

Anny Bakalian's *The Armenian-Americans: From Being to Feeling Armenian* (1993) and Martine Hovanessian's *Le lien communautaire: trois générations d'Arméniens* (1992) mostly address the diasporic identities of the American and French-born generations from a more sociological viewpoint. These studies are quite similar in approach and scope. Despite the limitations of sociological surveys and samples, some of the conclusions in both studies are comparable, suggesting that they may be applicable beyond the limits of the studied communities. Bakalian analyzes the identities of American-born generations of Armenians based on quantitative surveys conducted in New York and New Jersey and some qualitative interviews in the 1980s. The book argues that the Armenian-Americans transformed from "being Armenian to feeling Armenian" and that later generations developed a "symbolic" identity as opposed to the traditional markers of identity. One of Bakalian's major points is that American born Armenians have the freedom to decide their personal identities: "They may choose to be Armenian, Armenian-American, American-Armenian, American, or whatever else they want"

(Bakalian 1993, 6-7). Hovanessian's conclusions drawn from the study of the French-born third and fourth generations in Issy-Les-Moulineaux are quite similar. "In the absence of territorial, economic, linguistic unity," writes Hovanessian, "being an Armenian" constitutes a choice. Some choose to learn the language, others prefer working with other Armenians, or joining Armenian organizations, practice their oriental cuisine, or travel to Armenia (Hovanessian 1992, 260-1). Both works shed an important light on individual aspects of identity formation and the importance of the time factor in the definition of Armenianness. Both argue that the generations born in the Untied States and France gradually distance themselves from traditional Armenian diasporic institutions, organizations and identities. One of Bakalian's important conclusions is that the Armenian-American community is "not a monolithic structure" and therefore it is more appropriate to speak of "sub-communities", which "are crisscrossed by allegiances to place of birth, by recency of immigration; by religious affiliation; by political and ideological sympathies; by age; by life-style and interest; and by education, occupation, and income levels" (*ibid.* 428-9). While valuable, both works produced in the early 1990s did not benefit from the more recent debates and discourses in diaspora studies. Arguing that "assimilation and identity in the United States go hand in hand" and that "late-generation Armenian-Americans are less and less likely to know and practice the subculture of their immigrant parents and grandparents," Bakalian believed that this category of people did not constitute a diaspora anymore, as they had "no intention of settling elsewhere" (*ibid.* 101, 347). Hovanessian, by contrast, while agreeing with Bakalian that generations born in France "accelerated the process of integration" and assimilation, still did not completely exclude the third and fourth generations from the diaspora in part because she did not privilege the importance of the myth of return to the homeland as much as Bakalian.

Since the early 1960s, several scholarly works have been devoted to different aspects of the Armenian community in Lebanon, as the Lebanese Armenians had developed distinct and strong community structures and, at the same time, have become socially, politically and economically integrated in the Lebanese social fabric. Zaven Messerlian's Masters thesis, entitled *Armenian Representation in the Lebanese Parliament* (1963) is an oft-quoted source, providing valuable details on Armenian participation in the Lebanese parliamentary elections since 1934. Nikola Schahgaldian's PhD dissertation, *The Political Integration of an Immigrant Community into a Composite Society: The Armenians in Lebanon, 1920-1974* (1979) presents a more comprehensive analysis of how different Armenian confessional communities integrated into Lebanon's political fabric. Schahgaldian's approach is valuable as he examines the political integration of Armenians in Lebanon by taking into consideration the influences of the ethnic policies and resulting politics of Soviet Armenia in the diaspora, as well as the peculiarities of the Lebanese political culture during the years of the French Mandate (1920-1943) and after the independence of Lebanon (1943-1974). Tsolin Nalbandian's more recent dissertation, entitled *Fashioning Armenians in Lebanon, 1946-1958* challenges Schahgaldian's work, because it "maintained the existence of two impermeable distinct groups, the Armenian and the Lebanese, inferring that the latter was more "native" than the other," and for separating Armenians from other Lebanese in that sense (Nalbandian 2011, 18). In her study, Nalbandian accentuated the "formative contributions" of Armenians to Lebanese national life, challenging both Armenian and Lebanese historiographies "which deny Lebanon's Armenians a meaningful role in the fashioning of the Lebanese nation-state" (*ibid.,* 1). Although limited in scope both spatially and temporally, as the work focuses exclusively on Lebanon in the period of 1946-1958,

Nalbandian's approach challenges the essentialist perceptions of concepts such as homeland and nation. Among other findings, her work reveals how in a short span of time different and competing perceptions of homeland, authority, the Armenian, the National, and the Armenian Other, were constructed by various Armenian media outlets in Lebanon. The work also takes into consideration transnational and diasporic influences on Armenian affairs in Lebanon, and emphasizes the dynamics within the Lebanese Armenian community.

Finally, several theoretical works dealing specifically with the problems of Armenian diaspora in general constitute the fifth cluster of literature. Chronologically, the first major publication on this subject was *Hay sp'yurk'i patmut'yun (hamarot aknark)* [History of the Armenian Diaspora (A Brief Outline)] by Karlen Dallak'yan. The work was originally published in 1998 and revised and updated in the second edition of 2004. The study focuses on the modern and contemporary Armenian diaspora in the twentieth century. Dallak'yan was a high ranking Communist Party official in Soviet Armenia, who, among other positions he held, towards the end of his career was the head of the Committee of Cultural Relations with Diaspora Armenians in Soviet Armenia (1985-1991) and a member of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia. His work is a valuable source for the scholars of the Armenian diaspora, as the author's active involvement in the making and implementation of policies towards the Armenian diaspora certainly illustrates his theorization on the Armenian diaspora. Contrary to Sheffer's argument on Armenians being a "stateless" diaspora until the collapse of the Soviet Union, Dallak'yan's account is based on the premise that Soviet Armenia was the homeland of the Armenians.[14] While Dallak'yan's account

[14] Dallak'yan was the advocate of Soviet Armenia and the USSR. From a more Marxist perspective, he defined four historical phases in the relations of homeland and diaspora, based on the policies of the homeland (Soviet Armenia) towards the diaspora. In the author's perception, phase one, roughly from 1921 to the mid-1920s, is defined by the principle of "National Unity." Homeland policies encouraged national unity in the diaspora in support of Soviet

briefly touches upon major developments in the diaspora, the work is less sensitive towards the competing and different perceptions of homeland in local and transnational diasporic discourses and overlooks how they affected the activities of diasporic organizations and the construction of diasporic identities.

The recent book by Laurance Ritter, *La longue marche des Arméniens: histoire et devenir d'une diaspora* (2007) analyzes the contemporary Armenian diaspora and diasporic identities. The first chapter provides brief discussions of Armenian diasporic identities and communal structures in Lebanon, Georgia, North America, France, Russia and Turkey. One of the chapters in the first part argues that "Armenians lived as a diaspora in Karabagh" during the Soviet period (2007*,* 112). Such an approach suggests that the author generally was guided by a perception of a diaspora, similar to that which Walter Conner formulated as "that segment of people living outside the homeland" (Conner 1986: 16). Following Martine Hovanessian and some other scholars, Ritter considers time as the most decisive criterion for assessing a diaspora (Ritter 2007, 132). Even though the book does not specifically focus on the post-genocide Armenian diaspora, the proposed theoretical model of diaspora formation approximately corresponds to the "three generations" of genocide survivors: the first phase is characterized as exile, the second phase as integration, and the third phase as diaspora (cf. *ibid.,* 136-7). The subsequent chapters of

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Armenia (Dallak'yan 2004, 23-7). The author defines phase two, from the mid-1920s until the 1940s, by the principle of "Class Stratification." The homeland's policies in the diaspora encouraged factionalism according to class affiliations, gradually alienating almost all Armenian diasporic organizations (*ibid.* 27-45). Phase three extends from the 1960s until the 1980s, and is defined by the principle of "Political Stratification." Homeland policies from the 1960s reestablished relations with the pro-Soviet and pro-Soviet Armenia diasporic Armenian organizations, but continued alienating the anti-Soviet political factions (*ibid.* 45-8). Finally, the fourth phase in the relations of the homeland and diaspora begins with the independence of Armenia in 1991. The author defines phase four by the principle of "Unconstrained Relations." The establishment of a democratic regime in independent Armenia created conditions for the unconstrained relations of all diasporic organizations, regardless of political views and class affiliations, with the homeland, the new Republic of Armenia (*ibid.* 49-51). In the second and third chapters, the author provides a brief history of the Armenian dispersion, explores the establishment of Armenian organizations in the diaspora, and discusses their struggles and conflicts in the diaspora. The fourth and final chapter provides brief histories of Armenian settlements in different countries.

the book focus more on post-Soviet Armenia and on the construction of diasporic identities in the relations with Armenia. Historical developments throughout the twentieth century and processes defining the transnational dynamism in the diaspora are largely left out of the scope of the book.

Drawing on a huge body of theoretical literature in diaspora studies, Chapter 6, "Different Identities: Soviet Armenians, Diaspora Armenians, 1921-87" and Chapter 7, "Strengthening National Identity, Soviet Style, 1921-87" of Razmik Panossian's monograph *The Armenians: From Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars* (2006) provide a substantial analysis of the post-genocide Armenian diaspora. One of the important contributions to the understanding of diasporic developments in Panossian's work is the theorization of different perceptions of homeland in the diaspora. Without delving into historical analysis on how different perceptions of homeland had developed in the diaspora, Panossian acknowledges the fact that "homeland" could represent different things for a "typical diasporan Armenian," ranging from the ancestral village in the Ottoman Empire to the "city of birth in the Middle East (or elsewhere), the country of residency or citizenship, present day Armenia, or the ideal of an Armenia to be" (*ibid.,* 316).

The major object of Panossian's analysis is the Armenian nation. He defines nation in very abstract terms as "a modern entity, based on a subjective sense of political belonging, but rooted in objective - and often pre-modern - factors such as myths, symbols and cultural markers" (Panossian 2006, 28). Panossian suggests that nations "must have some sort of political structure that ties its members together," which can be "states (as is the case with the 'established' nations), or … community structures (as the case with diaspora nations)" (*ibid., 28*-29).

Allowing for the possibility of "diaspora nations" in chapter 6, Panossian juxtaposes the "Soviet style nation-building" to the "diaspora style nation-building" in the 1920s and 1930s to argue that

> …under the leadership of competing organisations, a heterogeneous group of people with fundamental differences in terms of regional identity, religion (Apostolic, Catholic and Protestant), language (Armenian, Turkish, dialects), occupation and class, social status (refugees, assimilated elites, intellectuals), political loyalties and cultural influences from host-states were moulded into a relatively coherent community with a collective consciousness as a *diasporic nation* [emphasis in original] (*ibid.,* 292).

Panossian ascribes to the diaspora, particularly to the diasporic elites (leadership) and institutions, the capabilities necessary to produce a nation. In his discussion of the post-genocide Armenian diaspora the role of "political elites," "nationalist leaders" and diasporic institutions is considerably overestimated. Elites and institutions certainly played an important role in the formation of Armenian diasporic communities, in the establishment and functioning of various Armenian diasporic organizations and in the production of Armenianness in different countries, but these cannot be overemphasized at the expense of the social-political conditions in host countries and the policies of Soviet Armenia in the diaspora; while acknowledged, they are given less importance in the book.

Secondly, while Panossian acknowledges that "different Armenian groups around the world engaged in differing processes of identity formation in the post-Genocide period" (*ibid.,* 292), certainly not all of these processes led to the formation of a *diasporic nation*. His book privileges the Armenians of Lebanon and the Armenianness produced in Lebanon in the 1920s and 1930s, which in Panossian's conviction became the "standard" by which identity was measured throughout the post-Genocide diaspora" (*ibid.,* 305). Rather than addressing how and in what particular ways it became the standard, Panossian juxtaposes it with the symbolic Armenianness,

described by Anny Bakalian. To him, symbolic Armenianness produced in the West a "fractured identity" insofar as it was "evolving in various directions in various communities." Panossian does not exclude the symbolic Armenians from being part of an Armenian nation. Downplaying the diversity of Armenianness produced in Lebanon, as well as the diversity of diasporic identities in general, Panossian's work emphasizes the phenomenon of a *diasporic nation* and the subjective sense of belonging of all Armenians in the entire diaspora and Soviet Armenia, regardless of enormous differences, to one Armenian nation.[15]

Khachig Tölölyan is the most prominent scholar, who has contributed to the study of Armenian diaspora significantly and whose several articles have been groundbreaking in the field of diaspora studies. Tölölyan's views on Armenian diaspora are dispersed in several articles and brochures rather than combined in a single monograph. In Tölölyan's theorization, the Armenian diaspora is analyzed as the "paradigmatic Other of the nation state," although he acknowledges that "transnational communities" such diasporas are, may act as nation-states' "ally, lobby, or even, as in the case of Israel, its precursor" (1991b, 5). In his conviction, "[w]hereas diasporas have long been conceived of in relation to the triangle of homeland, hostland and diaspora, they are now conceptualized as part of a transnational network and a global space" (2002: 30). With the recent proliferation of the discourse of transnationalism in diaspora studies, as Tölölyan argues, "the prevailing orientation towards the nation-state" no longer serves as the "analytical strait-jacket" for the study of diasporas (*ibid.,* 37). While in practice Tölölyan acknowledges that "each twist of Soviet nationalities policy" in Soviet Armenia towards the diaspora "had its

[15] In the conclusion of chapter 6, Panossian argues that "Armenians are presently divided between various sets of institutions, polities, imaginations, cultures etc., each set itself fragmented along political lines. But they all maintain they are one nation, bound by a subjective sense of belonging" (2006, 318).

consequences in the [Armenian] diaspora" (2000, 121), and that debates of the homeland constituted part of the diasporic discourses (2006; 24-5), he focuses mostly on dynamic processes in the Armenian diaspora, without analyzing its orientation towards the Armenian state, whether Soviet or independent.

Tölölyan's major argument in regard to the post-genocide Armenian diaspora is that the *exilic nationalism* of the first generations was replaced by *diasporic transnationalism* of the later generations. He defines *exilic nationalism* as expressed in the hopes of Armenian elites and institution for return to the ancestral lands, and *diasporic transnationalism* as the realization of the permanence of the diaspora (2000, 107-8; 2002, 9; 2006, 13-4). In the second phase of diasporic transnationalism, elites and institutions become less important vis-à-vis "the massive new transnational migrations of the post-1965 period" (2006, 9-10).

After the independence of Armenia (1991), as Tölölyan observes, certain diasporic elites (including himself), have begun to affirm that Armenians worldwide constitute something other than a transnational diaspora, more than a collection of different communities in the diaspora. If for Panossian this was the subjective sense of belonging to an Armenian nation, for Tölölyan it makes "less sense to speak of an Armenian nation - with its implications of unity and essence," and therefore, he introduces the idea of an Armenian *transnation.* The Armenian *transnation* consists of the Republic of Armenia, the region of Nagorno-Karabakh and the diaspora, "itself enormously heterogeneous," and is "…animated by many interactions and exchanges" between the three constituent parts (2002, 38).

Regarding diasporic identities, Tölölyan differentiates between three groups of Armenian "ethnics" in the United States: *fully assimilated* Americans of Armenian descent; *true ethnics*, "who acknowledge their Armenian descent and display "ethnic pride" symbolically, retain voluntary associations with communal organizations … but are emphatically American at the same time;" and *diasporic* Armenians, "who are vital to the struggles over communal self-definition. They give their various forms of allegiance to an Armenian nation…" (Tölölyan 1996a, 24-5; 2005, 45). The *diasporans* are committed activists, core members of the community, who hold multi-local concerns and affiliation and who

> staff and found organizations that have specifically diasporan concerns: they lobby for or against the homeland government…, or raise funds for the homeland,… or struggle to mobilize a transnational religious community in the service of a new homeland movement… They tend to be citizens of one country who also think of themselves as members of a transnational political and cultural community… (Tölölyan 1996b, 18).

In a later article, Tölölyan adds one more group to the list, which are the recent *ethnic migrants*, who are not assimilated, not involved in local diasporan organizations and not active in diaspora matters but still maintain their homeland identities and close relations with the homeland (2000, 113).

If in theory Tölölyan's differentiation of the Armenian "ethnics" is quite appealing, in practice often it is hard to differentiate between *fully assimilated, true ethnics* and *diasporans*. If someone is not involved in any diasporic organizations, is not active in the life of diaspora, does not speak Armenian, occasionally, but not consistently, gets involved in programs with the homeland, is he/she a diasporic Armenian or a *true ethnic*? Or if someone has not been active in the diaspora for many years, and then he/she decides to be more involved in diasporic life and homeland related activities, is he/she a *diasporan* or again a *true ethnic*? Such observations suggest, and as

Tölölyan (1996b, 17-19) also noted, that in practice, diasporic identities are fluid, as people tend to change especially in the age of transnationalism and advanced communications.

While Tölölyan's theoretical and methodological contribution to the field of diaspora studies is undeniable, both his works and the literature on Armenian diaspora, in general, left the historical and sociological aspects of the transformation of the post-genocide Armenian dispersion into a diaspora unaddressed. The following questions, which this dissertation intends to address, have remained largely out of scholarly discussions in the field:

- How and under what conditions did the vast dispersion of Armenians following the deportations and genocide transform into a diaspora?
- How did conditions in specific host-countries impede or conduce the activities of diasporic elites, the formation and (transnational) activism of Armenian institutions?
- How did international and national social-political developments influence the Armenian diaspora over time?
- Why and in what ways did some Armenian diasporic institutions succeed in developing strong transnational networks, while others remained locally organized at best or disappeared in many countries?
- What have been the prevailing perceptions of homeland, how they have been constructed and what was their influence on dynamic processes in the diaspora?
- In what ways did the twists and turnings of Soviet nationalities policies influence the dynamic processes in the Armenian diaspora?
- How did some forms of Armenianness and identities, as proposed by Panossian, become dominant in the post-genocide Armenian diaspora?

The present dissertation aims to fill this gap in the existing literature on the Armenian diaspora. The purpose of this dissertation is to analyze the major processes, turning points, and discourses in the formation and functioning of the post-genocide Armenian diaspora. It seeks to achieve this by comparatively exploring dynamic processes in major settlements of Armenians in three countries - the United States, France and Lebanon; by exploring the policies of the homeland state (Republic of Armenia (1918-1920) and Soviet Armenia (1920-1991)) and their influences on diasporic elites and institutions; by examining the activities of elites and institutions in response to dynamic international, national and homeland conditions and policies; and by addressing discourses, identities and continuities shaped transnationally across the borders of (nation)-states. It is not the intention of this work to provide a comprehensive history of Armenian settlements and communities or Armenian organizations in Lebanon, France and the Untied States. However, histories of the settlement of Armenians in the United States, France and Lebanon are discussed in so far as they help to comparatively analyze the peculiarities of the paths of integration, which the Armenian immigrants and refugees had to take under the prevailing social-political conditions in each of those countries. Similarly, histories of Armenian diasporic institutions and organizations are discussed in so far as they were instrumental in the establishment of transnational networks and production of transnational discourses on Armenianness and the Armenian homeland, as they served as channels for promoting certain values, identities, ideologies, orientations and political agendas in the diaspora.

The main thesis of this dissertation is that the transformation of the post-genocide Armenian dispersion into a diaspora occurred thanks to the efforts of Armenian elites and institutions, but

that it was *equally* determined by policies pursued by the country engaged in promoting itself as the homeland, Soviet Armenia and, perhaps more importantly, by the changing and multiple influences of host-country specific and international social-political conditions. The latter also influenced the ideologies and policies of the elites and institutions, and significantly determined the strengths and weaknesses of these institutions locally, in host-countries, and transnationally in the diaspora. This dissertation emphasizes the combination of various local, national, international and transnational factors, as well as some personal and organizational peculiarities of Armenian elites and institutions, which produced certain transnational ideologies and orientations towards Soviet Armenia and discourses on homeland and diasporic identifications. By focusing on such important diasporic institutions as compatriotic societies, the Armenian Church, political parties, and institutions created by Soviet Armenia for dealing with Armenians in the diaspora, throughout the work this dissertation highlights the tensions and conflicts within and among these institutions, which, under the influence of changing international and local conditions in host-countries, contributed to the formation of the Armenian diaspora and produced transnational loyalties and belongings. The radical transnational split in the post-genocide Armenian diaspora occurred as a result of such struggles of the elites and institutions; conflicting perceptions of the Armenian homeland and of its national symbols, such as the flag; and tensions arising from the policies of host-countries, which directly or indirectly encouraged or discouraged certain orientations and transnational loyalties. After 1965, the genocide recognition became a shared ground between the formerly hostile Armenian camps. The diasporic elites and organizations have slowly developed some ability to put aside hostilities and occasionally unite in efforts to commemorate the Armenian genocide. Yet the institutionalized divisions continued to prevail, (re)producing the incompatible identifications and identities, policies and programs,

discourses and disunities. The bifurcated self-perceptions of Armenians, between those who accepted Soviet Armenia as the homeland, and those who envisioned a more abstract homeland to be attained in the future, continued producing discourses centered on the homeland (Soviet Armenia) or the diaspora, were reflected in their youth oriented projects, and gave rise to homeland-centered and diaspora-centered paradigms of diasporic belongings.

The emancipatory social movements of the 1960s in Europe and the Untied States and the crisis in the Middle East, accelerating the East-West migration waves, have revealed yet new tensions within Armenians originating from different countries. Varying expressions of Armenianness produced in different countries, even in some cases under the influence of the same transnational diasporic institutions, came into contact and conflict in the West. This was expressed in the clash of identities among Armenians originating from various countries in the Middle East and between them and local French- or American-born second and third generations. Stereotyping and mutual labeling drew certain symbolic boundaries between Armenians originating from different countries, and often materialized in organizations founded and staffed exclusively by members of these Armenian subethnic communities. Moving beyond typologies and privileging certain forms of Armenian diasporic identities, as Panossian does with the Armenianness produced in Lebanon or Tölölyan with the *diasporan* type, this dissertation stresses, on the one hand, the dynamic processes, contexts in host-countries and policies in the changing homeland, which determined the diversity of diasporic identifications and belongings and, on the other hand, the instrumental role of Armenian institutions in promoting transnational paradigms of diasporic belongings.

Methodology

The theoretical framework for this study is based on the prevailing debates in diaspora studies. It partly follows the framework proposed by Kim Butler (2001), but rather than favoring this "triangle" approach of homeland, host-country and diaspora, or discourses of transnationalism and transnational and global social spaces, this dissertation attempted to situate the analysis of the Armenian diaspora within and between both analytical perspectives. The "triangle" approach is indispensable when studying how certain dispersions transform into a diaspora (cf. Butler 2001, 207; Sheffer 1986, 1). Without addressing the problems of homeland, conditions in host-countries, as well as the intentions, ideologies and perceptions of diasporic intellectuals, elites and organizations, it would be impossible to analyze how exactly certain immigrant or refugee populations established in a foreign country were able to produce and retain distinct identities, establish various organizations and engage in relations with their kin in other countries and in the homeland. On the other hand, discourses of transnationalism are indispensable when studying how diasporas are capable of producing independent political agendas and engage in lobbying activities in their respective host-countries.

The fieldwork was conducted in three countries - Lebanon, France and the United States - in the course of two years from 2012 until 2014. The choice of these three countries was determined by two reasons. First of all, Armenians in all three countries had maintained identifiable presence since their settlement with their institutions and organizations, periodical press, and generations directly or indirectly involved in organizations and institutions. Secondly, the activities of Armenian elites and organizations especially in these countries have had long-lasting

transnational resonance and repercussions in the post-genocide Armenian diaspora throughout the twentieth century. The present dissertation is based on about 150 interviews (each lasting about an hour) conducted by the author with the leaders of various Armenian organizations and other notable representatives of the second and third generations in these three countries; numerous newspaper articles photographed by the author in various Armenian newspaper collections in Lebanon, France and the United States; as well as number of other publications produced by the eyewitnesses, immediate participants of the events, and by the diasporic elites.

Because the archives of Armenian diasporic organizations are not accessible, articles published in their official organs in various countries or pamphlets authored by their respective leaders and juxtaposing those publications with their opponents' criticism on given subjects, were indispensable for providing a more balanced analysis of the events. The major newspapers consulted in Lebanon were *Aztag* (1927 - present), *Ararad* (1937 - present) and *Zartonk* (1937 - present), the official organs of the three Armenian political parties. In France, *Haratch* (1925-1940, 1945-2009) and *Achkhar* (1960-2012) although formally not affiliated with any of the Armenian organizations, informally represented the conflicting political viewpoints of the Dashnaks and Communists. Apart from these two, several issues of *Arshav* (1932), the unofficial organ of the Armenian pro-Communists in the 1920s, and *Anahit* (1929-1940, 1946-1949), a literary journal run by one of the leaders of the Armenian Democratic Liberal (Ramkavar) party had also been studied. *Hairenik Monthly* (1922-1970) and the *Armenian Review* (1948-present) especially in the period of 1948-1965, represented the official line of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (the Dashnak party) in the Diaspora, as most of its leaders occasionally contributed lengthy analytical and ideological pieces. The dissertation extensively makes use of

articles published especially in these journals. Apart from these two, several issues of the Dashnak weekly and daily organs, like *Hairenik* (1899-present) in Boston and *Asbarez* (1908-present) in California, the independent *Armenian Reporter International* (1967-2014), *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* (1932 - present) affiliated with the Ramkavar party also have been consulted.

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into five chapters. The chapters are organized chronologically and thematically. Chapter one, *Defining Homeland,* provides the historical background in the nineteenth century. The first section in the chapter argues that a certain territorial image of the Armenian homeland was constructed and promoted by Armenian intellectuals and public activists from the 1850s. It was formally recognized in the void Treaty of San-Stefano, following the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78, and was incorporated in the programs of the Armenian political parties emerging in the second half of the 1880s. In the second section, the chapter goes on to argue that the Sovietization of Armenia in 1920 and the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, left the Armenian political parties, now all operating exclusively in the diaspora, with an existing Soviet state and with their unrealized dreams to achieve the large independent Armenia they had imagined.

Chapter two, *Host-Country Conditions, Dispersion of Armenians*, *and the Prospects for Community Building in the United States, France and Lebanon*, analyzes comparatively the dispersion of Armenians, social-political and economic contexts in the United States, France and

Lebanon, the patterns of settlement, political and social integration of Armenian immigrants and refugees, as well as the efforts of the diasporic elites to establish community organizations. The major argument in this chapter is that while the diverse groups of Armenians tended to regroup and reestablish their community life in host-countries according to their family and compatriotic ties, international and country specific contexts in many ways determined the possibilities and peculiarities of community building and the construction and transmission of identities in each of these countries. The chapter emphasizes the dialectal and confessional diversity of Armenian immigrant and refugee groups and how the patterns of dispersion and settlement within certain countries produced in many cases compatriotic settlements of Armenians originating from the same village, small town or region in the Ottoman Empire. After settling in usually close-knit compatriotic settings, these communities produced truly diasporic transnational networks to help their compatriots back in the homeland (narrowly defined, as the native village or town in the Ottoman Empire), or, after the great dispersion, elsewhere in the diaspora.

Chapter three, *In Search of Armenia Between the Two World Wars,* examines the process of the reorganization of Armenian political parties in the diaspora and their orientations towards the Armenian homeland in the interwar period. By analyzing political conditions in the Untied States, France and Lebanon, policies and participation of the Soviet Armenian *Committees of Aid to Homeland* in the formation diasporic communities, this chapter particularly addresses the emergence and institutionalization of pro- and anti-Soviet political orientations among the Armenian political parties in the diaspora and tensions, disagreements and struggles of the Armenian political parties for power within different Armenian communities. Rather than treating the political parties as monolithic entities, this chapter stresses the internal dynamics

within the parties and how these processes eventually led to the institutionalization of certain attitudes towards the Soviet regime and certain perceptions of the Armenian homeland. The second and third parts of the chapter analyze how the political parties gained growing influence within the Armenian communities in the host-countries by attempting to control other communal institutions and organizations, like churches or compatriotic societies, by establishing schools, wherever possible, or by taking control over the existing Armenian schools. It also sheds light on how in Lebanon, particularly, due to more favorable social-political conditions, Armenian organizations became instrumental in the forging of the diverse refugee masses into more homogeneous Armenophone masses, albeit with different/conflicting perceptions of the homeland, the nation and national symbolism. The major argument in the chapter is that Armenian political parties developed different perceptions on the Armenian homeland and Soviet Armenia, and produced, therefore mutually exclusive values, symbolism and loyalties. The clash of exclusive orientations took different shapes in different countries, causing an intra-communal schism in the United States, and intra- and inter-organizational conflicts and schisms in France and Lebanon.

Chapter four, *From Exclusions and Violent Schism to Joint Commemorations of the Genocide,* addresses the process of transnational polarization of the Armenian diaspora. The chapter analyzes the rapidly changing international conditions and how they influenced the political courses of the Armenian diasporic factions during WWII and the Cold War. The major argument of the chapter is that if the pro-Soviet factions took advantage of the unprecedented coalition of particularly the United States and Soviet Union to discredit the anti-Soviet Armenian political organizations and to benefit from it, the Cold War provided conditions for the resurgence of the

anti-Soviet faction. The struggle between diasporic Armenian pro- and anti-Soviet factions, the former represented by several political and non-political organizations, and the latter represented mostly by the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (the Dashnak party) and its affiliate organizations, acquired new transnational dimensions especially after 1947. Taking advantage of the prevailing anti-Sovietism in the Untied States and Western Europe, directly and indirectly encouraged by American and Western European backing and support, the anti-Soviet offensive of the Dashnaktsutyun in several host-countries eventually led to the radical split within the Armenian (Apostolic) church in the Middle East and to a transnational schism in the post-genocide Armenian diaspora. The last part of the chapter analyzes the changes in Soviet policies, international conditions, as well as the establishment of genocide recognition in the political agendas of Armenian political parties, which combined led to the attempts of rapprochement among the Armenian political parties and hostile factions. The 1965 joint commemorations of the fiftieth anniversary of the Armenian Genocide were unprecedented, and became a turning point marked by at least nominal transnational unity among all Armenian political factions.

Chapter 5, *Divided in Unity: Armenian Factions, Diasporic Identities and Subethnic Communities in France and the United States,* argues that even if the year 1965 marked the symbolic beginning of a process of formal rapprochement between the hostile camps, even if the genocide recognition provided a shared ground between these camps, institutional dividedness in the Armenian diaspora and transnational rivalry among Armenian political factions continued. In the first part, the chapter examines the emergence and transnational competition of radical Armenian organizations in the diaspora and the effects of their activities on host-country policies, as well as on Armenian diasporic factions. The second part largely addresses another

aspect of the disunity in the Armenian diaspora by exploring how Armenianness, produced especially in Lebanon, became dominant within many diasporic organizations and came to be promoted by several Armenian transnational organizations and institutions in the diaspora. This section emphasizes the heterogeneity of diasporic identities by analyzing clashes of identities in France and the Untied States, where a number of new Armenian immigrants had settled since the 1960s from the Middle East and Soviet Armenia. The chapter concludes by analyzing how certain continuities in transnationally divided Armenian diaspora eventually produced *homeland-centered* and *diaspora-centered* paradigms, both of which self-reflexively address the problems of homeland and diaspora, yet prioritize one over the other with all attendant consequences.

Chapter 1

Defining homeland

Introduction

Homeland, whether in the form of a (nation-) state or as an imaginary or mythical concept, constitutes an important attribute of a diaspora. This chapter provides a historical background to the post-genocide Armenian dispersion and to the concept of homeland, which will become a central matter of debates in the post-genocide diaspora. It analyzes the conditions under which the Armenian homeland was imaginatively, and somewhat imaginarily, restored and defined in Armenian political discourse and in the programs of Armenian political parties; explores the rapidly changing international, imperial and Armenian affairs during WWI and its aftermath, which made a great impact on the realization of the Armenian homeland; and addresses the conflicts and tensions among Armenian political parties and factions related to the perceptions of homeland and its representation. In the first part, the chapter argues that a certain territorial image of Armenia, the homeland, was constructed and promoted by the Armenian intellectuals and political parties. It does so by analyzing the changing conditions in the Russian and Ottoman empires in the nineteenth century and the discourse produced by Armenian intellectuals and political parties. In the second part, the chapter goes on to argue that this image of homeland came into conflict with the actualized Republic of Armenia (1918-1920) by examining the

uncertainty of the Armenian political factions around the status of the Republic of Armenia in relation to the envisioned homeland. The sources used for the reconstruction of the Armenian homeland as it had been imagined by the Armenian intellectuals and political party leaders, consist mostly of the programs of Armenian political parties, peace treaties, and newspaper articles authored by these intellectuals and leaders.

The Struggle for the Homeland: Armenia in the Nineteenth Century

The annexation of the Khanates of Erivan and Nakhijevan by the Russian Empire, following the Russo-Persian war of 1826-1828, marked the beginning of a new era in the political, social and cultural realities of the region. Under the influence of a Christian Slavic culture, reform movements in the Russian Empire, and larger processes of enlightenment and secularization in Europe, the socio-political context underwent rapid change for the Armenians. The social environment was now conducive for the development of an Armenian liberation-minded, socialist intelligentsia and literature.[16] The Russian dominion over Armenians gave rise to a generation of educated, liberal minded Armenians, who quickly became the active proponents of secularization, enlightenment and modernization. Shortly after the absorption of Eastern Armenia by the Russian empire, some Armenians began taking advantage of the advanced educational opportunities, provided by the tsarist regime. Receiving education in the leading universities of Russia and Germany, these young intellectuals made significant contributions to the advancement of education in their native Armenian communities and to the formation of a modern, secular Armenian identity (cf. Khachaturian 2009: 1-25).

In the Ottoman Empire, Armenians continued as an ethno-religious community (*millet*), enjoying a certain degree of autonomy in communal matters, but remained inferior to the Muslims in the Empire in the realms of politics, administration and the military (cf. Barsoumian 1997, 182-3).

[16] For a detailed study of the influences of the developments in Imperial Russia on the formation of modern Armenian identity see Khachaturian (2009).

The Ottoman reforms, initiated by Sultan Mahmud II in 1830s, held the promise of equality for all subjects of the empire before the law, of which the Armenians hoped to highly benefit (Findley 2008, 18; Shaw and Shaw 2002, 59-61, 55; Akçam 2006, 28-35, 79; Barsoumian 1997, 182-3). The subsequent Reform Edict of 1856, which aimed at reorganizing the *millet* system urged the *millets* to reform their structures and involve laymen in the internal affairs of the *millet* (Akçam 2006, 30; Barsoumian 1997, 180-2). Several years of disputes and discussions between liberal *constitutionalists* and conservative *anti-constitutionalists* in Constantinople eventually produced the Armenian National Constitution, which was finally adopted by the Armenian Patriarch (1860) and approved by the Sultan in 1863 (cf. Ormanian 2001, 4018-4020; Libaridian 1987, 114-5; 2007, 62-3; Barsoumian 1997, 198). With much enthusiasm some Armenians began advocating equality for Armenians in the Ottoman Armenian provinces, thereby initiating a discourse on the Armenian homeland.

The urgency of the conditions of Armenians in the provinces was brought to the attention of Armenians in Constantinople and elsewhere primarily thanks to the efforts of the bishop Mkrtich‘ Khrimian (1820-1907).[17] Khrimian was inspired but concerned with the stalled *Tanzimat* reforms and quite disappointed of the ignorance of Constantinople Armenians of the situation of Armenians in the provinces. He founded the *Artsvi Vaspurakan* (Eagle of Vaspurakan) monthly in 1855 in Constantinople, and moved it to his birthplace in Van the next year. In the course of almost a decade (from 1855 until 1863) Khrimian and his disciples published a number of essays in *Artsvi Vaspurakan* on the history of the Armenians, patriotism, the dire conditions in the homeland – Armenia, by which they referred to Armenian provinces. In

[17] Khrimian was a native of Van. His accomplishments promoted him to the rank of the Patriarch of Constantinople in 1869 (until 1873). He was later elected Catholicos of all Armenians (1892-1907).

doing so, they intentionally promoted the provinces as the Armenian homeland and called on the Armenians to return to their birthplaces. Khrimian believed that through education and adherence to the Armenian Constitution the unfair treatment of Armenians in the homeland would end.

In 1869 Khrimian was elected Patriarch of Constantinople. This strong advocate of the Armenian constitution and education in the provinces (homeland) now occupied the highest possible Armenian office in the Ottoman Empire to be able to implement the Constitution. Four years later, on August 3, 1873, Khrimian announced his resignation at the Armenian National Assembly session. In the resignation speech he admitted that he had agreed to leave everything behind and move out from the homeland, because he had honestly believed that, as Patriarch, he could achieve his goals (Khrimian [1873] 1910, 6). But before long he had found himself in violation of some of the principles of the "law of national reforms." Moreover, shortly after his election, Khrimian became the active proponent of constitutional reforms and was even labeled by some adherents of the Constitution as an anti-constitutionalist (*ibid.,* 18-9). Khrimian confessed in the speech that he could not achieve his goal, because "the councils provided by the Constitution [were] never enough to meet the needs of the [Armenian] people." However, he still hoped some Constitutional reforms could make the "administrative machine" move, if the Patriarch could receive more executive power (*ibid.,* 11; 23).

Khrimian's hopes remained unrealized because the institutionalized *millet* system in the Ottoman Empire was inherently in contradiction to the promises of certain equality among all the subjects of the Empire in the Reform Edict. Without the good will of the Sultan, the Armenian

Constitution could not change the life of Armenians in any significant way (Libaridian 1987, 155-62). The implementation of the Reform Edict in the Empire remained solely at the discretion of the Sublime Porte. As Shaw and Shaw (2002, vii-viii) argued in their study, "though the Tanzimat reforms were accompanied by an extension of the principle of representative government, ironically they culminated in the sovereign autocracy of Abdulhamid II (1876-1909)…"

The reluctance of the Sublime Porte to implement the promised equality among the imperial subjects prompted the Armenians to think of alternative ways of ending the suffering of Armenians in the provinces. The Russian victory in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78 offered a possibility for the Armenians to seek external assistance in this matter. The successor of Khrimian, Patriarch Nerses Varzhapetian, and the Armenian National Assembly petitioned the supreme commander of the Russian Army, Grand Duke Nicholai Nikolaevich, to include a provision on Armenians in the peace treaty with the Ottomans (Hovannisian 1997a, 208; cf. Kostandyan 2008, 236-7, Ormanian 2001, col. 4342). Subsequently, the treaty of San Stefano, singed between Russia and the Sublime Porte on March 3, 1878, addressed the issue of Armenians in Article 16:

> As the evacuation by the Russian troops of the territory which they occupy in Armenia, and which is to be restored to Turkey, might give rise to conflicts and complications detrimental to the maintenance of good relations between the two countries, the Sublime Porte engages to carry into effect, without further delay, the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by Armenians, and to guarantee their security from Kurds and Circassians (Holland 1885, 343)

The treaty was not implemented, however, as the European powers fearful of the increasing Russian presence in the Ottoman Empire intervened and made the parties renegotiate the provisions of San Stefano treaty at a conference convened in Berlin.

Inspired by the treaty of San-Stefano and hoping to get even more specific article passed in the new treaty, the Armenian patriarchate developed a project of reforms in the Armenian provinces. The document was produced in 1878 and was circulated by the unofficial Armenian representatives among the delegates of the Berlin peace conference. The bilingual document in Armenian and French, printed in Constantinople, was titled *Project of Laws for Ottoman Armenia* (*Tsragir kazmakerpakan kanonagri Osmanyan Hayastani/Projet de réglement organique pour l'Arménie Turque*). The document defined Armenia territorially, according to which the future Armenia would include the Vilayets of Erzurum and Van entirely, the northern part of the Vilayet of Diarbekir (which was to the East from the sanjak of Kharberd (Harput) until the River Euphrates), the sanjak of Arghana (Ergani), the northern part of the sanjak of Seghert (Siirt), as well as the harbor of Rize between Trebizond and Batumi in order to facilitate commerce (*Tsragir* 1878, 8(9)). The document envisioned full autonomy for Armenia within the structure of the Ottoman Empire with an Armenian governor general appointed by the Sublime Porte. The governor was to reside in Erzurum and would be invested with full executive power in Armenia. The *Projet* endowed him with the authority to provide the security in the region, to collect taxes, to appoint local administrators, judges and preside over the general assembly (*ibid.*, 8(9)).[18] The document also proposed certain regulations in the relations between Armenians and Muslims by suggesting mixed Christian-Muslim militias, separate Sharia courts for the Muslims and secular courts for the Christians or Christian-Muslim disputes (*ibid.*, 12(13)).

[18] The document, unfortunately, does not include a map of the envisioned Armenia. It should be noted, however, that the described territories of Armenia did not encompass all the six vilayets, where Armenian constituted large numbers (Map 1.1).

The peace treaty between Great Britain, Germany, Austria, France, Italy, Russia and Turkey "for the Settlement of Affairs in the East" signed in Berlin on July 13, 1878, however, dismissed all the petitions and claims of Armenians. Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin significantly revised Article 16 of the San Stefano Treaty and dropped the word *Armenia* altogether:

> The Sublime Porte undertakes to carry out, without further delay, the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Circassians and Kurds. It will periodically make known the steps taken to this effect to the Powers, who will superintend their application (Holland 1885, 306).

Despite the unfavorable for the Armenians outcome, the treaties concluding the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-1878 made a significant impact on the emergence of radical ideologies among Armenians. If before the Russo-Turkish war the necessity of resorting to arms, resistance, struggle were not seen and preached as preferable options for achieving national goals in the Ottoman Armenian provinces, the post-war treaties, first promising an autonomous Armenia then downgrading the autonomy to some mere reforms, made the Armenian delegates, headed by Khrimian, rethink their beliefs. After returning from Europe, the *Hayrik* (father), as Khrimian had become known among Armenians, gave a controversial speech in Constantinople, which some scholars argue was the "prescription that produced the Armenian revolution" (Libaridian 1987, 161; cf. Nalbandian 1963, 29). Khrimian's sermon described the events at the Berlin conference in a metaphorical language. He compared the process of negotiations at the conference with an Armenian dish, *harisa*.[19] As he explained, the delegations of "small and oppressed" nations who had arrived with "swords," used them as "iron ladles" to get their share of *harisa*. The ladle of Armenians was made of a paper and, therefore, they could not get anything (Achemian 1929, 511-2).[20] "There is no room for supplications or petitions when

[19] *Harisa* is an Armenian porridge dish usually made of barley and chicken or lamb.
[20] Khrimian referred to the petition that the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople prepared for the delegates of the Congress.

matters are decided by guns," Khrimian allegedly stated afterwards[21] (quoted in Libaridian 1987, 160; cf. Achemian 1929, 512). The *Sermon on the Sword,* as Libaridian (1987, 160) has characterized the speech, made a big impression especially on revolutionary minded youth. Whether or not Khrimian's sermon was a call for individual or collective armed resistance or revolution, it produced much resonance among the Armenians even beyond the borders of the Ottoman Empire.[22]

Map 1-1. Ottoman Armenian Provinces, 1878-1914
(Source: Hovhannisian 1997a, 205)

[21] Khrimian's speech was reconstructed by some eyewitnesses retrospectively. First time it was published in *Hay Sirt* [Armenian Heart] weekly in Marseille by Manuel Mirakhorian in 1927 (cf. Achemian 1929, 514fn). Hayk Achemian (1929, 511) quoted the eyewitness account of Khachig Khan Sarajian. It is possible that the recorders of the speech might have misremembered or altered Khrimian's words. But it is equally possible that Khrimian actually used these words. After all, his speech did not appear in local Armenian language newspapers at the time, which indicates that they might have feared a harsh response from the Sublime Port.

[22] In his doctoral dissertation work, *The Ideology of Armenian Liberation,* Libaridian (1987, 165-66) argues that Khrimian's message "remained vague, as he did not say what he meant." Louise Nalbandian, (1963, 29), however, believed that Khrimian's sermon was "an indirect appeal for the use of arms – "iron spoons" – the means successfully adopted by Balkan revolutionaries."

Homeland in the Programs of Armenian Political Parties (1880s – 1890s)

After the Treaties of San Stefano and Berlin, the Armenian Question was no longer the internal issue of the Ottoman Empire. The Treaty of Berlin involved the European powers, which took certain responsibility to "superintend" the application of the reforms. Armenians were not attributed any active role in the treaty, but the internationalization of the Armenian question by the treaties mobilized Armenians as well. The secular discourse on Armenian nation developing among Eastern Armenians in the Russian Empire, in parallel to the Ottoman reformations since the mid-nineteenth century, began to address more intensively the problems of Armenians in the Ottoman Armenian provinces after the peace treaties. The growing propaganda of some Armenian intellectual circles of the necessity of resistance and self-defense created fertile grounds for the emergence of Armenian clandestine organizations, culminating in three political parties.

Chronologically, the first Armenian political party was founded in Van in 1885. The formation of the party was associated with the name of Mkrtich' P'ortugalian. P'ortugalian had been a teacher and an educator in Constantinople, was one of the directors of the *Araratian* educational society[23] and for a short period of time an editor of an Armenian language periodical in Constantinople[24] (Poghossian 1957, 215-16; Leo 1987, 591). In the 1870s, he moved to Van and

[23] The founding of educational societies was part of the enlightening mission of some Armenian intellectuals in the second half of the nineteenth century. Araratian, Kilikian and Dprotsasirats-Arevelian were three of the most notable Armenian educational associations of the time in the Ottoman Empire. These societies merged to create the United Armenian Society (Association) in June 1880, which aimed at establishing schools and educational institutions in "Armenia and Cilicia," i.e. the densely populated Armenian provinces in the Ottoman Empire. By 1884 the United Society had created branches in 16 provinces and established 24 schools in various Armenian villages and towns throughout the Empire (Poghosian 1957, 36-7; cf. *ibid.,* 103-5, 215-42; Aghayan et al. 771-72).

[24] P'ortugalian was the editor of the periodical *Asia* for only eleven months from December 1873 to October 1874. From his democratic stand, he represented the interests of the common people. P'ortugalian was mostly critical of

worked as an educator, encouraged and fully supported by Khrimian. Meanwhile in 1876 he made a trip to Tiflis to meet with some Russian Armenian activist intellectuals and to solicit some support for the *Araratian society*. The meeting with Grigor Artsruni, a prominent liberal-minded Russian Armenian intellectual and newspaper editor, proved to be fruitful. As P'ortugalian later recalled, it was in the meeting with Artsruni, that they decided to relocate the center of activities of the *Araratian society* from Constantinople to Van (see Leo 1987, 592). After his return to Van in 1876, P'ortugalian became one of the regular contributors of Grigor Artsruni's *Mshak* weekly,[25] under the pen name 'Hrant', providing correspondence on the situation of Armenians in Van. At the same time, P'ortugalian began spreading *Mshak's* liberalism and secular nationalism in Van. Upon his return to Van, P'ortugalian became very influential for his advanced views, radical teachings and for propagating the ideas of self-defense and resistance among the Armenian youth (Kitur 1962, 26-7; cf. Nalbandian 1963, 92-3). The intensifying anti-Armenian measures in the Ottoman Armenian provinces following the Russo-Turkish war soon led to the exile of P'ortugalian and Khrimian from Van. P'ortugalian ended up in Marseille, where he started the periodical *Armenia* in 1885. His former students started the *Armenakan* party, naming the party after P'ortugalian's *Armenia* (Aghayan et al. 1981, 186-7; Libaridian 1986, 221-24; 235-36; Nalbandian 1963, 90-97). The program of the *Armenakans* stated that the organization was based on the principles "preached by *Armenia"* and aimed at disseminating its ideology. The purpose of the party was to "…win for the Armenian people in Turkey the right to rule over themselves through revolution…" (quoted in Ghazarian 1988, 13; cf. Nalbandian 1963, 97). Among the methods of achieving the purpose, the *Armenakan* program

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the Patriarchate and National Assembly because of their inability to improve the conditions of ordinary people (Madoyan 1975, 105-7)

[25] *Mshak* [Tiller, Cultivator] was established by Grigor Artsruni in 1872. Artsruni was the editor of *Mshak* until his death in 1892. The paper was especially popular in the immediate aftermath of the Russo-Turkish war, within both the Russian and Ottoman Armenian circles (cf. Leo 1987, 585).

envisioned using "revolutionary literature, excellent education, […] military and disciplinary training, promoting sentiments of self-defense [...] prepare the people for a general movement, especially when the external conditions (the disposition of foreign powers and neighboring races) seem to be favorable for Armenians" (quoted in Ghazarian 1988, 13; cf. Nalbandian 1963, 98). There activities, however, remained local, mostly in the province of Van/Vaspurakan.

The second Armenian political party, which was established in 1887 in Geneva, became far more important in terms of the numbers, scope and geography of activities, than the Armenakans. The founders of the Hnchakyan party, a group of Eastern/Russian Armenians, were directly influenced on the one hand by the teachings of Marxism and Russian socialist revolutionary movements of the mid-19th century, and, on the other hand, by P'ortugalian and his *Armenia*. Avetis Nazarbekian (1866-1939), the leader of the group, was born in Tiflis, spent a few years in St. Petersburg as a student, where he was involved with the most influential Russian revolutionary party of the time *Narodnaia Volia* (People's Will) (cf. Khurshudyan 2000: 22-3; Daly 2006, 639). In the years of reaction and persecutions in the Russian Empire under Alexander III (1881-1894),[26] he had to flee the capital of the Russian Empire to Europe. Through his affiliation with Russian revolutionary movements, Nazarbekian had been exposed to the teachings of such Russian dissident social-revolutionaries and intellectuals, as Alexander Herzen, Nikolaĭ Ogarëv, Nikolaĭ Chernyshevskiĭ, Peter Kropotkin and others. In 1886-1887 Nazarbekian was actively publishing in *Armenia* and his intention was to start a political organization with P'ortugalian (Khan-Azat 1927a, 71; Nalbandian 1963, 104-5). After P'ortugalian made clear that

[26] The assassination of Alexander II in 1881 by *Narodnaia Volia* initiated the most reactionary years in the Russian Empire. Under Alexander III, the imperial authorities attempted to administratively centralize the empire and to suppress national movements by enforcing certain degree of cultural Russification on all subjects (Kappeler 2001, 283; cf. Wortman 2000, 237, 526; Stalianus 2007, 11-2).

he was not interested, Nazarbekian started the party with his fiancé Maro Vardanian (1864-1941) and four other Russian Armenians in Geneva. The program of the Hnchakyans, published in the party organ *Hnchak* [Bell] in 1888, declared the distant and immediate objectives of the party. The distant objective, or the ideal of the Hnchakyan party was achieving socialism for the Armenian people. The focus in the program was on the sufferings and slavery of Armenians in Ottoman Armenia. "In order to save the people from their miserable conditions and in order to put them on the right track leading to socialism," the Hnchakyans believed it was important to acquire democratic national independence in Ottoman Armenia. The Hnchakyan program expressed a concern that if the Armenian people did not acquire independence, they would end up becoming part of some other despotic "exploiter state" (*Hnchak* 1888, N11-12).

By the 1890s among the progressive and liberal-minded Russian Armenian youth the orientation towards the liberation of Ottoman Armenia had already been established. In 1889, the Hnchakyans sought to organize a local branch in Russian Transcaucasia. The arrival of Ruben Khanazat (1862-1929), one of the co-founders of the Hnchakyan party, in Tiflis sparked much enthusiasm among the Armenian youth. But the meetings with local Armenian groupings revealed the conflicting priorities in ideologies and tactics. If Khanazat preached for a socialist revolution in Ottoman Armenia, the Transcaucasian Armenians thought that Armenians in Turkey should be prepared to resist the Kurdish plunderers. Grigor Artsruni, who had consciously distanced himself from actively leading the Armenian revolutionary minded groupings because of his fear for *Mshak,*[27] nevertheless participated in the meetings. He was

[27] The Tsarist oppressions and Russification policies in Transcaucasia under Alexander III specifically targeted the Armenians, as the latter had been more privileged in comparison to other people in the region. The *ukaz* of 1884 ordered the closing of the Armenian schools, which was implemented in 1885, and the Russian censorship

trying to persuade the Hnchakyan delegates to abandon their socialist program and join others in the liberation of the Armenian people (Khudinyan 2006, 133). Some others argued that the Armenian cause was a national cause for all classes of the people, while the socialist program could potentially repel the assistance coming from wealthy Armenians (Khan-Azat 1927b, 128).

The Hnchakyan demonstration of 1890 in Constantinople, however, stimulated much resonance in Transcaucasia and gave impetus to many revolutionaries to form a new organization. After long debates, the Armenian revolutionary groupings of Transcaucasia agreed to unite their efforts in a single revolutionary organization. The *Federation of Armenian Revolutionaries* was founded in the summer of 1890 by Kristap‘or Mik‘ayelian, Simon Zavarian, Step‘an Zorian and several other activists. They aimed at uniting all Armenian revolutionaries, regardless of their ideological differences, under an umbrella organization. In their negotiations with the Hnchakyans, the committee reached an agreement to have two official organs — the *Hnchak* in Geneva and the *Droshak* (Flag or Banner) in Tiflis (Nalbandian 1963, 155-56; Walker 1990: 68; Hovhannisyan 1997, 215; Khudinyan 2006, 215-16). The *Manifesto* of the *Federation*, printed as a circular of *Droshak* in 1890, declared that the aim of the Dashnaktsutyun (Federation) was to unite the efforts of all Armenians by connecting all the Armenian centers in order to reach the "political and economic liberation of Ottoman Armenia." The *Manifesto* called on Armenians everywhere to join the struggle, regardless of age, gender, occupation, wealth, social status, confessional affiliation. The rich, the poor, the peasants, the women, the elderly and even the clergy were called on to join the national struggle.[28] From this document and the subsequent two

threatened to close down periodicals associated with the dissident revolutionary movements. Therefore Artsruni had to take a more moderate position (cf. Nalbandian 1963, 144-48; Suny 1997a, 131; Khudinyan 2006, 175)

[28] The full text of the *Manifesto* in Armenian is available in the collection of Droshak articles of 1890-1901 (*Droshak* 1890-1901).

other circulars published in 1891, it became clear that socialism was not going to be one of the strong underlying ideological tenets of the *Federation.* Not surprisingly, the Hnchakyans severed ties with the newly formed Federation in less than a year. In the issues of May 18 and June 5 1891, the editors of *Hnchak* (1891 N6, 8; N7, 8) officially denied any connection with the Dashnaktsutyun: "the [Hnchakyan] party has never been part of … "the Dashnaktsutyun" and there is no unity and no connection [with them]." Thereby the short-lived cooperation between the Hnchakyans and the Dashnaktsutyun ended. While the Hnchakyan leaders in Geneva could not subordinate the struggle for socialism to national struggle, the leaders of the Federation were ready to subordinate their struggle against Tsarism to the liberation of Ottoman Armenians from the Ottoman yoke (Suny 1997a, 132; cf. Khudinyan 2006, 217-18).

The First General Congress of the Federation convened in June 1892 in Tiflis. The Congress adopted the program and now, after the secession of the Hnchakyans, the Federation of Armenian Revolutionaries was renamed to the *Armenian Revolutionary Federation* (*Hay heghap'okhakan dashnakts'ut'yun,* hereafter the Dashnaktsutyun or the Dashnak party) (Khudinyan 2006, 250; Nalbandian 1963, 166). The lengthy introduction of the 1892 program began with the discussion of socialist principles and the criticism of the European countries, which were yet to bring about the envisioned "fraternity, liberty and equality" to people in their countries. Despite expressing conviction that the exploitation of the working class would end someday in all countries, the authors did not want to impose any "utopian doctrines" on Armenians and, instead, intended to create a more "viable program" by focusing on conditions in Armenia under the Ottomans (*Droshak* 1894 N10, 2).[29]

[29] The program of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation was printed in 1892 and reprinted in N11 and 12 of *Droshak* in 1894. It has also been reproduced in a number of books since then.

The purpose of the Dashnaktsutyun, as formulated in the program, was to "…achieve political and economic freedom of Ottoman Armenia by means of rebellion…" (*Droshak* 1894 N11, 2). The program envisioned a "free Armenia" in future with democratic government, free elections, equality of all nationalities before the law, equal economic opportunities for everybody, compulsory education, strong rural and artisan communities. The program did not use the word "independence" in relation to Armenia, which had been explicitly mentioned in the program of the Hnchakyans (cf. Nalbandian 1963, 169; Hovannisian 1997a, 216). The intention of the Dashnak leaders was clarified further in a series of articles published in Droshak under the title of "Ayb u Ben" (ABC). The editors of Droshak juxtaposed the concepts of *freedom* and *independence* and did not see independence as the necessary condition for achieving significant reforms. In response to the Hnchakyans' immediate goal, they believed reforms and freedom in Armenia would be possible to achieve without necessarily having an independent Armenian government or an independent Armenian state as a precondition (*Droshak* 1893 N5, 1). The Dashnaktsutyun's focus on the freedom, rather than independence of Ottoman Armenia, the prioritizing of nationalism over socialism defined largely against the Hnchakyan immediate objective of acquiring independence in Ottoman Armenia and distant objective of achieving socialism, determined the growing popularity of the Dashnaktsutyun among Armenians. After a brief period of stormy activities, the Hnchakyan party, in contrast, began declining due to the failure to achieve any progress in the pursuit of Armenian reforms and because of the growing internal tensions between the proponents of socialism and nationalism.

By 1896, the Hnchakyans had organized two major demonstrations in Constantinople in 1890 and 1895, and revolts in the villages of Sasun (August 1894) and Zeytun (October 1895) in the Ottoman Empire. The revolutionary activities of the party within the Ottoman Empire attracted many young Ottoman Armenian activists. Far from being inspired by Nazarbekian's ideas of building socialism in future Armenia, most Ottoman Armenians joined the party primarily because of its immediate objective — struggle for the independence of (Ottoman) Armenia (cf. Kitur 1863, 40; Damadian 1985, 89; Nalbandian 1963, 117). The massive incidents did not entail any real progress in the Armenian Question, but claimed many casualties on both Armenian and Turkish sides. One of the consequences of the Hnchakyan activities was the pressure of the European powers on Abdul Hamid II to sign the Armenian Reform Program in 1895. Instead of facilitating the reforms, the European intervention provoked Abdul Hamid's anger, which led to large-scale massacres of Armenians in the provinces in 1895-96 (cf. Nalbandian 1963, 118-28; Hovhannisyan 1968, 31-2; Hovannisian 1997a, 220-26). Amid the crisis, tensions between the proponents of socialism and nationalism resurfaced in 1896 within the party. While the Nazarbekians (Avetis and Maro) and their faction insisted on socialism, their opponents thought the European powers were reluctant to support the Hnchakyans and the Armenian Cause because of socialism (cf. Nalbandian 1963, 128-30; Hovhannisyan 1997, 226; Kitur 1962, 267). One of the leaders of the anti-Nazarbekian faction, Arp'iar Arp'iarian strongly expressed against socialism, arguing that the pursuit of socialism was an impediment to reaching the goal of national liberation: "The war, whether declared or putative against the more or less wealthy class, had been detrimental, too," wrote Arp'iarian in 1896.[30] As he explained, the wealthy

[30] Arp'iarian's short novel *Karmir Zhamuts (The Crimson Offering)* (1909), which is about the events of 1890-1896, demonstrates that he actually thought the wealthy Armenians could change and they could have very important contribution to the national cause. The novel depicts the conflict between a wealthy Armenian Effendi, who believes in loyalty and servitude, and a young Armenian priest from the Armenian provinces (*Armenia* in the text), who

Armenians realized that if the Turkish government could claim part of their wealth, the Hnchakyans threatened to confiscate their entire wealth; therefore they would not be interested in supporting the Hnchakyans (quoted in Shahpaz 1987, 190). The growing tensions led to the split of the Hnchakyan party in 1896. In order to distinguish itself from the Nazarbekian faction the splinter faction became known as the Reformed (Verakazmyal) Hnchakyan Party in 1898 (cf. Hovhannisyan 1968, 32-3; Kitur 1962, 269-74). The split in 1896 became quite detrimental and ended "the most active era" of the Hnchakyan Party (Nalbandian 1963, 127; cf. Kitur 1962, 272-73, Damadian 1985, 99).

The problems of balancing between socialism and nationalism and the prioritization of independence or autonomy of Armenia, the preference for socialist revolution or national rebellion constituted the most significant areas of disagreement among the Armenian revolutionary political parties in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Disagreements, exacerbated by personal ambitions, eventually turned the Armenian revolutionary parties into rivals, rather than allies in the pursuit of the Armenian national cause. Despite the profound disagreements, in their programs and activities the parties shared a common perception of Armenia, the homeland. The activities of all of the Armenian parties — the Armenakans, the Hnchakyans (including the Reformed Hnchakyans after 1896-98) and the Dashnaks, focused on Ottoman Armenia as it had been outlined in the Treaty of San Stefano. Even if they had any implicit territorial aspirations against the Russian and Persian empires, their explicit agitation and activities targeted the Ottoman Armenia, to which all of them referred to as Armenia, the

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preaches liberation and self-defense. While the Effendi is hostile to the priest in the beginning, closer to the end of the novel he comes to realize that the salvation of Armenians is impossible without armed resistance. At the end of the novel the conservative believer of loyalty and servitude makes a donation to the priest and instructs him to buy "powder and guns" for the people (Arp'iarian [1909] 1950, 54)

homeland. But the changing international and domestic conditions in the Ottoman and Russian Empires in the first few decades of the twentieth century, as the following section will discuss, had a significant impact on the perceptions and definitions of the Armenian homeland.

Homeland Redefined?
World War I, the Loss of Ottoman Armenia and the Republic of Armenia

The Young Turk revolution of 1908 generated much enthusiasm among Armenians, with many of them hailing the restoration of the Ottoman Constitution.[31] Following the revolution, the Armenian political parties put down their arms and abandoned violence, hoping that the Ottoman Constitution would pave the way for reforms in the Armenian provinces and for the much anticipated solution of the Armenian question. The Dashnaks believed the solution could be achieved by aligning with the Western educated leaders of the Committee of Union and Progress (the Young Turks) (cf. Atamian 1955, 158; Libaridian 2004, 144). Most of the Armenakans believed it was time to resort to the constitutional means of struggle and joined the newly founded Armenian Constitutional Democrat Party (*Hay sahmanadrakan Ramkavar kusaktsut'yun*). The purpose of the new Armenian party was to make the restored constitution in Turkey more democratic, to work peacefully towards the maintenance and development of Armenian identity in Turkey, rejecting any separatism (Dallak'yan 1999: 5). The Hnchakyans, in their sixth World Congress of 1909, also decided in favor of the legal, constitutional path in the Ottoman Empire. The Congress, however, found the Young Turk top-down nationalist policies of forging an Ottoman citizenry unacceptable. The Young Turks' nationalism was interpreted by the Hnchakyan Congress as an attempt to "denationalize the constituent non-Turkish subjects" of the Ottoman Empire and "assimilate them into Turkish nation under the general concept of an *Ottoman*" (Kitur 1963, 324). The Congress reemphasized the right of nations to self-

[31] The Ottoman Constitution was promulgated by Abdul Hamid II in 1876 and abrogated a year later with the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish war.

determination and decided to struggle against the Young Turk ideology of "denationalization" (quoted in Kitur 1962, 324). In the same Congress, after abandoning the revolutionary tactics, the party was renamed to Social Democrat Hnchakyan Party (cf. Kitur 1962: 323-29; 343; 348).

To the great disappointment of the Armenian political parties, the Armenian question was solved in a way, which was not at all anticipated in their plans for a better future. After ceding territories in Africa to Italians in the war of 1911, losing many of the European possessions to the Balkan defeats in 1912-1913, the Young Turk Ottoman officials where overwhelmed when the European powers and Russia imposed a plan of reforms in Ottoman Armenia in 1914. Under pressure, the Young Turk administration had to sign the Reform Act on February 1914. The Act envisioned the creation of two administrative units out of the six Armenian provinces, to be governed by European inspectors-general. The Young Turks realized that the loss of control on provinces in Eastern Anatolia, could eventually lead to the loss of those lands as well (cf. Hovannisian 1997a, 236-37). The outbreak of the war in 1914 provided a perfect occasion to solve the Armenian question permanently. Under the cover of war, the Young Turks initiated and implemented deportations and massacres of the Armenian population on the lands, which all the Armenian political parties for two decades had been promoting as *the homeland, the Armenia*, as well as in some other parts of the Ottoman Empire.

At the conclusion of World War I the Armenian homeland in Turkey was mostly devoid of its Armenian population. Most Armenians fell victim to the genocide, while the survivors were exiled from their native lands. In Transcaucasia, following the collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917, the disintegration of the short-lived independent Transcaucasian Federation in May 1918,

and the declaration of independence by Georgia on May 26 and Azerbaijan on May 28,[32] the representative body of the Russian Armenians reluctantly declared on May 30:

> 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[33] 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 (quoted in Walker 1990, 256-57).

While acquiring a *de-facto* independence, the actual independence of an Armenian republic went unmentioned in the statement (cf. Hovannisian 1971, 33). Rather than being officially claimed in the declaration, the designation "Republic of Armenia" was applied and ascribed to a small independent land in Transcaucasia in the treaty of Batum on June 4, 1918, the title of which read: "The Treaty of Peace and Friendship between the Republic of Armenia and the Ottoman Empire" (cf. Hovannisian 1971, 33-8; Walker 1990, 257). The Treaty of Batum, albeit never ratified by the Republic of Armenia or Ottoman Empire, became the first international document recognizing the existence of a nominally independent Republic of Armenia (Map 1.2). The actual declaration of independence was issued only one year later, during the celebration of the first anniversary of the Republic of Armenia.[34]

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[32] For detailed discussion of the Russian revolutions and developments in Transcaucasia, see Hovannisian (1971, 15-39; 1997b, 296-97); Walker (1990, 243-57).

[33] Armenian National Council was the executive of the Armenian National Congress. The Congress comprised the representatives of all Russian Armenian political parties, except the Bolsheviks. The Congress convened on 1917 and became the spokesman of the Armenian people in Transcaucasia. The Dashnaks were the majority in the congress, followed by the Populists, Social Revolutionaries, Social Democrats and non-partisans (Vrats'ian 1928, 31-2; Hovannisian 1971, 16-8).

[34] Simon Vrats'ian, one of the participants of most of these events and the last prime minister of the Republic of Armenia before the Sovietization in 1920, confirms that the independence of Armenia was actually declared on May 28, 1919, one year after the republic had acquired independence (see Vrats'ian 1924, 49; 69).

Map 1-2. Republic of Armenia (1918-1920)
(Source: Hewsen 2001, 236)

In parallel to the unfolding events in Transcaucasia, an independent Armenian initiative continued the pursuit of the (Ottoman) Armenian Cause in Europe. At the conclusion of the First Balkan War in 1912, the Catholicos of Armenians Georg V had initiated an Armenian representation in Europe. He had appointed Boghos Nubar, the son of the finance and foreign minister of Egypt and the former director of Egyptian State Railways, as the representative of the Armenian people in Europe. Aside from his European connections, Boghos Nubar was a renowned philanthropist as the founder and president of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU).[35] A group of Armenians, who gathered around Boghos Nubar, had formed what

[35] Boghos Nubar founded the AGBU in 1906 in Cairo, Egypt, in response to the worsening conditions of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. The objectives of the organizations were "to assist in the intellectual and moral development of the Armenian people, … to ameliorate their material and economic condition, … "encourage and support any

came to be known as the Armenian National Delegation. After WWI, under the leadership of Boghos Nubar, the Armenian National Delegation had refocused its activities on claiming the Armenian lands from the Ottoman Empire (Hovannisian 1971, 257). In the post WWI context, the Armenian National Delegation saw itself as sort of a "government of exiles," the representative of all Armenians now massacred and dispersed from their ancestral lands (cf. Tölölyan 1991a, 177-78). The independence of the Transcaucasian Republic of Armenia in 1918 created some tensions for the Armenian National Delegation and for Boghos Nubar. For people and organizations, who sought the creation of Armenia in place of the Armenian provinces in the Ottoman Empire, the Transcaucasian Republic of Armenia could not represent *the* Armenia, *the* homeland. As an expression of such discontent, Boghos Nubar, the Hnchakyans, the Sahmanadir Ramkavars and other Ottoman Armenians often refrained from using the expression "Republic of Armenia" instead referring to it as the "Araratian Republic" (cf. Kitur 1963, 149-50; 158-63; Hovannisian 1971, 259). Several months after the *de facto* independence of Armenia, in November 1918, Boghos Nubar declared on behalf of the Armenian people "the unification of all historic Armenian territories" (Hovannisian 1971, 258).

The Congress of Western (Ottoman) Armenians, convened in Erevan in February 1919, drawing on Boghos Nubar's declaration, advocated for the Free and United Armenia and adopted a resolution expressing "confidence in His Excellency Boghos Nubar Pasha's first cabinet of Free and United Armenia" (quoted in Hovannisian 1971, 452). The Congress was followed by the

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action which could produce these ends" (AGBU 1948, 34; Melk'onyan 2005, 37). To reach these goals, the AGBU aimed "to establish or subsidize schools, libraries, trade schools, workshops, hospitals, dispensaries, orphanages and other institutions of the kind…, provide assistance to needy Armenians in the homeland without distinction of religious faith, … assist the peasantry … with land, seeds, animals, and implants …, encourage the progress of local industries, disseminate knowledge in modern agriculture and … extend immediate help to victims of famines, fires and any other disasters" (quoted in Mirak 1983, 176).

pan-Armenian National Congress, summoned in Paris from February 24 to April 22 of 1919. The National Congress, chaired by Boghos Nubar, had representatives from all Armenian political and national bodies, including some distinguished leaders and representatives of the Republic of Armenia. The Congress confirmed the importance of the "creation of a united Armenia" (Hovannisian 1971, 454-58).

The participants of the pan-Armenian National Congress, the representations from all over the world and from the Republic of Armenia, seemed to make the decisions of the congress and the leadership of Boghos Nubar legitimate. Yet, about a month later, the Dashnak dominated government of the Republic of Armenia made a declaration on May 28, 1919, which read, in part, as follows:

> To restore the integrality of Armenia and to secure the complete freedom and prosperity of her people, the Government of Armenia, abiding by the solid will and desire of the entire Armenian people, declares that from this day forward the divided parts of Armenia are everlastingly combined as an independent political entity.
> …Now, in promulgating [the] act of unification and independence of the ancestral Armenian lands located in Transcaucasia and the Ottoman Empire, the Government of Armenia declares that the political system of United Armenia is a democratic republic and that it has become the Government of this United Republic of Armenia.
> Thus, the people of Armenia are henceforth the supreme lord and master of their consolidated fatherland, and the Parliament and Government of Armenia stand as the supreme legislative and executive authority conjoining the free people of united Armenia… (quoted in Hovannisian 1971, 461-2)

The statement, which was the actual and official declaration of the independence of the Republic of Armenia, went beyond confirming the *de facto* independence, and proclaimed the "unification and independence of the ancestral Armenian lands located in Transcaucasia and the Ottoman Empire." The reference to the "consolidated fatherland" and United Armenia was drawing directly upon the earlier statements of Boghos Nubar, the Western Armenian Congress and the Armenian National Congress. More importantly, through the declaration, Dashnak dominated government in Armenia claimed to be the "supreme legislative and executive authority" of the

United Armenia and thereby undermined Boghos Nubar's leadership and the legitimacy of the Armenian National Delegation. The decision of the leaders of the Republic led Boghos Nubar to conclude: "a coup d'état had been staged in Erevan" (Hovannisian 1971, 468). The political conflict over the future leadership of the United Armenia that was ripening in the following summer between the Dashnaktsutyun and the Armenian National Delegation, dominated by the Ramkavars, predetermined the tensions between these political groups in the dispersion. While the Armenian National Delegation continued actively participating in peace conferences in the course of 1920, it was Avetis Aharonian, the representative of the independent Republic of Armenia and the leader of the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia, who was invited to sign the treaty of Sèvres in August 10, 1920 (Hovannisian 1996, 372). By then, most of the European powers had at least *de facto* recognized the independence of the Republic of Armenia and its delegation as the legitimate representative of the Armenian people.

The treaty of Sèvres, signed between the Ottoman Empire and the European powers, was the success of the Armenian and the Armenophile missions[36] in Europe and America. According to the treaty, Turkey recognized "Armenia as a free and independent state" (Article 88), the borders of which remained to decided by the President of the United States of America in the vilayets of "Erzerum, Trebizond, Van and Bitlis… (Article 89)" (Martin 1924, 814-15).

By the time the President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson submitted the map of the independent Armenia in November 1920 (Map 1.3), the Republic of Armenia had been trying to

[36] The American Committee for the Independence of Armenia (ACIA) was one of such organizations, most of the members of which were non-Armenians. On February 24, 1919 the Committee sent a petition to the President of the Untied States, Woodrow Wilson, which signed by 20,000 protestant rectors and ministers and catholic priests. They petitioned for securing and insuring "the Independence of Armenia, including the six Vilayets, Cilicia and the littoral of Trebizond in Turkish Armenia, Russian Armenia and Persian Armenia" (*Petition* 1919).

resist the offensive of the Kemalist Turkish army[37] and the Bolshevik pressures from north. Less than two weeks after the announcement of the Wilsonian Armenia, the Dashnak delegates in Moscow handed-over power to the Bolsheviks on the midnight of December 2, 1920, and the Dashnak negotiators with the Kemalists were forced to sign the humiliating treaty of Alexandropol the same day, by which Armenia denounced the Treaty of Sèvres and all territorial claims against Turkey (cf. Walker 1990, 322). Although the transfer of power to the Bolsheviks annulled the Treaty of Alexandropol, in the following year the leadership of Soviet Armenia, along with the representatives of Soviet Georgia and Azerbaijan, signed the treaty of Kars with Turkey, which officially denounced all previous treaties and established the borders of modern Armenia (Walker 1990, 394). The Sovietization of Armenia, the Treaty of Kars and the other victories by Mustafa Kemal against Greeks and in Cilicia, made the European powers to renegotiate the Treaty of Sèvres. The new treaty, concluded in Lausanne in 1923, recognized the new republican regime in Turkey, with borders far more extensive than those prescribed at Sèvres, without making any reference to Armenia.

[37] After assuming the command of the defeated Ottoman army, Mustafa Kemal reorganized these units to resist further dismemberment of what had remained from the Ottoman Empire. The emergence of modern Turkey owes to Kemal's military campaigns in 1919-1923, which became known as the Turkish War of Independence.

Map 1-3. The Boundary Between Turkey and Armenia, Prepared by Woodrow Wilson, 1920
(Source: Galichian 2003, 222)

Conclusion

The conclusion of the Treaties of Kars in 1921 and Lausanne in 1923 sealed the Armenian Question. The Armenian homeland, as the Armenian political parties had envisioned it, was lost to the Republic of Turkey. The ultimate failure of the Armenian ethno-territorial nationalism to create an Armenian state on lands promoted as the homeland was accompanied by an unexpected emergence a small part of Armenia as a country, which bore the name Republic of Armenia until November 1920, and which became Soviet Armenia afterwards. While in the post-Lausanne environment the hope for regaining the homeland and returning home was fading, the existence of the Soviet republic of Armenia within the federal structure of the Soviet Union provided new grounds for the rethinking, re-evaluation and discoursive reconstruction of the Armenian homeland. New discourses and debates on the Armenian homeland gradually took shape in the relations of Soviet Union/Soviet Armenia and the post-genocide Armenian diasporic communities. As it will be argued in subsequent chapters, various Armenian organizations and groupings developed different and often conflicting perceptions of the homeland in the diaspora. Whereas some groups and organizations promoted Soviet Armenia as the new Armenian homeland, others advocated for the liberation of Western Armenia (in Turkey), while the ordinary Armenian immigrants and refugees developed local perceptions of homeland in the emerging compatriotic settlements in host-countries. Not necessarily mutually exclusive, the orientation towards the homeland, whether in the form of an existing state (Soviet Armenia), in

the form of an imaginary[38] state (Western Armenia) or in the form of native towns and villages, substantially determined the ways, in which the post-genocide Armenian diasporic organizations defined allegiances, course of activities, identities and transnational belongings, as the following chapters will discuss in detail.

[38] Imaginary in this context should be read as not existing on the political map as an independent, semi-independent or an autonomous country.

Chapter 2

Host-Country Conditions, Dispersion of Armenians and the Prospects for Community Building in the United States, France and Lebanon

Introduction

In parallel and in response to the deteriorating conditions in the Ottoman Empire, large number of Armenians had been leaving the homeland since especially the last decades of the nineteenth century. By WWI, the United States already hosted a vibrant Armenian community. In various cities and towns, where Armenian immigrants had settled in considerable numbers, they had established Armenian churches, chapters of political parties and other organizations, and started Armenian language periodicals.

The genocide and deportations of Armenians during WWI brought massive waves of Armenian refugees and orphans to various countries in the Middle East and Europe. The deportations and physical annihilation of a significant part of the Armenian population had another important, yet mostly unaddressed, effect on the Armenian people. They disrupted the collective effort of the nineteenth century Armenian clergy, intellectuals and political activists directed towards redefining and modernizing the Armenian identity through spreading education and literacy in their envisioned Armenian homeland. The genocide survivor Armenian refugees, reaching

different countries, therefore, represented groups of diverse dialects and often languages, habits and traditions, subcultures and confessional affiliations. Their collectivity as Armenians was defined by their affiliation with a Christian church and by certain shared cultural traits as Apostolic, Catholic or Protestant Armenians, and, to a lesser extent, by language - their local Armenian dialect or Western Armenian.

While the Armenian political parties negotiated the possibility of regaining the Armenian homeland in the early 1920s, as the previous chapter discussed, the dispersed Armenian refugees settled in camps, struggled to recover from physical and mental exhaustion, and formed informal self-help organizations and community structures. This chapter analyzes the particularities of the Armenians' social adjustment and political integration in the United States, France and Lebanon, to argue that the host-country contexts essentially influenced the possibilities of the retention, construction and transmission of Armenian identities, and defined the prospects of the formation of Armenian communities. The first three sections in the chapter focus on local social-political contexts and conditions in the United States, France and Lebanon, on the patterns of the dispersion of Armenians in each of these countries, and on the particularities of political inclusion and social adjustment of the Armenian immigrants and refugees into these societies. These sections particularly stress the initial dialectal, cultural and confessional diversity of Armenian immigrant (in the case of the United States) and refugee groups (in the case of France and Lebanon), to argue that compatriotic and confessional identities and belongings became one of the important factors in the dispersion and settlement of Armenians in the host-countries. In a comparative light, these sections also demonstrate how conditions in Lebanon were conducive for the integration of Armenians as a distinct community in contrast to the assimilationist

contexts of American and French societies, in which integration for the majority of Armenians meant assimilation into host-society. The last part of the chapter addresses the activism of Armenian compatriotic organizations, which, among other Armenian institutions, grew as transnational and truly diasporic initiatives and made an important contribution in the formative stage of the post-genocide Armenian diaspora.

This chapter seeks to feel the gap in the secondary literature on Armenian diasporic communities, which in most cases understate the diversity and heterogeneity of the Armenian refugee and immigrant communities and downplay the role of compatriotic identities, settlements and societies. It does so by examining personal accounts of some second generation diaspora Armenians, expressed in their published memoirs and interviews with author; by drawing on articles published in Armenian language periodical press in the United States, France and Lebanon, as well as on the histories of compatriotic societies compiled by their members. In addition to these primary accounts, the chapter also relies on many important secondary sources on Armenian communities in the United States, France and Lebanon. While individual studies about the dispersion, settlement and social-political integration of Armenians in these countries are available, a comparative study of these processes and their consequences, which will be presented below and in the subsequent chapters, has not been attempted in previous studies.

Armenians in the United States: From foreign workers to Full-Fledged Americans

The Armenian presence in the United States dates back to the early seventeenth century. The first Armenian, whose name was found in the records of the Virginia Company of London, a certain "Martin the Armenian," also referred to as "John Martin the Persian," arrived to the United States sometime in 1618 or 1619 (Malcom c1919, 51-7; Tashjian ([1947] 1970, 1-2; Abrahamyan 1967, 343). Prior to the nineteenth century the number of Armenians in the United States was so insignificant that Robert Mirak refused to recognize the Armenians of the British colonial period as the "true pioneers." "They did not start an exodus of Armenians to America;" Mirak argued, "they were strays, removed from the main currents of the migration" (Mirak 1983, 36). The influx of Armenians in the US increased slowly from the 1830s to the 1880s through the channels of Armenian missionaries established in the Ottoman Empire. Migration intensified significantly after the Hamidian massacres of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire in 1895-96 (cf. Malcom [c1919], 57-61; 66; Dekmejian 1997, 434; Mirak 1983, 36-44; Waldstreicher 1989, 35). As Malcom ([c1919], 60-61) observed, the Armenians arriving in the US during 1834-94 represented the higher classes and their purpose was "to go to school to learn trades, to engage in commerce, and [for some] to escape political persecution, but with the intention of returning to their country within a short time." The Treaties of Commerce and Navigation concluded between the United States and the Ottoman Empire in 1830 and 1862 certainly facilitated immigration to

the United States.[39] According to Malcom's estimates, around 2000 Armenians, who came mostly through the assistance of American missionaries, settled in New York, Worcester, Boston, Providence, Hartford, Philadelphia, Hoboken, Troy, Chicago and Fresno, California (Malcom [c1919], 61) (Map 2.1). Since, prior to 1899, the US immigration records were based on the countries of origin and not on ethnic affiliations, the figures of Armenians arriving in the US remains unknown (Malcom c1919, 63; cf. Jendian 2008, 45; Phillips 1989, 103).

Map 2-1. The Armenian Diaspora in the United States (and Canada)
(Source: Hewsen 2001, 276, Map 270)

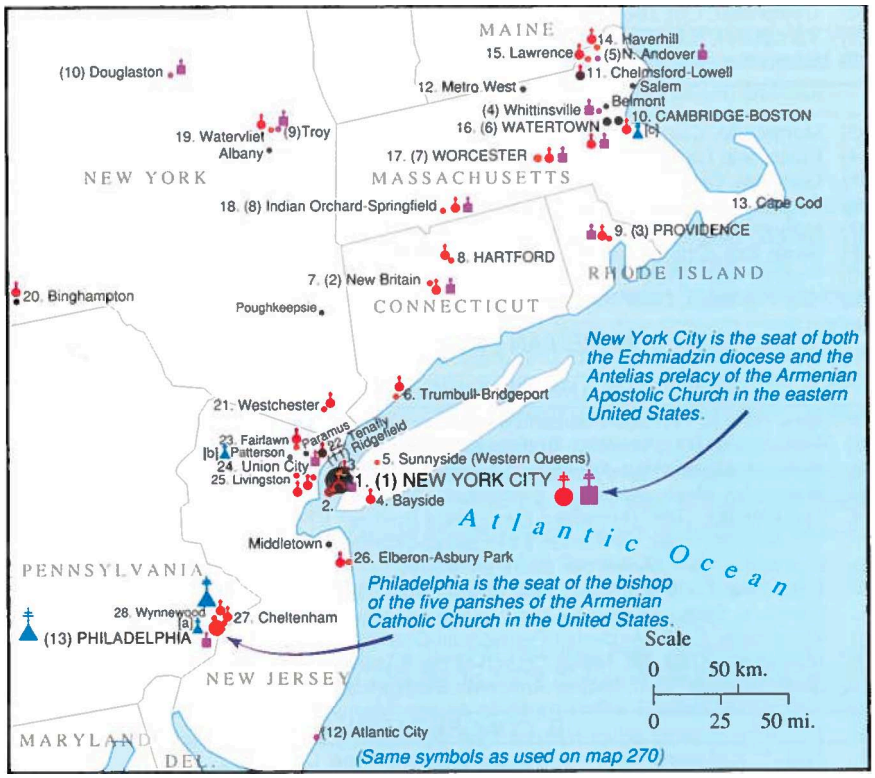
[39] The texts of the treaties are available in *Treaties* (1873, 643-52)

Robert Mirak (1983, 36-59) suggests three phases of Armenian arrival in the US prior to WWI: "The Pioneers," in 1834 – 1890; "Flight," 1890-1899 and "Mass Migration," 1900-1914. According to the estimates provided by Malcom (c1919, 62-7), Mirak (1983, 59), Tashjian [1947] 1970, 18) and Jendian (2008, 46), the number of Armenians who settled in the US prior to WWI was between sixty and seventy thousand. The number of Armenians arriving in the US during 1915-1931, according to Jendian's (2008, 46) estimates, was less than thirty thousand (cf. Federal Writers 1937, 33; Tashjian [1947] 1970, 18). Part of the reason of this relatively small number of Armenians arriving in the US, compared to France or the Middle East,[40] was the remoteness of the United States from the Ottoman Empire. Due to the immediate geographical proximity to the Armenian provinces in the Ottoman Empire, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq and Egypt in the Middle East became the primary destinations of a large influx of Armenian genocide survivors in the immediate aftermath of WWI. Another factor, which impacted the lower number of Armenian immigration to the United States in the 1920s, was the Immigration Act of 1924. The quota system introduced by the Act, among others, significantly reduced the rates of Armenian immigration to the United States (cf. Jendian 2008, 51; Tashjian [1947] 19; Waldstreicher 1989, 39-40).

In order to accommodate the masses of physically and emotionally exhausted refugees, the local officials in Greece, France, Lebanon, Syria and elsewhere had to settle Armenians in temporary refugee camps, usually near one of the major harbors. In contrast, Armenians did not have any refugee camps in the US. Most of the survivors arrived in the US to join their family members,

[40] For the number of Armenians arriving in France or Lebanon in the 1920s, see the next sections.

who had migrated to America earlier.[41] According to the US Census of 1920, Massachusetts (25%), California (19.1%) and New York (13.3%) hosted the largest numbers of Armenians (cf. Jendian 2008, 52). Within these states, Worcester, MA, Fresno, CA and New York City hosted the largest numbers of Armenians by the early 1920s. These cities were followed by Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, West Hoboken, Jersey City, Detroit, Los Angeles, Troy, Cleveland and some other minor settlements (Malcom c1919, 73; Deranian 1987, 28; Tashjian [1947] 1970, 18).



Map 2-2. The Armenians in Northeast Atlantic States
(Source: Hewsen 2001, 277, Map 271)

[41] Robert Mirak's parents, for example, John and Artemis Mirak (Zaven Mirakian and Artemis Emerian), both were genocide survivor orphans, who were eventually brought to the United States through their family network. In the case of Zaven Mirakian, the husband of his aunt had immigrated to the United States in 1912 and he was able to bring his wife and her nephews, Zaven and Vartges, to the United States in 1921. In a similar pattern, the husband of Artemis Eremian's cousin also lived in the United States and he brought his genocide survivor wife and her cousins to the United States in 1923 (Mirak 2014, 20-34). Most of the genocide survivors arrived in the New World through family networks as immigrants rather than as political refugees.

Map 2-3. The Armenians in Northern California
(Source: Hewsen 2001, 277, Map 273)

Map 2-4. The Armenians in Southern California
(Source: Hewsen 2001, 277, Map 272)

The American Context: Immigration Policies, Naturalization and Social-Political Conditions in the Untied States

The intensification of the Armenian immigration to the United States in the final decades of the nineteenth century was part of one of the massive immigration phases in the history of the United States. The growing industrial regions in New England, New York, and the Midwest, massive construction projects of especially railroad systems, as well as vast unsettled agricultural areas had all created a huge demand for manpower and labor in many regions of the United States. Immigration was seen as a solution to the growing needs of the country, which determined one of the heaviest immigration flows into the United States beginning in the 1880s. According to the data of the two US censuses in 1890 and 1920, more than 18 million immigrants entered the United States, the overwhelming majority originating from Europe (Batalova and Terrazas 2013, 25; cf. Jaret 2002, 21).

The massive flow of immigrants helped advance the economy and industry, but it also entailed many problems. The growing number of immigrants posed a certain danger to nation building and to then established American identity. Until WWI, tensions between economic advancement and national identity, the former encouraging immigration and the latter perceived to be diluted by immigration, were resolved in favor of economic advancement. Yet, under the impact of prevailing theories of Social-Darwinism, race and physical anthropology in Europe, the new science of eugenics, anti-immigration nativist movements manifested themselves in various

regions of the United States, first, in the form of anti-Catholic campaigns, and, later, growing into Anglo-Saxon nationalism (Jones 1992, 212-238).[42]

Over several decades, immigration was seen as a problem due to its effects on the American identity, generally perceived to be weakening its "social health and integrity" (*The Immigration Problem* 1923, 47). Discrimination and prejudice against immigrants augmented with the increasing number of immigrants to the United States. The immigrants were excluded from labor unions, while riots and violence against them continued. Batalova and Terrazas (2013, 25) describe the situation as follows:

> Citing a host of reasons ranging from immigrants' poor intellectual capacity and lack of hygiene, racial incompatibility, labor competition, and fears over loyalty to the country and its democratic principles, the opponents of immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe and Asia were pushing Congress for restrictions on further immigration and the curtailing of immigrants' rights to land and property ownership.

In many states and regions of the country, beatings and murders of immigrant workers, attacks against immigrant settlements and the burning of their properties became widespread expressions of discrimination against immigrants (Jaret 2002, 29). Concerns for American "racial purity" were so prevalent, that in 1882 the US Congress voted for the expulsion of Chinese refugees. The Chinese Expulsion Act was the first law in the United States to severely restrict the entry of a certain racial group into the United States (Batalova and Terrazas 2013, 23; Jones 1992, 226-27; Schneider 2011, 20).

The exclusionist nativist movement at the end of the nineteenth century generated many proponents of the inclusion and assimilation of immigrants. In the process, nativism gradually

[42] As Jeremiah Jenks, a members of the former United States Immigration Commission (1907-1910), and his colleague reported, in 1912, "[i]mmigration of foreigners into the United States has been long recognized as one of [the] important social and political problems" (Jenks and Lauck 1912, 2).

turned into a new, more coercive movement of Americanization. The proponents of the Americanization movement were concerned of the immigrants' ignorance of the language, American values and culture, and their inability or unwillingness to connect with American culture, to learn the American ways of life. At the turn of the century, Americanization became an official campaign with many supporters in the Federal Government and the Congress. The purpose of Americanization was assimilating the immigrants into American society, making "Americans out of immigrants" in order to "unite the nation" (Schneider 2002, 171; 2011, 156-58). Americanization in this context meant not only teaching the immigrants the English language and American values, but also making them forget their habits, cultural traits and everything deemed "un-American" (Schneider 2011, 158).

The naturalization acts of 1802 and 1870 could not satisfy the fiercest proponents of Americanization, as both did not make any reference to the importance of the English language, Protestantism, American values or culture.[43] Under their pressure, the US Congress passed a new naturalization act in 1906, which defined the knowledge of English and the US Constitution as legal requirements for acquiring US Citizenship, in addition to the requirements of race and age (*An Act* 1907, 35). Although the level of English proficiency was not clarified in the document, Americanization, at least formally, became part of acquiring US citizenship (Schneider 2011, 153).

[43] The acts of 1802 and 1870 made only two formal requirements for the foreign born immigrants: they had to be of white or of African descent (1870 Act) and over 21 years of age. The laws required five years of residency, a "declaration of intention" that the prospective citizens had to file several years prior to naturalization and thereby express willingness to renounce all their former allegiances and titles (Schneider 2002, 163; 2011, 196).

Americanization, as argued by Dorothee Schneider (2011, 151-52), occurred on formal or public and on private levels. Formal or public Americanization was expressed in offering classes of English, American history and culture to the immigrants, which would lead them to cultural assimilation. Private Americanization was part of the immigrants' adaptation to the new environment. Public Americanization was enforced through many institutions, but primarily through education. Public schools became widely recognized as the most important agencies of formal Americanization for first- and second-generation immigrant children. Although the church was officially separated from the state,[44] Protestantism had come to constitute a key marker of American identity and was even enforced on Catholics, Mormons and other non-protestants.[45] As Jenks and Lauck, former members of the U.S. Immigration Commission, reported in 1912, with the exception of the "Orientals,"[46] the assimilation of immigrants, especially those of the second-generation, was quite successful under the influence of "public schools and the social circumstances" (198-200). As Schneider's (2011, 171) study also confirms, by the 1920s Americanization had become a "widespread part of the identity of public schools." Teaching and requiring the immigrants to speak English had become one of the focal points of assimilating the immigrants (Jaret 2002, 28; Schneider 2002, 171-73). Simultaneously, many states officially banned instruction in foreign languages and instituted mandatory evening citizenship classes for immigrants[47] (Schneider 2011, 171-173).

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[44] The First Amendment to the United States Constitution of the *Bill of Rights* adopted on December 15, 1791, guarantees religious liberty, freedom of speech, freedom of the press and freedom of council.

[45] Up until the 1920s, even "the practice of reading the King James Bible in public schools was judged constitutional, despite the appeal of Catholics and others to be exempted on conscientious grounds" (Little 2007, 40).

[46] By "oriental races" the authors meant the Chinese, the Japanese and the Hindus (Jenks and Lauck 1912, 200-201)

[47] Big industries of the time, such as the Ford Motor Company, would often establish their Americanization programs in order to teach immigrant workers the English language, American values and culture, and "elevate" their families "to a proper "American" standard of living" (Meyer 1992, 70). As Jones (1992, 243) observed, "From 1915 onward, the Americanization of the immigrant became a patriotic duty, absorbing the energies of thousands of schools, churches, fraternal orders, patriotic societies and civic and business organizations." Theatrical performances

The pre-WWI Americanization policies, apparently, did not prove to be successful vis-à-vis the continuing influx of large numbers of immigrants. In the post WWI era, when France and the European countries also began welcoming immigration and relatively eased naturalization due to the need for manpower both in the armed forces and in the labor economy, the concerns for increasing numbers of immigrants resulted in the adoption a restrictive immigration Act of 1917. The Act of 1917 (also known as the Asiatic Barred Zone Act) banned immigration from most Asia. It also barred immigrants with any physical illness (mostly tuberculosis) or mental disorder; prostitutes and anarchists were also banned, and a literacy test for all arriving adults over the age of sixteen was introduced (Jaret 2002, 32-34; Jones 1992, 231; *The Immigration Problem* 1923, 61-3). As reported by the National Industrial Conference Board in 1923, this Act, did "nothing to solve the problem of adjustment to the English speaking community," because the literacy test implied demonstrating reading skills in any language. At the same time, the Board reported that 84% of the foreign-born "white children," from seven to thirteen years of age, and 94% of "native white children of foreign or mixed parentage" were attending schools. The report concluded that the high percentage of native-born children of immigrant or mixed parentage in American schools was indicative of the eagerness of immigrant parents to give their children American education (*The Immigration Problem* 1923, 45). The success in the Americanization of the second generation explains why the Fourteenth Amendment of the US

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in the promotion of American culture, values and the nation were also common. One of the oft-quoted reenactments of the WWI era Americanization was the performance *Melting Pot* by the graduating workers of the Ford English School in Dearborn. The act symbolically demonstrated the *passage* from an immigrant to an American. As the director of the school described: "…a pageant in the form of a melting pot, where all men descend from a boat scene representing the vessel on which they came over; down the gangway . . . into a pot 15 feet in diameter and 7-1/2 feet high, which represents the Ford English School. Six teachers, three on either side, stir the pot with ten-foot ladles representing nine months of teaching in the school. Into the pot 52 nationalities with their foreign clothes and baggage go and out of the pot after vigorous stirring by the teachers comes one nationality, viz, American" (quoted in Meyer 1980, 77).

Constitution, ratified in 1868, did not become a matter for heated debates and revisions. According to the Amendment, all people born in the United States automatically became eligible for US Citizenship (Schneider 2002, 164; Schain 2008, 188). While the children of the immigrants did not seem to pose many problems for Americanization or assimilation into American society, the immigration problem still persisted, because large numbers of immigrants were not assimilating or Americanizing as the proponents of Americanization had envisioned. In the concluding part of the 1923 report, regarding the assimilation of immigrants the Board proposed:

> we find it stressed that immigrants should be selected as to character, occupations, and numbers, with a view to their distribution from the standpoint of assimilation, Americanization, steady employment and the maintenance of life at a normal American standard of living; that laws be enacted strictly regulating immigrant banks and employment agencies; that aliens be excluded who come to this country with no intention of becoming American citizens, and that aliens who attempt to persuade immigrants not become American citizens should be made subject to deportation (*The Immigration Problem* 1923, 118).

The proponents of Americanization thought that the intention to acquire naturalization and citizenship would take the immigrants to the path of assimilation. Yet by the mid-1920s, Americanization had proven inefficient as the increasing number of immigrants began changing the balance of American-born and unassimilated immigrant populations in many small and large cities. To deal with the immigration problem, public and political discourses eventually shifted the focus from the policies of assimilation to simply restricting immigration. The Immigration Act, passed by the U.S Congress in 1924 (also known as the Johnson-Reed Act), established certain quotas for each country, significantly reducing immigration to the United States. According to the act, only 2% of the nationals distributed in the US Census of 1890 could enter the country per year (Batalova and Terrazas 2013, 26; Jaret 2002, 32-4; Jones 1992, 237-38; Schain 2008, 184, 195-96). The quota system significantly lowered the rates of immigration. Section 13(c) declared, "No alien ineligible to citizenship shall be admitted to the United

States…" (*The Immigration Act of 1924*). This section was implicitly referring to the naturalization laws of 1870 and 1906 and reconfirming that the Chinese, Japanese and those belonging to the Asian "oriental race" could not enter the United States (cf. Schneider 2011, 20-30, 57-9).

From the early 1920s, the opponents of Americanization became more vocal about the negative effects of the policy. To counter the proponents, many social scientists and policy makers described coercive Americanization as anti-American and in contradiction with the American values. In 1919, the head of the California Commission on Immigration and Housing, himself an immigrant, wrote:

> The spectacle of the rapid and ignorant Americanization efforts was disheartening. It did not represent America as the foreigner had pictured it in his dreams before landing upon these shores. It flavored more of Hungary where the magyarization of several millions of people was attempted … of Russia of the Tsarish [*sic*] days with the persecution of the Jew and the denaturalization of Poles (quoted in Schneider 2011, 164)

Subsequently, many works produced by sociologists, anthropologists and other social scientists were published and promoted by the opponents of Americanization. Most of these studies demonstrated how Americanization during WWI and in the post-war years had been a failure, that there was no need for such a policy as immigrants mostly voluntarily chose to become Americans (Schneider 2011, 164-67). By the 1930s the policy of coercive Americanization had significantly declined.

As an expression of fading Americanization policies, during the years of the Depression in the 1930s, the government even began sponsoring projects for collecting American folklife. As part of the New Deal policy, the government funded the unemployed intellectuals - lawyers, teachers, librarians, and scholars, to continue writing, which became known as the *Federal Writers*

Project. The Project was aimed at collecting oral histories of various American lifestyles, in which the immigrants would also self-reflexively present their personal stories of Americanization. The Project reconfirmed the inefficiency of coercive Americanization and the efficiency of self-initiated Americanization of the immigrants (cf. Schneider 2011, 167-68). The *Federal Writers* Project, as well as many other works produced by social scientists, demonstrated how various institutions and organizations, such as churches and other voluntary organizations created by various ethnic communities, had become important agencies of Americanization (cf. Schneider 2011, 168).

Discourses challenging Americanization policies in the late 1920s and early 1930s reshaped official policies towards the immigrants and naturalized citizens. Instead of being suppressed, ethnic churches, organizations and cultures were even encouraged as providing effective agencies for Americanization. After becoming naturalized citizens, the former immigrants could proudly wear their "old world" clothes in various American-style parades to celebrate the true spirit of American freedom (Schneider 2011, 169). Structural discrimination against the Asians and formal and informal discrimination against Blacks certainly continued, but the white races, those eligible for naturalization, benefitted from the decline of coercive Americanization and certain toleration of ethnic identities and peculiarities. Even if prejudice and discrimination against the immigrants continued through World War II, coercive Americanization significantly faded and was replaced by Americanization by choice.

Dispersion of Armenians in the United States and the Compatriotic Settlements

The immigration of Armenians to the Untied States in the nineteenth century commenced with the support and efforts of American missionaries in the Ottoman Empire. Various missionary reports of the time testified, with some disappointment, that most Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, who achieved a certain level of literacy in missionary schools, left their native lands for America (cf. Malcom c1919, 76-7; Deranian 1987, 15; 20; Tashjian [1947] 1970, 12-3). As suggested by Mirak, despite their small numbers in the Ottoman Empire, about twenty percent of the early Armenian immigrants to the United States were Protestants.[48] After establishing in the United States, Armenians who had arrived through the missionaries or who had fled the massacres of 1895-1896 also brought their families and encouraged their relatives and friends to immigrate to the US.

By the 1880s and 1890s, Worcester in New England and Fresno in California became quite notable destinations for Armenian immigration (Maps 2.2, 2.3). Worcester attracted Armenians for several reasons: first of all, it was one of the heavily industrialized centers in the US and could provide jobs to unskilled workers. Secondly, some of the Protestant missionaries, who worked in Kharberd in the mid-nineteenth century, originated from Worcester (Deranian 1987, 16, cf. Avagyan 2000, 53). Some of them taught at the Armenian College (later renamed to Euphrates College) and naturally, as concluded by Deranian (1987, 28), they "spoke of

[48] "All in all," Mirak argues, "the movement to America owed much of its character to the Protestant missionaries, and the Armenian Protestants were a large factor in the exodus" (Mirak quoted in Deranian 1987, 26). Protestant Armenians were very active in the founding and operation of the Armenian Colonial Association, established in New York in 1900. The Association helped many Armenian immigrants to find jobs and settle in various cities of the Untied States. It also provided some assistance to the needy Armenian immigrants or orphans (Mirak 1983, 70-71; Tootikian 2005, 14).

Worcester and aroused interest in the city." Finally, the first Armenians, who arrived in Worcester and found employment at the Washburn and Moen Manufacturing Corporation or the commonly known "the wire mill," gradually brought their families, friends and relatives from Kharberd, making the Armenian community in Worcester about 80% Kharberdts'i (people originating from Kharberd). The president of the "wire mill," Philip Moen, was himself an active missionary and he encouraged the immigration of Protestant Armenians to America. In the 1880s, the number of Armenians became so noticeable in Worcester that the area they inhabited became known as "little Armenia" (Deranian 1987, 17; Phillips 1989, 106).[49]

In contrast to Worcester, Fresno was not a major industrial center in California. Because of its fertile land and favorable climate it was growing into an agricultural center in the last decades of the nineteenth century. The first Armenian settlers of Fresno were the Seropian brothers, members of the Protestant Congregational Church. They arrived from Worcester in 1881 in search of a warmer, drier climate for their sick brother (Bulbulian 2000, 13-20).[50] Originating from the small town of Marsovan in the Sivas (Sebastia) vilayet in the Ottoman Empire, these Protestant brothers soon pulled many Marsovan Armenians from New England and from the old country (Kooshian 2002, 32-5). By the end of the 1880s, the Fresno Armenian community had people originating from Yozgat, Bitlis, Kharberd and elsewhere in the Ottoman Empire. Most of these people had moved to Fresno from New England (Bulbulian 2000, 31-9; Waldstreicher 1989, 59-60). Similar to Worcester, in the course of a few decades, the Armenian presence

[49] In order to emphasize the importance of Worcester for Armenians in the 1880s and 1890s, Deranian (1987, 19) in his article with a quite intriguing title "Worcester is America," insists that it had become known as "the Armenian metropolis of the country." Similarly, David Waldstreicher (1989: 46) calls Worcester "the first center of Armenian life in the United States."

[50] The first Armenian to arrive in Fresno was Martiros Yanikian in 1874. He did not settle there at his first arrival and returned to Philadelphia, but eventually he settled in Fresno later. Feeling like a *nor mart* (new man) in that area he adopted the name Frank Normart (Bulbulian 2000, 16-7; Hagopian 1984).

became so notable that the area where the Armenians concentrated became eventually known as the "Armenian Town" or "Little Armenia" (Bulbulian 2000, 37; Hagopian 1984; 1997). Compared to the Worcester Armenian community, the Fresno community was more heterogeneous in terms of the origins of the incoming Armenians. Yet, by confessional affiliations, most of the early immigrants were all Protestants, just as in Worcester (Bulbulian 2000, 86-7).

Among the factors influencing the settlement of Armenians, jobs and family/compatriotic ties played a crucial role. Most of the Armenian "pioneers" arriving in the US in the course of the nineteenth century were unmarried men, ready to travel anywhere for education or employment (Waldstreicher 1989, 45). They were followed by their families and compatriot/coreligionists. Because of chain migration, many areas became concentrations of Armenians originating from a particular village, town or region in the Ottoman Empire. One of the largest groups arriving in the Untied States from the "Old World" were the Kharberdts'is (Kharberd Armenians), who settled in Boston, Worcester, Lynn, Providence, and Whitinsville (Mirak 1983, 124). Because a smaller number of Armenians from Malatia and Arabkir settled in Philadelphia, it soon became the largest aggregation of Armenians from Arabkir and Malatia. Similarly, Armenians from Van were mostly drawn to Pawtucket and Niagara Falls, while the Turkophone Armenians from Adana and Kayseri concentrated in Watertown and New York respectively[51] (Alboyajian 1937, 1963-4; Eghiayan 1970, 895-96; Mirak 1983, 124; Kaprielian-Churchill 2004, 18). Compatriotic identities often prevailed over national/confessional identifications as Armenians. If the number

[51] Similarly, the Armenians of Tigranakert (Diyarbakir) clustered in Providence or West Hoboken. They became so prominent in West Hoboken that an article in an Armenian newspaper of the time wrote: "a visitor to West Hoboken who hadn't visited Dikranagert [Tigranakert] wouldn't need to" (quoted in Mirak 1983, 124). Robert Mirak recalls a story that when the West Hoboken Armenians were asked if there were any Armenians in that community, they said: "no, they are all Tigranakerts'is" (Interview with Robert Mirak. May 12, 2014).

of Armenians from a certain village was smaller, they would identify themselves with the nearby town and blend into regional compatriotic settlements of, say, Kharberdts‘is or Arabkirts‘is. Establishing compatriotic communities was a quite common pattern among the first-generation Armenians.[52]

In industrial or agricultural centers like Worcester and Fresno, where Armenians originating from different Ottoman Armenian villages and towns regrouped, the Kharberdts‘is, Bitlists‘is, Yozgats‘is, and Mushets‘is concentrated in certain areas within the Armenian quarter and they often developed separate community centers and businesses. As Walter Karabian,[53] the son of a Bitlists‘i, recalled in the documentary *From Bitlis to Fresno* (Hagopian 1997), "We … knew which ones were Mushets‘is, which ones were Kharberdts‘is. We knew of course all the Bitlists‘is…." He also recalled an anecdote about his great-uncle, Krikor Karabian, whose Kharberdts‘i friend used to tell him, "Krikor, you are a good man, too bad you are not a Kharberdts‘i."[54] There were two Armenian markets in Fresno. The Kharberdts‘is went for shopping at the Hanoian's market and the Bitlists‘is to Kersam's store (Fresno's Arax market).

[52] Abrahamyan (1967, 354-355) quotes the records of the proceeding of the February 22, 1910 meeting of the Armenian-American delegation, which has the following information about the Armenian settlements in the US: 1. California - 2000 Armenians, mostly from Kharberd and Bitlis; 2. West Hoboken region -1000 Armenians mostly from Tigranakert; 3. New York with the suburbs - 5000 Armenians from different places; 4. Philadelphia - 650 Armenians, mostly from Arabkir and Malatia; 5.Troy-NewYork - 600 Armenians from different places; 6. Chicago area - 1000 Armenians from different places; 7. Canada - 600 Armenians mostly from Geghi; 8. Saint-Louis region - 800, mostly from Geghi; 9. Detroit - 400 Armenians from different places; 10. Lawrence region - 900 Armenians mostly from Kharberd and Ch‘mshkatsak; 11. Providence - 2500 Armenians mostly from Kharberd, Palu and Mush; 12. Worcester region - 2500 Armenians, mostly from Kharberd and Malatia; 13. Boston region - 2500 Armenians, mostly from Kharberd. The author notes that these do not seem to represent the actual numbers of Armenians, but this record is another piece of evidence for the tendency of Armenians to congregate in compatriotic settlements.

[53] Walter Karabian is a second-generation Armenian-American, born in Fresno, CA in 1938. He is a former California State Assembly Majority Leader and a well-known attorney.

[54] Karabian recalled another version of the same story during the interview with the author. In this story Krikor Karabian's friend said "Oh, that Krikor Gharibian [the original last name of Karabians - V.S.], what a wonderful man, what a great friend, too bad he is a Bitlists‘i."

Intermarriage between the groups in the early years was also rare if not absent at all.[55] The compatriots knew each other personally and most often all other Armenians in their town originating from other Ottoman Armenian villages and regions. Armenian churches, informal schooling and political organizations, having been initiated by Armenian activists within compatriotic settlements from the 1890s, had the potential to bring together Armenians originating from various towns and villages in the Ottoman Empire.

The Founding of Armenian Churches in the United States

The majority of Armenian immigrants in the United States were the adherents of the Armenian Apostolic and Protestant faiths.[56] Before the founding of Armenian churches, first Armenian immigrants attended local Protestant churches to pray with the Americans. Sometimes such prayer meetings were held at private homes or rented facilities by Protestant missionaries and Armenian preachers (Mirak 1983, 182; Avagyan 2000, 122; Kooshian 2002, 87; 92; Minassian 2010, 66; Shemmassian 2011, 215). Witnessing such conditions upon his arrival to Worcester in 1888, Mkrtich‘ P‘ortugalian, the editor of *Armenia*, wrote:

> No matter how much Armenians are persecuted in Muslim countries, they can keep their nationality and their own Church, but in Christian countries, especially in America, there are many more difficulties in preserving our national and religious identity. Wherever the Armenians have gone, they have also brought with them their Armenian churches, the Armenian press, the Armenian schools; and that National Trinity has graced them with prosperity and has saved their national existence from all alienating forces and unfavorable circumstances (quoted in Deranian 1987, 22)

[55] Interview with Walter Karabian. March 6, 2014.
[56] The number of Catholic Armenian immigrants in the United States was very small. A few Catholic Armenian parishes were established in the early 1920s, but the Apostolic Exarchate for Armenian Catholics was established only in 1981 (cf. Avagyan 2000, 121, 129; *The Eparchy of United States and Canada o the Patriarchal Armenian Catholic Church,* http://www.armeniancatholic.org/inside.php?lang=en&page_id=304. Accessed August 15, 2014).

The concern for the "alienating forces" targeting Armenians was expressed first of all against the Armenian Protestants. Tensions and conflict between the Protestant and Apostolic Armenians facilitated the need to establish an Armenian Apostolic church in Worcester.

Inspired by P'ortugalian's speeches, the Apostolic Armenians in Worcester formed an Armenian Academy (*Kachaṙ haykakan*),[57] which soon reached a membership of about 250. In their first few meetings the newly formed organization voted unanimously to exclude the Protestant Armenians (Avagian 2000, 123, Kooshian 2002, 128-29; Minassian 2010, 67). The Academy addressed a letter-appeal to the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople with the request to send an Apostolic Armenian *vardapet* (celibate priest) to serve in Worcester. In response to the plea, Patriarch Khoren Ashegian sent Bishop Hovsep (Joseph) Sarajian to Worcester in 1889 who became the first Armenian Apostolic priest of America (Ashjian 1948, 18; Deranian 1987, 22-4; Minassian 2010, 69; Mirak 1983, 182-83). In the course of two years, the board of trustees raised enough funds to erect the Armenian Apostolic church of St. Savior (Surb P'rkich') in Worcester in 1891. Inspired by Bp. Sarajian's appointment, many Armenian Apostolic communities followed the example of the Worcester church. Apostolic churches were founded in Cambridge (Massachusetts), Providence (Rhode Island), Hartford (Connecticut), and elsewhere (Ashjian 1948, 19; Deranian 1987, 24-5; Mirak 1983, 182-83; 1997, 400; Avagian 2000, 124). In 1898 with the special decree of Catholicos Khrimian, the Diocese of Armenian Church of America was established with its Prelacy seat in Worcester.[58] Bp. Sarajian was appointed as the first

[57] Some authors translate the expression *Haykakan Kachaṙ* as the Armenian Academy. Others, like Oshagan Minassian (2010, 67), translate it as the Armenian Club. The Armenian word 'kachaṙ' has many different connotations, but Academy seems to be a closer translation.

[58] For political reasons in the Ottoman Empire, churches in the United States were transferred under the jurisdiction of the Catholicosate of Ējmiatsin. Maghak'ia Ormanian, the Patriarch of the Armenian Church in the Ottoman Empire at the time, in his three-volume history of the Armenian Church, writes that the Sublime Porte demanded the Patriarch of Armenians to eliminate the Armenian revolutionary circles in Europe and the United States. In his own

Primate of the Armenian Church. With the active involvement of Bishop Sarajian, parish councils were created in New York, Chicago and Troy, Manchester and Lynn, West Hoboken and New Britain, Philadelphia and elsewhere (Ormanian [1912] 2001, 5103-105; Mirak 1983, 186).

In Fresno, the pioneer Armenian immigrants attended the First Congregational Church with the Americans, where they were often ostracized and faced discrimination. By 1895 tensions between the Americans and Armenians had escalated to such an extent that the American members of the church congregation voted to expel the "garlic" Armenians from the church. With the help of the Presbyterians, only three years later, a group of Evangelical Armenians was able to organize the Armenian First Presbyterian Church in Fresno in 1897. Another group of Protestant Armenians founded the Fresno Armenian Evangelical Pilgrim Congregational Church in 1901. The first Armenian Apostolic church in Fresno, Holy Trinity, was founded in 1900 with local efforts and with the support of Bishop Sarajian (Bulbulian 2000, 86-92; Kooshian 2002, 104).[59]

Compared to Armenian Apostolic churches, the Armenian protestant churches benefitted from the prevailing Protestantism in America and had better chances of adapting to the New World.

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words, in order to escape the responsibility "once and forever," Ormanian replied that he did not have jurisdiction over the churches outside the Ottoman domains. Consequently, he made the necessary arrangements with Catholicos Khrimian to transfer the churches in Europe and America under the jurisdiction of the Holy See of Ējmiatsin (Ormanian [1912] 2001, 5103-104).

[59] In less than 30 years the number of Armenian apostolic churches increased dramatically with the augmenting numbers of Armenians in California. Due to the remoteness of California from Worcester, the need to have a separate church diocese grew. From 1918, California churches began making appeals to the Diocese in Worcester and to the Catholicos in Ējmiatsin for creating a separate California diocese. Their pleas were finally answered by the Catholicos in 1927; with the endorsement of the Holy See of Ējmiatsin, California Armenian churches elected a Primate and organized the Diocese of Armenian Church of California (cf. Wertsman 1978, 10; Kooshian 2002, 401-409; Minassian 2010, 221-25)

Having no formal affiliation with any mother church overseas, as Kooshian (2002, 90) argues, "they could claim an Armenian heritage, if they had a mind to:"

> Their church organization was as American as any other. Their doctrine, renouncing all authority but Holy Writ and Conscience, emanated from the Protestant Reformation. Their style of worship was identical with that of their American brethren. Their songs had been translated for them from the songbooks of the missionaries. Their sermons, whether in Turkish or Armenian, could be just as easily delivered in English when the need arose. And they could follow the fine old American tradition of spinning off new sects, of multiplying, of evangelizing. For them, being Armenian was a matter of nationality and identity, not religion or ideology.

Providing service in Turkish was as natural in some Armenian protestant churches, as services in Armenian. Services in Turkish were often provided for Turkophone Armenians coming from Adana or Kayseri (Malcom c1919, 101). Following the model of various Evangelical Unions in the Ottoman Empire, the Armenian Protestant churches spreading in New England and California organized into two unions. The Armenian Evangelical Association of America was founded in Worcester in 1901 for churches in the East and the Armenian Congregationalist Association of California was founded in 1908 for churches in California (Kooshian 2002, 103; Tootikian 1996, 194).

For number of reasons, compared to the early Armenian Apostolic churches, Armenian Protestant churches were "better attended" by Armenian immigrants (cf. Malcom c1919, 102). In August 1911 a letter addressed to the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople from the Diocese of Armenian Church in America noted that on Sundays "only twenty or thirty people out of two thousand attended services" (Minassian 2010, 135). Similarly, in 1912, Vahan Kurkjian, the founder of the first AGBU chapter in America, wrote in *Gotchnag*:[60]

[60] *Gotchnag* was an Armenian language weekly, published in Boston from 1900. It was founded by Armenian Evangelical ministers and was affiliated with the Protestant Armenian community (Mirak 1983, 249; Tootikian 2005, 15-6). The weekly was renamed to *Gotchnag Hayastani* in 1919, and *Hayastani Gotchnag* in 1921, and ceased publication in 1968 (Babloyan 1986, 54)

> The Armenian Church … our chief representative and trustee … is a feeble, breathless creature. …. The great majority of the Armenians in America are not in communication with its influence. … In Eastern states, the churches in Worcester and Hoboken, in California, Fresno, Fowler and Yettem …lack regularity and discipline. … [This is] … the Armenian Church, the first flower of Christianity, whose apostleship, devotion and martyrdom we vaunt. … I know of many who scoff, for whom religion means ignorance, retrogression and melancholy. … But where are the believers? … In Boston of 2500 Gregorian [Apostolic] Armenians barely 25 have paid their $2 annual dues. … Our pews remain empty, except for Easter and Christmas, and [many are nominal Christians]. The church is leaderless. (quoted in Mirak 1983, 189-190)

Contrary to the expectations of the founders, Armenian churches did not attract large masses of Armenian immigrants in the United States.[61] Some historians believe this was because of the lack of well-prepared Armenian clergy, able to understand and address the spiritual needs of the Armenian immigrants in the United States (Mirak 1983, 190-91). While this seems to be a crucial factor, another important factor that has not been much addressed, was the overall discriminatory American social-political environment, which had a direct impact on the social-political integration of Armenians into American society.

Social Adjustment and Political Inclusion of Armenians in the US

Regardless of regional, linguistic-cultural and confessional diversity, Armenians faced more or less similar discriminatory attitudes as immigrants wherever they established visible communities. If in Worcester Armenians were prevented from joining labor movements or trade unions, in Fresno local American farmers and businesses refused them employment (Bulbulian

[61] Despite the prevailing apathy among the first generation Armenian immigrants towards the church, elections of local parish councils were usually tense. The church had been the most authoritative Armenian institution in the Ottoman Empire and in the minds of many immigrants the church had the same importance in the New World. Consequently, those affiliated with the Armenian political parties, often sought to control the parish council in order to exert certain political influence on the church congregation. Prior to the 1920s, the struggle was between the clergy, who in most cases were against the idea of revolution, and the Armenian revolutionary party activists, who wanted to use the church and its network for disseminating their revolutionary propaganda and fundraising purposes. These conflicts will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.

2000, 55, 114-115; Deranian 1987; 18). If in Worcester Armenians were often denied police protection (Deranian 1987, 18; Mirak 1983, 142), in Fresno companies refused selling insurance to Armenian businesses against fire (Bulbulian 2000, 111). In many places, for many years Armenians could not join any social, service or country clubs, fraternities and sororities, or local high-school football teams (Bulbulian 2000, 108; Hagopian 1984; Zenian 1996, 12). Prejudice and discrimination did not exclusively target Armenians, yet in places where Armenians lived in larger concentrations, discrimination acquired specifically anti-Armenian character. As Charles Mahakian notes in his dissertation,

> …Disagreeable traits, which some of the Armenians of the first generation had, would have been the cause of their being disliked as individuals, but would not have given rise for a prevalent race prejudice if the Armenians were not concentrated in such large numbers, relative to the native population. In large cities or small towns, wherever the Armenians are few in number, no such strong antagonism has been developed against them as there has in Fresno Country. (Mahakian quoted in Bulbulian 2008, 107).

In Fresno, discrimination against Armenians was at its highest. The notorious land covenant restricted their rights to purchase property in certain areas. As a result, Armenians in Fresno were barred from residing in certain areas and were forced to cluster in a ghetto-like Armenian neighborhood (Bulbulian 2000, 109, 115; Mirak 1983, 144-45);[62] Armenian businessmen were not allowed to rent offices at certain buildings (Hagopian 1983; 1997); some buildings and shop windows had signs with discriminatory notes, "no dogs or Armenians allowed"[63] or "Farm For Sale, Armenians Need Not Apply" (Bulbulian 2000, 119; Zenian 1996, 12).

[62] The standard form of a buy and sell agreement act read: "Neither said premises, nor any part thereof shall be used in any manner whatsoever or occupied by any Negro, Chinese, Japanese, Hindu, Armenian, Asiatic or native of the Turkish Empire, or descendant of the above named persons, or anyone not of the white or Caucasian race" (quoted in Mirak 1983, 144-45).

[63] Similar expressions were quite common against other immigrants as well. Many similar infamous signs of discrimination existed against the Irish, Blacks, Chinese and others. "No Dogs and Chinese Allowed," "No Irish, Blacks and Dogs," and other similar signs were quite prevalent at the time.

Prejudice and discrimination was especially hard for the children of immigrants. The children of school age had to attend local public schools, interact with the non-Armenian locals and confront their American schoolmates' derogatory comments almost every day. Regardless of which background they were coming from, whether they were Kharberdts'is, Arabkirts'is, or Bitlists'is, or from Protestants or Apostolic families, expressions like "dirty black Armenians" or "starving Armenians" targeted them all equally - in schools, workplaces and streets in Fresno, and elsewhere as well (Bulbulian 2000, 108; Deranian 1987, 18; Jendian 2008, 69). In the documentary produced by the Armenian Film Foundation *Strangers in a Promised Land* (1984) Walter Karabian recalls:

> Discrimination was one of the major factors in shaping Armenian mentality in Fresno. Parents of the first and second generation went out of their way to have us assimilate into the American mainstream of life. We were given names like Walter, Rodney, Eugene, Kenneth, Richard and not the traditional Armenian names (Hagopian 1984).

Adopting or giving American names seemed to be one way of dealing with the most obvious differences between the Armenians and Americans. All across the United States, adopting American names or the Americanization of names among the first and second generation Armenians seemed to have become a commonly acknowledged mechanism of successful integration into American society (Americanization by choice).[64] Name changes became so popular among Armenians that Shemmassian (2011) even observed some patterns: "Serop

[64] Examples are plenty, but to name a few, upon his arrival to the United States, the father of Robert Mirak, Zaven Mirakian changed his name to John Mirak. Another successful entrepreneur and philanthropist Stephen Mugardichian changed his name to Stephen Mugar (Mirak 2014, 5-37). Similarly, many Fresno Armenians willingly changed their names to make them sound more American. Petros Petrosian became Peter Peters, some others adopted American last names, such as Taylor, Lyons, Sweat (Bulbulian 2000, 27; Hagopian 1997). Karnig Elvasian became Carl Sivas; George Elmasian became George Mason, Mardiros Fereshtian became Mark Frensh (Waldstreicher 1989, 97). Among the Musa Dagh Armenians, Yeprem Franklian changed his name to John E. Franklin; Hrant Yeghiarian/Egarian/Igarian applied for citizenship under a new name Henry Vance Garian; Sherbetjian become Shrin (Shemmassian 2011, 210). In some cases last names were simplified in order to make the pronunciation easier. This was the case with Khachigians, who dropped the first letter "K" to sound as Hachigian. Similar letter change occurred with the last name of the Karabian family, whose original Armenian family name was Gharibian.

became Sam, Hovsep became Joseph, Boghos became Paul, Manase became Mac, Elmas became Pearl, Azniv became Agnes" (210).

Name changes, although very prevalent,[65] were hotly debated among Armenians. While the representatives of the Armenian political parties placed much emphasis on the preservation of national identity and were against name changing, the more pro-assimilationist factions in the community, usually the Protestant affiliated circles and their periodicals (like *Gotchnag*), encouraged the changing and modification of Armenian names to make them easier for American pronunciation. Name changing, therefore, was not a universal practice among Armenians. Some Armenians still preserved their Armenian names, some just Americanized their first names and some changed their entire names to make no obvious connection to their previous Armenian names (Mirak 1983, 179). Some of the brothers of the above mentioned Seropians in Fresno, for example, Americanized only their first names – John (Hovhannes), George (Kevork) Jacob (Hagop). They were able to develop into very successful businessmen through discrimination and prejudice which often pushed them downhill and made them climb the hill over and over[66] (cf. Bulbulian 2000, 22-26; Mirak 1983, 105-22). To rephrase Robert Mirak (2014, 37), it seems the Americanized names helped in climbing "a fewer hills."[67] In line with the same argument, Bulbulian (2000, 18) also recorded that the first Armenians who were

[65] Anglicizing or Americanizing names was not a particular characteristic of the Armenian immigrant group in the United States. Among other early immigrants to the United States, many adopted American names, and some of them even became quite famous Americans. In her article on "Assimilation or Transnationalism? Conceptual Models of the Immigrant Experience in America" the author, Silvia Pedraza (2006, 42-43) brings number of examples of Hollywood stars, who had changed their names.

[66] In one of the sections of his book on Fresno Armenians Bulbulian (2000, 22-26) describes how discrimination and prejudice against Armenians often caused major inconveniences and losses to the Seropians' businesses. But despite the hardships, the brothers were able to become quite successful and prominent in Fresno Country.

[67] In rare instances, some first generation Armenians could succeed without having to change their names. Varaztad Kazanjian, an immigrant from the Ottoman Empire, who started from the Worcester "wire mill," as many of Armenians, managed to graduate from Harvard Dental School, joined Harvard Medical Unit in World War I as a surgeon, and became "a world famous plastic surgeon" in the 1930s (Federal Writers 1937, 38).

able to join American social or country clubs or service organizations had non-Armenian names. Yet even after changing names, the school age children of immigrants often felt the prejudice for their unpopular last names. In the autobiographical history of his family, Mirak (2014, 100-101) recalls how he would often say his last name was "Smith," and how he felt uncomfortable when his mother Artemis spoke Armenian in front of his "Anglo friends."

In significant ways, the everyday confrontation with discrimination and prejudice had impacted not only the regional/compatriotic identities, but also the second generation's attitude towards their Armenian background. Dwelling between two worlds – an Armenian (whether Kharberdts'i, Mushets'i, Bitlists'i) at home and an American at school, and in their attempts to overcome the inferiority complex in a larger discriminatory context, the second-generation Armenians found different ways of dealing with the problem. Some tried to forget their Armenian names completely; some rejected anything related to Armenians, even food and clothing; some avoided mentioning any relations to Armenians. Yet there were others, who just did not know what to do and suffered in retrospect: "The children, the poor children! We were torn in half by the conflicting demands of our Armenian homes and our American environment" (John Hagopian's recollection quoted in Mirak 1983, 161; cf. Hagopian 1984; Waldstreicher 1989, 80-1). Embarrassment for demonstrating their ethnic traits, embarrassment for their parents' not speaking and understanding English, embarrassment for being made interpreters of their parents for bargaining goods in markets,[68] which created a negative attitude towards

[68] In one of the chapters of his book, Mirak (1983, 162) discusses several examples of Armenian children, who felt embarrassed for their parents, because they often would take them to markets as interpreters and would ask them to bargain prices. The non-Armenian shopkeepers perceived the bargaining as cheating and "a desire to rob the shopkeepers" of their last cents. In such situation, the children blamed their parents for being "foreigners and old-fashioned."

Armenians, all these made the second generation more prone to assimilation and Americanization.

Peer pressure, in addition to the official curriculum in American public schools, made a huge impact on the Americanization of the children of immigrants. Despite the pressing atmosphere, sometimes for the lack of alternative, but quite often due to the desire to help their children integrate and advance in American society, most Armenian immigrant parents voluntarily chose to send their children to American public schools.[69] Public schooling with its Americanizing mission and instruction exclusively in English made the schools important agencies of melting the Armenian children into the American pot. As Mirak's (1983, 161) observation confirms, "public schools and their teachers taught impressionable youngsters that the preservation of Armenian names and Old World customs and ideas was both totally wrong and un-American." Both formal education (public Americanization) and informal social and peer pressure in public schools made the school-age Armenian children not only question their Armenian identities, but also in their efforts of becoming an American to often actively reject their Armenian background (private Americanization). William Saroyan provided a vivid account of how immigrant children felt in American public schools:

> The kids of immigrants … are quickly made aware of a number of attitudes held by others about them, mainly that they are not the equals of Americans… First there was a nickname for each of group that amounted to an insult, not so much because of the nickname itself, but for the contempt with which it was frequently flung at a member of the group not only by angered members of other groups, but also by adults and teachers themselves. It was so bad that simply to refer to a boy by his nationality, as an Armenian, for instance, became the equivalent of an expression of contempt and, of course, an insult. … It was soon so undesirable to be what you were that many boys and girls wished to God they were something else, and even tried to pretend that they were actually not Armenian, for instance, but Persian. Or they couldn't wait

[69] Jenny Phillips (1989, 109) provides the recollection of an Armenian immigrant worker, which demonstrates how ordinary people working at factories were not happy with their status and wanted their children to be more successful. According to this account, after the woman was praised by her boss for being a good worker and the boss expressed hope that someday her children would work at the factory, she replied: "I hope I never see the day when my children have to do this kind of work."

> to get out of school, and out of town, so that they could forget what an unfortunate thing it was to be who they were (Saroyan quoted in Mirak 1983, 273).[70]

The negative experience of childhood often made the second-generation not teach their children about their Armenian heritage at all.

Armenian families, churches and other formal and informal Armenian communal institutions, thus, mostly lost their role in the New World as agencies of identity formation to the American public schools. In close-knit Armenian neighborhoods, as in Worcester or Fresno, the presence of those institutions significantly prolonged the process of assimilation. The Armenian neighborhoods, churches (both Protestant and Apostolic), coffeehouses, political party clubs, and informal Armenian schooling[71] certainly provided places for intermingling and socialization for Armenians arriving from various regions of the Ottoman Empire. In such places, different and sometimes mutually unintelligible dialects came together, even though many literature Armenians could communicate in Western Armenian.[72] Church attendance or community participation, however, were secondary compared to the primary concern of all immigrants to integrate in the New World. Number of other factors made church or Armenian school attendance even repelling for the children of immigrants. Even if some children attended Armenian evening or one-day schools "because of parental insistence," the classes in the

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[70] Some Armenian children lacking working knowledge of English were even placed in schools for individuals with mental disorders (Hagopian 1997).

[71] Instruction of the Armenian language, geography, culture and religion was usually held in Armenian evening schools adjacent to an Armenian church. There were no full-time Armenian day schools in the Untied States until the 1960s. Some communities organized after school Armenian classes. With the lack of trained professionals, usually local priests and some learned women volunteered as teachers (cf. Mirak 1983, 275-76; Shemmassian 2011, 214).

[72] Armenians coming from different Ottoman provinces spoke different dialects, which in some cases were mutually unintelligible. Armenians of Musa Dagh, for example, spoke a dialect called *Kistilig,* (the language of Christians), and many of them were ignorant of the standard Western Armenian, which was based on the Armenian dialect of Constantinople, and became the literary standard of the Ottoman Armenians in the nineteenth century (Shemmassian 2011, 212).

afternoon or during the weekends, taught by non-professional teachers and priests, were not enough for learning or transmitting the language (cf. Malcom c1919, 101-2; Mirak 1983, 376). Learning Armenian, on the other hand, was not of the utmost priority for the children of immigrants, compared to what they had to accomplish in American public schools. Under peer pressure, rather than learning the common mutually intelligible standard of Western or any Armenian, the Armenian kids preferred learning and communicating in English. This was even encouraged by some Armenian institutions. Some Armenian language periodicals urged the Armenian immigrants to learn English as a "key to success." Articles appearing in various periodicals suggested to socialize with Americans and to attend evening classes in order to learn and improve their command of the English language (Mirak 1983, 273). Evening classes for immigrants, provided in most of the communities with significant immigrant population, were not mandatory either, but the perspective of integration and success made them more appealing. In the long run, therefore, the effects of living in concentrations or scattered in big cities were paradoxically the same. While living dispersed and scattered was not conducive for the retention of an Armenian language, identity or a particular lifestyle, living in large concentrations also eventually led to the assimilation of the second and third generation Armenians.

Acquiring naturalization was seen as an important step towards the full and final inclusion into American life. Compared to other immigrants in the United States, the naturalization of the first-generation Armenians and their children was relatively easier. In contrast to the Chinese or Japanese, the Armenians were spared any federal level structural discrimination and could avoid significant problems for naturalization in the United States. Generally being considered as whites, sometimes through litigation and other measures, Armenians were able to secure their

rights for naturalization (cf. Mirak 1983, 282-83; Shneider 2011, 224). Since 1909 if the Armenians could meet the requirement of basic proficiency in English, receiving naturalization and citizenship would not be a major challenge.[73] As long as they could channel their efforts in the directions, which were not much affected by discriminatory policies, as long as they could negotiate their professional aspirations, they could quite successfully establish and develop in their places of settlement after receiving citizenship.

Acquiring American citizenship, however, often meant more than a mere change of nationality. Mirak (1983, 280) quotes George Mardigian saying:

> I wish I could make you understand what it is like not to be an American - not to have been an American all your life - and then suddenly, with the words of a man in flowing robes, to be one, for that moment, and forever after. Think of it … One moment, you belong with your fathers to a million dead yesterdays. The next, you belong with America to a million unborn tomorrows.

The American citizenship meant not only becoming formally affiliated with the American state, but also signified the passage from an immigrant to an American. It was a certain junction point between the Armenian past, "a million dead yesterdays," and American future - "a million unborn tomorrows." Acquiring citizenship also meant being able to participate in the political and public life. During various campaigns, even Armenian language newspapers provided extensive coverage of American events, encouraged Armenians to actively follow local politics and to vote for a certain candidate (Mirak 1983, 283-86). Acquiring naturalization, thus, was not only formally, but also in essence turning the Armenians into full-fledged Americans.

[73] In a brief episode in 1909 Armenians were declared as belonging to the "Asian race" by the United States Bureau of Naturalization and therefore not eligible for naturalization. The governmental action, however, was ruled out by the United States Circuit Court of Massachusetts, which established that the Armenians belonged to the "white or Caucasian race" and were eligible for naturalization (Mirak 1983, 282; cf. Waldstreicher 1989, 62-3)

After the destruction of their hometowns and villages in the Ottoman Empire during WWI and the loss of hope for return to their ancestral lands, the diverse group of Armenian immigrants sought ways to build a future, where they and their children could succeed in the New World. The new immigrants arriving in America following WWI, who mostly joined their families and relatives, adjusted to the lifestyles and patters of life in America. Despite the proliferation of Armenian ethnic organizations in the context of waning Americanization in the 1920s and 1930s, most Armenians engaged in voluntary Americanization. As the *Federal Writers* concluded their study on Armenians in Massachusetts in the mid-1930s, in all respects the "American-born Armenians" looked and behaved like Americans. Unlike their "foreign-born" parents, they hardly used native language, were fluent in English and there was "nothing foreign in their customs and habits" (Federal Writers 1937, 144-5) Interviews conducted by *Federal Writers* revealed that the "old generation" Armenian editors, priests, writers, professional men were concerned about the fact that it was impossible to keep the second generation Armenian. The attempts of the elders to organize the American-born Armenians into Armenian societies "conceived by and similar to those of the immigrant generation," remained unrealized (*ibid.,* 145). Apart from arguing for the success of Americanization by choice, Federal Writer's report of 1937 was very important in terms of its tolerance towards Armenian ethnic organizations. Interviews and research conducted by the Writers, all of them of American origin, made them aware of the Armenian political and other organizations operating in the Untied States. Yet by completing the work, the authors did not have any intention to call for any coercive action against ethnic Armenian organizations. Involvement in ethnic Armenian organizations and institutions, especially churches, was no longer seen as detrimental to the success of Americanization by choice.

Armenians in France: From Apatride Refugees to Frenchmen

Unlike the Untied States, where the number of Armenians was already growing in the last decades of the nineteenth century, the largest flow of Armenians to France was directly caused by the genocide and deportations in the Ottoman Empire. Prior to WWI, Paris hosted just a small Armenian community,[74] some Armenians had settled in Marseille as well, but the Armenian presence in France became visible after 1920s with the arrival of sizable numbers of refugees from various parts of the Ottoman Empire. The actual figure of the Armenian refugees in the 1920s is hard to estimate, but various accounts put it between forty and seventy thousand.[75] Large numbers of Armenians arriving in France were genocide survivors and were placed in refugee camps by the French authorities. Marseille, the largest port city in southern France, was the first to accept the Armenian refugees between 1922 and 1928. Four hundred survivors

[74] The Armenian community in Paris consisted mostly of wealthy, merchant class, political activists, and visiting students from Constantinople, most of whom usually returned home after completing their university studies (Abrahamyan 1967, 155-71; Ch'ormisian 1975, 22-47; Ter-Minassian 1997, 50-6; 61-4).

[75] *Haratch* (1925-2009), the most renowned Armenian newspaper in France, for example, estimated that there were about 4,000 Armenians in 1921, which by 1925-26 had increased tenfold, becoming around 40-45 thousand. 20,000 lived in Marseille (*Haratch* October 16, 1925; April 4, 7, 1926). Based on some Armenian sources, Abrahamyan (1967, 167) suggests that in 1925 the number of Armenians was about 50,000, which by 1936 had become 70,000. The estimates provided by the French Office of the Protection of Refugees and *Apatrides* in the article published recently in *Le Monde* on Dec. 22, 2011, suggest yet another number: "Entre les années 1920 et 1950, la France a accueilli 350 000 réfugiés et 12 % d'entre eux étaient des Arméniens [about 42,000 – V.S.], indique l'Office français de protection des réfugiés et apatrides (OFPRA). La diaspora arménienne est principalement concentrée à Marseille, qui fut la grande de ville de débarquement des Arméniens à partir des années 1920, ainsi que dans les régions Rhône-Alpes et Ile-de-France." Despite some possible exaggerations, the inconsistency between the figures provided in Armenian sources for the 1920s and 1930s and the OFPRA figures of the 1920s and1950s suggests that the OFPRA did not count all Armenians arriving in France, but only the refugees (who lived in camps). Various accounts suggest that France hosted large number of Armenian orphans, as well as Armenian workers, who arrived to France with employment contracts and moved to their places of employment immediately after disembarking at Marseille (cf. Ch'ormisian 1975, 67; Belmont 2004, 31-41; Boghossian 2005, 64; Mouradian and Ter-Minassian 2003, 624; Ter Minassian 1997, 61-69).

escaping the Smyrna catastrophe[76] disembarked at Marseille in November 1922. Shortly afterwards, thousands of survivors arrived in Marseille from temporary camps in the Middle East and Greece (Le Tallec 2001, 43; Hovanessian 1992, 68; Belmonte 2004, 33-5). A small number of Armenians came with work contracts and, rather than staying in Marseille, they were transported to their places of employment in the industrial centers of Rhône Alpes (Lyon, Valence, Saint-Étienne, Saint-Chamond, Grenoble) and the Paris region, along the Marseille-Paris railroad. Many others passed through France on their way to North and South Americas (Boghossian 2009, 59; Dallak'yan 2004, 220, Hovanessian 2003, 355-56; Ritter 2007, 18). After the introduction of immigration quotas in the United States in 1924, the outflow of Armenians from France to the United States came to an end.

Most Armenian refugees, arriving in France without prearranged appointments, stayed in Marseille, in the barracks of the colonial military and the French workforce during the war (Belmonte 2004, 34). Camps *Oddo, Mirabeau* and *Victor Hugo* hosted the largest number of Armenian refugees (cf. Ter-Minassian 1997, 62). Compared to what the Armenians had experienced in the Ottoman Empire, for most even the miserable camp conditions were incomparably better. Life in the camps was secure and therefore more preferable. Clustered together in camps many refugees were reluctant to move. They preferred to stay enclosed in their communities, as they were ignorant of French, local customs and laws. Many Armenians turned down temporary employment at distant places, away from family, friends and their camp

[76] Following WWI, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, the revived Turkish army attacked Smyrna in 1922, which had been under Greek occupation since May 1919. The campaign exterminated the Christian population in Smyrna (predominantly Greeks and Armenians) and set the town on fire. Thousands of Greeks and Armenians fell victim, and many thousands fled the fire, seeking refuge in various European countries (cf. Walker 1990, 267, 345-46)

community life (Belmont 2004, 40). In view of shortages in the workforce, the French authorities, however, had different plans for the Armenians.

The French Context: Immigration Policies, Naturalization and Social-Political Conditions in France

In most theories and histories of nations and nationalism, the French Revolution of 1789 represents a significant point of reference, which provided a "rupture between the Old and New times" (Anderson 2006, 192). France has become the exemplary model of a nation for the dynastic and imperial states in the nineteenth century for the promotion of "popular sovereignty and constitutional rule" and claims on a "single national language and ethnically homogeneous population" (Eley and Suny 1996, 19-20). The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen in 1789, the First French Constitution of 1791 and the National Convention of 1792 inaugurated the state-imposed nation-building in France. In the course of the following century, the government's nation-building efforts produced, in David Bell's words, the "cult of the nation in France" (Bell 2001, 7, 143-73). As early as in the 1790s, in their centralization attempts, the Jacobins began the campaign of eradicating local *patois* (dialects) and making the French language uniform throughout the republic. Largely unsuccessful because of the lack of funds and organizational resources, the cultural-linguistic uniformity of France remained to be achieved in the times of the Third Republic at the end of the nineteenth century (cf. Bell 2001, 175-77; Agulhon 2001, 61). As Eugene Weber (1976, xii, cf. 67-94) also demonstrated with much supporting evidence in his seminal work *Peasants into Frenchmen*, "very significant portions of

rural France continued to live in a world of their own until near the end of the nineteenth century." By the twentieth century, loyalty to the French nation had come to dominate over and replace regional loyalties and identities; French language had become dominant and the usage of regional patois had significantly declined, largely thanks to the effectiveness of the two coercive institutions – schools and the army[77] (cf. *ibid.,* 84-85, 302). In the course of a century after the First French Revolution, thus, French republicanism had developed strong traditions of nation-building and overcoming differences through coercive assimilation.

In parallel, debates on whether a French person should be defined by descent (*jus sanguinis*) or by birth on the French soil (*jus soli*)[78] went on in the course of the nineteenth century.[79] These debates continued until the law of 1889 established the principle of *jus soli* in France (Weil 2008, 30-53; Brubaker 1992, 85-106; Lewis 2011, 233). The French Nationality Law of 1889 provided naturalization to the third-generation descendants of immigrants through *jus soli*: children born to parents, who were born in France, were automatically attributed French citizenship upon their birth (Brubaker 1992, 85; Weil 2008, 194). In order to grant French citizenship, the French authorities thereby made sure, first of all, that immigrants would be assimilated and transformed into Frenchmen in their hearts and souls. If in the US, the desire to acquire citizenship was

[77] Weber (1976, 295-97) argues that until the 1890s, the army was not operating as a massive instrument of assimilation, although systematic conscription was in force. The war against Prussia in 1870-71 gradually changed the attitude towards the army and it became "an agency for emigration, acculturation, and in the final analysis, civilization, an agency as potent in its way as the schools" (*ibid.* 302)

[78] As Rogers Brubaker (1992, 123) states, "*Jus soli* defines the citizenry as a territorial community and *jus sanguinis* as a community of descent."

[79] The First Constitution contained a definition of a French person, according to which the French were "those who were born in France to a French father; those who, born in France to a foreign father, have established their domicile in the kingdom; those who, born in a foreign country to a French father, have returned to establish residency in France and have sworn the civic oath" (quoted in Weil 2008, 14). The provisions of the First Constitution were subjected to certain modifications in the subsequent Constitutions of 1793, 1795, 1799, and in the Civil Code in 1803, which established *jus sanguinis* as the "*exclusive criterion* for attributing the quality of being French at birth" (Weil 2008, 14-29).

perceived as an incentive for voluntary Americanization, naturalization in France was perceived to be the ultimate outcome of the process of Frenchification (*francisation*).

The French authorities made sure that immigrants could acquire French citizenship and, thus, become equal to French citizens only after they had fully assimilated into French society. The parallel processes of nation-building through the assimilation of foreigners (*étrangers*) and defining the French based on *jus soli,* tried to make certain that the immigrant generations would have completely assimilated before becoming French nationals. The French policy of assimilation, which Baumann (2010, 46) calls "de-ethnicization, re-ethnicization of citizenship," implied that in order to be successfully integrated, immigrants were expected to abandon their ethnic or other communitarian identities, "to learn a self-standardizing national language and the corresponding hegemonic values, and then to compete with all others admitted as fellow neo-nationals" (Baumann 2010, 45-9).

The abandonment of ethnic or communitarian identities in the French context concerned religion as well. In contrast to the United States, where Protestantism was officially endorsed in coercive Americanization policies, the French did not privilege any of the religions. The principle of *laïcité* strongly pushed religious activism to the private sphere and separated French identity from all forms of religious affiliation. The law of 1905 on the separation of church and state, embodying the principle of *laïcité,* stipulated that the French Republic did not "recognize, pay or subsidize any religion." Churches and other religious institutions, if they wanted to own and

maintain buildings, develop networks and conduct worship, had to be registered with the state as cultural associations (*association culturelles*) under the 1901 law[80] (cf. Schwartz 2007, 15-6).

In the immediate aftermath of WWI, France became one of the principal countries of immigration in the world and even surpassed the United States (Mauco 1933, 765; Lewish 2011, 232). The shortage of workforce necessitated the recruiting of foreign workers, which made France a very attractive destination for large numbers of war refugees and other immigrants. In 1933, a report prepared by Georges Mauco, one of the leading experts on immigration and population in the 1930s,[81] sheds an important light on the issues of the control of immigration and the problems France faced vis-à-vis the large influx of immigrants. The number of immigrants, as reported by Mauco (1933, 767), doubled from 1921 until 1930, increasing from about 1.5 million to about 3 million (7% of the entire population of France).[82] In desperate need of workforce, the French authorities could not stop immigration, but assimilating the immigrants was becoming a pressing issue. Given the diversity of the countries of origin,[83] the assimilation of immigrants was harder "owing to their even wider difference in customs, culture and language" (*ibid.,* 776).[84]

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[80] Article 18 of the 1905 law clarified on religious institutions: "Associations formed to meet expenses, maintenance and public exercise of worship shall be established in accordance with Article 5 and following of Title I of the Act of July 1, 1901…" ("Loi du 9 décembre 1905 concernant la séparation des Eglises et de l'Etat." http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006070169anddateTexte=20080306. Accessed September 26, 2014)

[81] Reportedly, Mauco had a significant role in shaping the debates on immigration issues in France (Burges 2011, 167-68)

[82] Because France accepted scores of unskilled workers and because most new immigrants were employed in the "roughest, dirtiest and most dangerous trades," the country had been often accused of using its immigrants as "white niggers"(Mauco 1933, 766).

[83] Immigrants were arriving to France mostly from Central European countries, Africa and the former Ottoman domains (*ibid.*, 774)

[84] As recorded by Mauco, in some parts of the Mediterranean region, where the immigrants constituted large numbers, there was a tendency to replace the native French by their ethnic languages. "It was hardly an exaggeration," wrote Mauco in his report, "for the Italian consul to say to the mayor of Marseilles: "There are two mayors here, you and I" (*ibid.*, 776).

The need for quicker absorption of the growing numbers of post-WWI immigrants forced the French authorities to liberalize some of the requirements of the 1889 Law and relax the conditions of naturalization for the immigrants in 1927. After the revision of the 1889 law, the number of naturalized foreigners significantly increased (Weil 2008, 68). Compared to other immigrants, Armenians, however, did not benefit from the relaxation of the naturalization laws because of their uncertain status as stateless refugees.

Political Inclusion of Armenians in France

Armenian refugees and immigrants constituted no exception for the French assimilationist policies. They were seen as foreigners, similar to other immigrants, who would have to pass through the process of acculturation in order to integrate into French society (cf. Mandel 2003, 13; 21-22). But Armenians, along with some other categories of political refugees – mostly Russians and Jews, had attracted the attention of the French policy makers by the end of the 1930s as cases to be treated in a special way. Armenians were not just immigrants, but refugees without proper documentation. The Ottoman Empire, the country of their origin and the country, which could provide some documentation, no longer existed. Along with other political refugees, Armenians were generalized in a category "…whose adaptation and assimilation was particularly difficult."[85]

[85] As Mauco reported, forced migration producing refugees was different form voluntary immigration of workers. Refugees tended to regroup in overcrowded cities, where they "presented certain problem for competition and the neural centers of the country" (quoted in Weil 1994, 21).

The uncertain status of Armenians in France made them even more vulnerable. Compared to other immigrants, Armenians often received more discriminatory treatment. Even if some found employment or had arrived with work contracts, they were still often treated unequally at work. Predominantly with peasant backgrounds, these unskilled workers were put under the same rough conditions, as the other immigrants, but were often paid significantly less than their coworkers (Ch'ormisian 1975, 67-9; Abrahamyan 1967, 168-69; Ter-Minassian 1997, 63). The growing number of Armenian refugees in miserable conditions, on the other hand, led to stereotyping, discrimination and hostility against them. In 1923, the mayor of Marseille, Siméon Flaissières specifically targeted Armenians among "*des peuples d'Orient,"* warning that 40,000 Armenians were *en route* to France, who were alien to local customs, ignorant of rules of hygiene and brought diseases. The mayor called on the French government to strictly prohibit the entry of these *"lamentables troupeaux humains"* to France, because they were a big threat to the country (quoted in Belmont 2004, 38).

Regardless of their refugee status, similar to other immigrants, Armenians were required to acquire identification cards from the respective consulates of their countries. These special IDs had to "very obviously" mention the nationality of the holder, his civil status, photographic description, profession and contain his signature (cf. Noiriel 1996, 61). If the immigrants of other nationalities settling in France could acquire identity cards through the consulates of their respective countries of origin, the Armenian refugees did not have any consulate to represent their interests in France. The matter was complicated further when the French authorizes refused to recognize "Nationalité arménienne." In an interview to *Haratch,* an officer representing the Police Bureau of Paris clarified the point that after the Sovietization of Armenia and the

foundation of the Republic of Turkey, given that Armenia had become divided between "Russia and Turkey," the Armenians born in Turkey were seen as Turkish nationals, and those born in Russia were seen as Russian nationals (*Haratch,* August 2, 1925). The officer suggested the Armenians to apply to the Soviet or Turkish consulates for identity cards. As the editor of *Haratch* commented in the footnote, neither option would work for the Armenians. Turkey no longer recognized those who left the country without acquiring the passports of the Republic, and the Soviet Union granted passports only to the former residents of Russia. And even if some Armenians could acquire the Soviet passports, they would not be able to cross borders to other countries, which had not recognized the Soviet Union[86] (*Haratch*, August 2, 1925). Because of the unfeasibility of receiving identity cards either from the Soviet or Turkish consulates, both due to personal[87] and structural constraints, the Armenians were left "under no particular state's jurisdiction" (Mandel 2003, 21). The alternative for the stateless (*apatride*) Armenians was the acquisition of Nansen passports.

The Nansen passports, named after Fridtjof Nansen, the High Commissioner of the Refugees (1921-1930) in the League of Nations, were initially designed in 1922 as identity cards for the Russian refugees after the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, whose return to their former country of residence was impossible. Following the appeal made by the chairman of the Armenian National Delegation, Gabriel Noradungian (Gabriel Noratunkian), the League of Nations extended the jurisdiction of Nansen passports to include the *apatride* Armenian refugees as well (Le Tallec 2001, 38-9; Melik'set'yan 1985, 144). Under the nationality line the Nansen documents stated in French and in the language of the issuer country: "personnes d'origine russe ou arménienne

[86] France recognized the Soviet Union in 1924.
[87] Some editorials of *Haratch* in 1925 suggest that there was a great resentment at least on the part of the Armenian elites at being identified as Turks.

n'ayant acquis aucune autre nationalité." During the economic crisis in the early 1930s, while many immigrants were forced out of the country, Nansen passports helped their holders to avoid persecution for they had no place to return (cf. Hovanessian 1992, 67-8; Ter Minassian 1997, 69). Nansen passports, however, were of no help for acquiring naturalization. The naturalization laws in France did not have any provisions for refugees. Often reluctant to approve naturalization requests filed by Armenians, the French authorities were concerned first of all for their slower rates of assimilation. The 1927 liberalization of naturalization policies, as reported by Mauco (1933, 77), contributed to the assimilation of some naturalized foreigners. Yet, the French authorities were reluctant to grant French citizenship to immigrants, who could barely articulate anything intelligible in French. Rather than providing naturalization to immigrants in the 1930s, the French integrationist and assimilationist policies gradually expanded to incorporate political refugees, including the *apatride* Armenians, in the education system and the army.

The reforms of the education system, introduced by the Jules Ferry[88] administration back in the 1880s, created a nationwide primary school system accessible to all citizens of France at no cost. Yet these "free, compulsory, secular and intensely nationalistic … engines of assimilation," as Brubaker (1992, 15) described them, were not enforced on foreigners and refugees. Similarly, the introduction of universal conscription in 1889 left foreigners out of "the school of the nation" (Nord 2011, 48). Without having thoroughly worked out strategies for the integration of foreigners and immigrants, the French authorities often had to improvise on the level of public policies, revising policies towards the political refugees, such as the Russians, Armenians or the Jews in the 1930s only gradually and sometimes spontaneously (cf. Weil 1994, 16-9; Lewis 2011, 232-33). After their accession to power in 1936, the *Front Populaire* and the Léon Blum

[88] Jules Ferry was the minister of public instruction and later the prime minister of France (Nord 2011, 48).

administration initiated a series of social reforms, which significantly increased the number of immigrants' children in French *école communale* – i.e. primary schools - and made secondary education free and accessible for the poor and the children of immigrants. By 1937, most Armenian day schools, which had operated first within camps, then in the proximity of Armenian concentrations in Greater Marseille and the Paris region, were shut down; some, for not having a government issued license, others through various regulations passed by the government, which encouraged enrollment in *école communale* (cf. Boghossian 2009, 251).

Compulsory military service was also enforced on the holders of Nansen passports by the end of the 1930s. As reported by Arshag Chobanian (Arshak Ch'obanian) in December 1937, the French law on military service, voted several years ago, was finally implemented to include the holders of Nansen passports between the ages of 20 and 21.[89] A few years later, on the eve of WWII, Armenians with Nansen passports between ages 20 to 48 were massively mobilized to the French army (Ch'ormisian 1975, 177-78; Le Tallec 2001, 156-57; Belmonte 2004, 99). While according to the provisions of the Treaty of Geneva of 1928 recruits with Nansen passports could wear the uniforms of the host-countries, the military records of the Armenian recruits during WWII contained the following line in red ink: "Soldat n'ayant pas la nationalité française" (Le Tallec 2001, 156). The discrimination of the *apatrides* in the army raised the discontent of Armenians in many regions - Lyon, Angoulême, Issy-les-Moulineaux and elsewhere. Some Armenian organizations, such as the Central Committee for Armenian Refugees,[90] filed petitions to various agencies demanding French citizenship for the Armenian

[89] Holders of Nansen passports who refused to serve in the army were required to leave the country within a year (Chobanian 1937, 5-6, 93)
[90] After the treaty of Lausanne, the Armenian National Delegation reorganized itself into the Central Committee for Armenian Refugees (see next chapter).

recruits in the French army (cf. Ch'ormisian 1975, 178; Chobanian 1937, 94; Le Tallec 2001, 157). Yet, it was not until the aftermath of WWII that the *apatride* Armenians were finally granted naturalization, after the Armenian recruits in the French army had demonstrated their loyalty to France.

Dispersion of Armenians in France and the Compatriotic Settlements

Two factors determined the dispersion and settlement of Armenians in France. The first factor was the "brutal proletarization," as some scholars describe the process of involuntary transition of Armenians from peasants into hard-laborers. It dispersed the Armenians throughout the sites of their future workplaces across the country (cf. Ananian 1999, 36; Boudjikanian-Keuroghlian 1978, 27-34; Lauras 2006, 76-7; Ter Minassian 1997, 32). Chain migration through family networks and compatriotic ties was the second factor, which determined the concentration of Armenians originating from the same village in the Ottoman Empire in certain areas. Former refugees, who by the end of the 1920s had become mostly employed in big industrial and agricultural regions of France, tended to take their families to their new places of residence and helped their compatriots to find employment in the same industries or branches of agriculture and settle in those regions as well[91] (cf. Boudjikanian-Keuroghlian 1978, 35, 163; Le Tallec 2001, 75; Hovanessian 2003, 366). Similar to the dispersion pattern in the United States, Armenians originating from the same town or village in the Ottoman Empire tended to regroup

[91] These middlemen, who arranged employment for their family members or compatriots, were often called *simsars* (broker in Turkish) (Le Tallec 2001, 75)

in various cities, towns, quarters or neighborhoods.[92] Family and compatriotic ties provided with invaluable trust and fraternity relations, very productive for developing self-help communities in a foreign country.[93]

Compatriotic ties were quite predominant, but in rare cases religious affiliation also played some role in the distribution and resettlement of Armenians. As observed by Lauras (2006, 112), Armenians arriving in Saint-Étienne or Saint-Chamond were predominantly the adherents of the Catholic rite. Quite often, though, compatriotic and confessional affiliations were intertwined. Armenian refugees from Amassia, Afyonkarahisar and Ankara settling in Arnouville-lès-Gonesse were predominantly Catholic, making this suburb of Paris a concentration of Catholic Armenians. Those from Yozgat, Adapazar, Izmit, Seleuz, Tokat, Stanoz moving to Issy-les-Moulineaux were predominantly Evangelical Armenians, and they eventually made Issy-les-Moulineaux an important hub of the Evangelical Armenian community in the Paris region (Map 2.5) (Ananyan 1999, 132; Ch'ormisian 1975, 277; Ter-Minassian 1997, 66).

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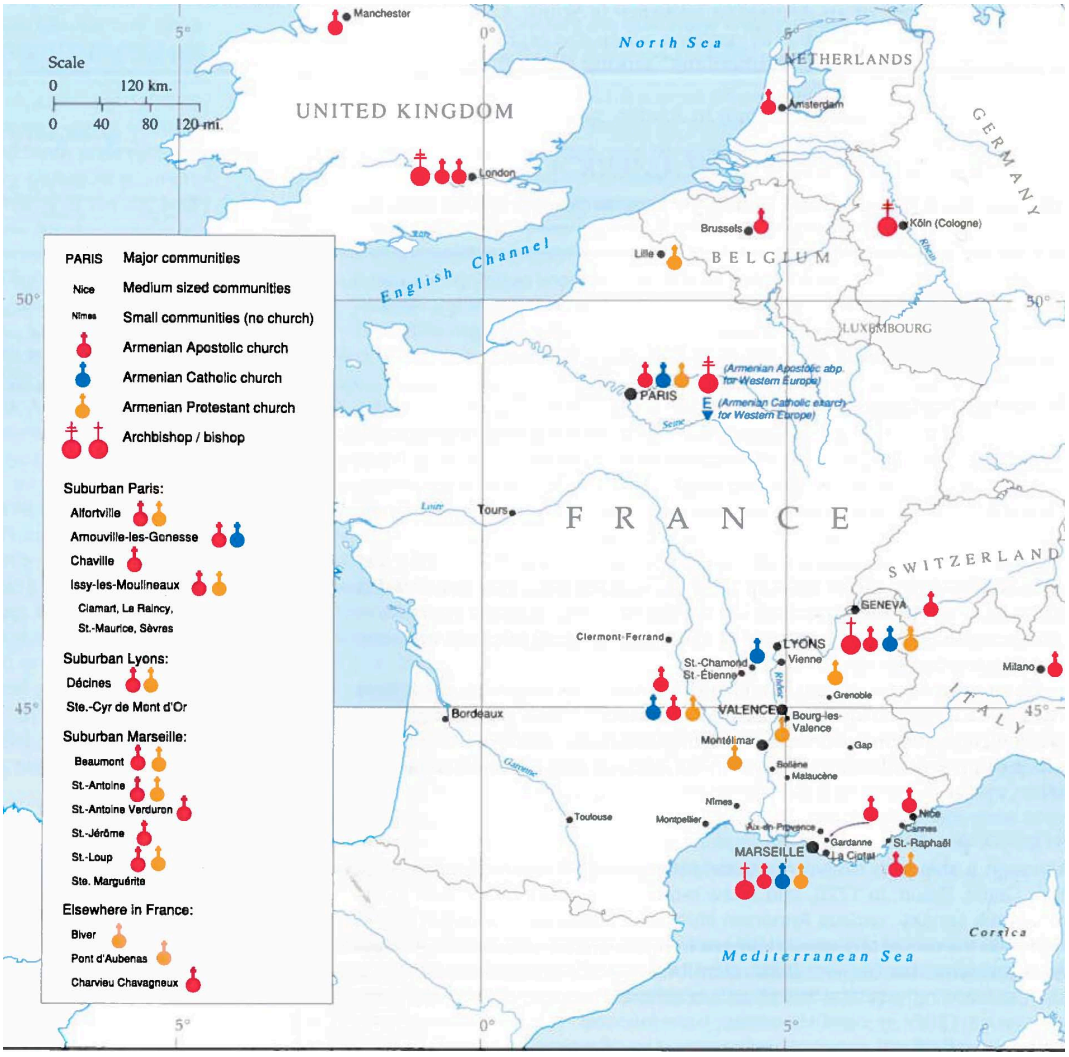
[92] In the case of Marseille, Armenians originating from Sebastia (Sivas), Tomarza, and Aslanbek settled in Campagne Perrier (Saint Antoine), those from Yozgat and Kharberd - in Campagne Frèze; Saint Jerome attracted Armenians from Afion, Izmir and Sivri Hissar; Armenians from Cilicia and Tigranakert regrouped in Saint Loup; and those originating from Ankara settled in Campagne Ripert. Other suburbs in Marseille followed a similar pattern of resettlement, yet in some cases the suburbs did not have just one particular compatriotic coloring. Beaumont, for example, which was much closer to the town, attracted Armenians originating from many different parts of the Ottoman Empire - Urfa, Van, Constantinople, Cilicia, Butania and elsewhere (Boghossian 2009, 73-4; Ch'ormisian 1975, 325). However, as Ch'ormisian (1975, 323) observes, even when Armenians originating from different villages and towns moved to the same suburb of Marseille, they created their small compatriotic quarters. Armenian dispersion outside Marseille mostly followed the same pattern. In the Rhône Alpes and Paris regions, Armenians from Malatia tended to concentrate in Saint-Chamond; those originating from the Tchenkiler region regrouped in Alfortville; those from Yozgat, Adapazar, Izmit, Seleuz, Tokat, Stanoz villages settled in Issy-les-Moulineaux (Ananian 1999, 37; Artin and Morel-Deladalle 2007, 126; Ch'ormisian 1975, 80, 268; Lauras 2006, 44-6; Hovanessian 1992, 60; Ter Minassian 1997, 66).

[93] Ch'ormisian's (1975, 322) account provides a clear image of how compatriotic ties were indispensable for the resettlement of Armenians from the camps: "Several families residing in Camp Oddo learn that 8-10 kilometers away from the town, in a village called Saint Antoine, a landowner by name *Perrier* sold part of his lands for a very cheap price. One Sunday they go there, see the lands lying on the slope of a woody hill, hanging on a canyon near the village, where one could get only by climbing. Could they build a house on that hill? After a minute of hesitation, dissatisfied with the living conditions in the camp and yearning for leaving the camp as soon as possible, they introduce themselves to the landowner and purchase a large piece of land in order to divide among themselves later. These are mostly former villagers from Sebastia, Yozgat, Tomarza, who are not afraid of [hard] work…"



Map 2-5. The Armenians in Western Europe
(Source: Hewsen 2001, 273, Map 272)

Compatriotic settlements often represented concentrations of quite different, yet still Armenian, linguistic-cultural settings. Local differences in dialect, habits, customs, and traditions created natural symbolic boundaries between Armenians originating from different parts of the Ottoman Empire. Some Armenian refugee groups were Turkophone, such as those coming from Ankara, Adana, Ayntab, Kayseri, in most cases adherents of the Catholic[94] and Protestant faiths (cf. Ch'ormisian 1975, 277; Ter-Minassian 1997, 74-5). Quite often local Armenian dialects were

[94] In an interview with *Haratch* on August 30, 1925, Father Bedros Kedijian (Petros Ketichian), a Catholic Armenian bishop, reported: "Despite the fact, that the significant part of our community are Turkophone, the sermons in our churches are in Armenian."

different from one another to such an extent that the speakers of one dialect could hardly understand the others.[95] Similar to the United States, within some compatriotic communities, intermarriage with "odars" (foreigner) originating from other towns or villages was strongly discouraged (cf. Boghossian 2009, 131). Symbolic group boundary making between "us" and "them" defined by differences in regional dialects, customs, habits, was very common among the first-generation Armenians in France, as well, although it was challenged by the centripetal tendencies of Armenian Church and other communal organizations.

The Founding of Armenian Churches in France

Contrary to the United States, the founding of the first Armenian Apostolic church in Paris predated the large influx of Armenian refugees for about two decades. The small Apostolic Armenian community residing in Paris at the turn of the century used to hold services in a local Protestant church, which they rented for services in Armenian. The founding of an Armenian church in Paris was initiated and commissioned by Alexander Mantashev (Mant'ashiants'), an Eastern Armenian oil magnate, who used to visit Paris quite often and participated in Armenian religious services at the rented Protestant church building. The construction of the *Cathedrale apostolique Saint-Jean-Baptiste* began in 1902 and finished in 1904 on rue Jean Goujon in downtown Paris (Ch'ormisian 1975, 85-86; Mouradian and Ter-Minassian 2003, 635). In 1927, the leaders of the church registered the *Association culturelle de l'Église Apostolique Arménienne de Paris et de la région parisienne* according to the French law of 1901, authorizing

[95] One of the interviewees of Martine Hovanessian in Issy-les-Moulineaux recalled that she could not understand any word in the dialect of Armenians originating from Stanoz (Yenikent). She thought that "their Armenian," meaning her dialect of Partizak was purer, more authentic and closer to the literary Armenian language (Hovanessian 1992, 60).

the creation of associations, and the law of 1905 on the separation of church and state. The Association aimed at meeting the spiritual needs of the Armenians in Paris and its regions by constructing more churches. The French government approved the "Religious Association" in 1927, and the church building became the property of the Association. The Association was based on membership and non-members could not participate in the church administration. Therefore, as Ch'ormisian noted, the church in Paris became "the property of several dozens of Parisian Armenians, generally of the wealthier people, who had settled in Paris before [WWI]" (Ch'ormisian 1975, 248-49).

The Armenian Church in Paris was nominally recognized as the seat of the Diocese of the Armenian Church in Europe since the 1900s under the jurisdiction of the Catholicosate of Ējmiatsin. Because of the absence of an established Armenian community in Paris before WWI this church acted as solely a religious institution, without having any other social functions (Ch'ormisian 1975, 85-8, 247). In the mid-1920s the Catholicos of the Armenian Church appointed Archbishop Grigoris Balakian (Grigoris Palak'ian) as his nuncio in Paris. Unable to come to terms with the Armenian notables in Paris, who controlled the church affairs, Balakian chose Marseille as the locus of his activities. He moved there in 1927 and actively embarked on Armenian church construction projects in the various suburbs of Marseille (Boghossian 2009, 84; Ch'ormisian 1975, 248-49, 314-15).

First churches were constructed in Marseille following the influx of Armenian refugees in the 1920s. While still at *Camp Oddo*, Armenians managed to develop their own camp administration, establish a small chapel and organize a school (Boghossian 2005, 74; Belmont

2004, 35-7). Similarly, a few other chapels appeared in the quarters of Marseille where Armenians constituted significant numbers (Boghossian 2005, 95-96). Shortly after the closing of Camp Oddo in 1927, Abp. Balakian initiated the construction of Armenian churches in all Armenian populated neighborhoods in Marseille and other Armenian settlements (Boghossian 2005, 102; 2009, 88-9; Ch'ormisian 1975, 314-5). Between 1926 and 1933, many Armenian apostolic and Evangelical churches were established in Marseille.[96]

For various reasons, most of the Armenian Apostolic chapels and churches did not register as *Associations culturelles* based on 1901 and 1905 laws (Boghossian 2005, 120). As in the past, the chapel-church acted not only as a place of worship, but also as a community center ("maison du people"), meeting the social, cultural and educational needs of the community. Adjacent to the chapels and churches, Armenians organized informal schooling to provide lessons in Armenian language and history, as well as the French language (cf. Belmont 2004, 62-76). According to Boghossian (2005, 216) there were about seven or eight Armenian Apostolic chapels and churches and ten Armenian day schools in Marseille in the 1930s. Although there were no legislative restrictions against running private schools "exclusively for foreign children residing in France," the law of 1886[97] and some special decrees issued by the Minister of Education established certain eligibility criteria for school instructors and defined daily hours of instruction in languages other than French. These measures significantly limited the possibilities

[96] Marseille currently hosts the largest number of Armenian churches in France. It has eight Armenian Apostolic, four Armenian Evangelical and one Armenian Catholic churches. The number of Apostolic, Evangelical or Catholic Armenian churches is significantly lower in other Armenian settlements in France. Paris (without the suburbs) and Lyon, for example, where the Armenian Apostolic population constitutes the majority compared to the Catholic and Protestant Armenians, have only one Armenian Apostolic Church.
[97] Full text of the law was published in *Journal Officiel de la Républic Française*, October 31, 1886.

of foreign language instruction in public and, to a lesser degree, in private schools.[98] Under such conditions, Armenians often disregarded state regulations and set up their own schools without obtaining a license, even if the school enrollment was numbered in the hundreds (cf. Boghossian 2005, 217).

The proliferation of Armenian churches, chapels, schools and other organizations was thanks to the efforts of the Armenian elites and activists; most Armenian refugees were not actively involved in community affairs. Sending children to Armenian schools was not a matter of primary concern for most Armenian parents as well. According to Boghossian's estimates (2005, 216), only one-third of the Armenian children attended Armenian schools and the other two-thirds attended French public schools. Similarly, as Belmonte's (2004, 78-9) study illustrates, the majority of Armenian school-age kids (6-8 years), who lived within an Armenian community in Saint-Loup, Marseille, attended French public schools, despite the fact that there were two Armenian schools in the proximity. There were many factors influencing this tendency, but most importantly it was due to the Armenian parents' desire to help their children integrate into French society as quickly as possible.

[98] *Haratch* discuses the decree of the Minister of Education of December 12, 1925, according to which foreign language instruction in public schools was allowed only as an extracurricular activity, after regular classes. In private schools, foreign language instruction could not exceed half of the regular school day hours (*Haratch,* January 24, 1926).

Social Adjustment of Armenians in France

In many ways similar to the United States, two processes went hand in hand in the newly emerging Armenian communities in France. Compatriotic settlements were producing Armenian communities, which provided conditions for the preservation and transmission of local/regional Armenian identities, customs and traditions. Yet, at the same time, Armenians sought ways of integrating into French society. Without a native village or town to return, they had to build their future in France. Despite the compatriotic boundaries, the common status of the Armenians in France as refugees and *étrangers,* the frequent stigmatization at work, schools and elsewhere, created another, more cohesive level of social boundaries between "us" – the Armenians - and "them" - the French. Armenians and their children, regardless of places of origin, often became victims of verbal abuse, racism and discrimination. During the years of the Depression in the 1930s, the French often called names to immigrants, including Armenians, offending the latter by expressions like "*Sale étranger! Retourne dans ton pays*."[99] The French schoolmates of the Armenian children often made fun of their names, mocked their accents, and laughed at them with sarcastic comments, like "*Arménien, tête de chien, mange ta soupe et ne dis rien*"[100] (Belmonte 2004, 81; cf. Ter Minassian 1997, 70). The increasing unemployment in the 1930s exacerbated xenophobia and discrimination against the foreigners, who were now seen as depriving Frenchmen of their livelihood (Terzian 1974, 274). The daily social pressure and discrimination at work, at school or in other public domains, socially excluded the Armenians, making them realize that if they wanted to succeed in France, they had to assimilate.

[99] Dirty foreigners, return to your countries.
[100] [You] Armenian, head of dog, eat your soup and shut your mouth.

Facing everyday discrimination, experiencing the disadvantages of being a foreigner in France, the stateless Armenians sought to be naturalized and acquire French citizenship as quickly as possible. The key to success in French society was, first of all, learning the language and acculturation. Therefore, despite the availability of Armenian schools, most Armenian families preferred sending their children to the French *écoles communales* in order to facilitate their integration. In rare instances, some relatively well-off Armenian families sent their children to private French schools, which promised better chances of succeeding in France after graduation (Belmonte 2004, 81; cf. Boghossian 2005, 216; Boudjikanian-Keurooghlian 1978, 177-78; Mandel 2003, 102).

The problem of assimilation was even more pressing in Paris. Armenians in Paris assimilated at higher rates and a faster pace, than those in Marseille and elsewhere, where they could afford living in communities. As Ch‘ormisian (1975, 236-40) observed, in 1926, when some officials from Valence were reporting that Armenian women were still dressed in their national costumes, the situation in Paris was quite different, where women coming from more affluent cities, like Constantinople, Smyrna or Bursa, had already adopted the Parisian ways of dress, hairdo and makeup (cf. Ter Minassian 1997, 71). The openness of the Parisian society accelerated the pace of assimilation and the erasing of the traditional Armenian customs. Several articles published in 1925 in *Haratch*, shared the concerns for assimilation. “The danger of denationalization,” as the author of one of the articles referred to the process of assimilation, was a persistent “threat.” He urged the community notables to find solutions, arguing that the founding of schools and churches would not solve the problem, because the Armenian youth mostly spent their days at

work and nights in their hotel rooms in Paris. Young people, who gathered in significant numbers at church on Sundays, did not have anywhere else to go (*Haratch,* October 2, 1925).

The problem of assimilation, which was attracting the attention of many Armenian intellectuals of the time, was sharply expressed by Shahan Shanur, himself an Armenian immigrant from Istanbul, in his novel, *Retreat Without Song* (1929).[101] Shahnur portrayed the life of some young Armenians in Paris and described how they all, regardless of their initial firm beliefs and convictions, gradually assimilated into French society. Armenian intellectuals of the time, expressing concern for the decline in the usage of Armenian-language newspapers and literature, did not see how Armenian organizations, with their limited capabilities, could reverse the ongoing process of assimilation. They often saw endogamy as the most efficient way to stop or at least slow down the pace of assimilation.[102] Shahnur also thought that the biggest threat in France was the demise of the Armenian family, the "basic pillar," which had preserved the Armenians for centuries (Shahnur 1994, 128). The author realized that the French, Italian, German, Greek and Russian women were perhaps more attractive, compared to the more traditional Armenian women, yet the Armenian women were essential for the continuation of the "Armenian blood" (Shahnur 1982, 88).

Despite the persistence of concerns regarding assimilation in the Armenian public discourse of the time, on the individual level, ordinary Armenians were more concerned with establishing themselves, integrating and advancing in the new country. The passage from an apatride

[101] The work appeared in installments in *Haratch* before 1929.
[102] Some suggested creating conditions, where orphaned Armenian men could meet orphaned Armenian women, because they believed that only marriage with an Armenian could save a person from "denationalization" (*Haratch,* October 2, 1925).

étranger to an integrated French citizen implied a process of identity transformation and acquisition of a new, French, identity. Through a mixture of isolation and ghettoization, through voluntary and involuntary involvement, through learning French and the customs, through the clash of first- and second-generations, through eventual expressions of ultimate loyalty to France during WWII, Armenians completed the passage from stateless refugees to French citizens in the 1940s.

Armenians in Lebanon: From Millets to Confessions

Many historians trace the Armenian presence in the Arab word back to the Middle Ages and the Early Modern period.[103] Until the nineteenth century, Armenians settling in Lebanon were predominantly Armenian converts to Catholicism. In 1749, an Armenian Catholic congregation established the monastery in Bzommar, which served as the seat of the Catholic Catholicos until the seat moved to Constantinople in 1866 (Sanjian 2003, 299). Prior to the founding of the Catholic millet in 1830, the Armenian converts to Catholicism were often persecuted in the Ottoman Empire. In order to escape persecutions, many sought refuge in the remote regions of the Empire, like the mountains of Lebanon, where most Christians were Catholic (Ormanian [1912] 2001, 3543-546, 3551; Sanjian 1965, 60-1). Apart from this institutional presence, there were a number of other Armenian settlements in various towns and villages of Syria and Lebanon.[104]

The massacres of 1895-96 prompted a new wave of Armenians to Syria and Lebanon, but the most massive influx of Armenians occurred during WWI and in its immediate aftermath (Hovannissian 1974, 19; Sanjian 2001, 149-50; Sanjian 2008a, 1; Schahgaldian 1983, 47). If the

[103] Seta Dadoyan recently published three volumes, entitled *Armenians in the Medieval Islamic World* (2011-13), where she argues that the history of Armenians from the seventh century was part of the histories of the locations and peoples in the Mediterranean, including Iran, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Egypt. These were locations, where "Armenians lived as integral elements and their world was governed by more or less the same laws that governed the region." (Dadoyan 2011, 1)

[104] Such settlements existed in Aleppo, Antioch, Latakia, Damascus, Alexandretta (Iskenderun), Kessab and elsewhere in Syria, and in Beirut, Ghazir, Junieh, Zgharta and elsewhere in Lebanon (Sanjian 1965, 46-70; Abrahamyan 1967, 13-8). The estimated number of Armenians in Beirut, for example, prior to WWI was about 1,500 (Varzhabedian 1981a, 34; Sanjian 2003, 291).

small community of Armenians, settled in the Beirut Vilayet prior to 1915, was spared major deportations and any massacre, the Armenian settlements in the Aleppo Vilayet in Ayntab, Marash, Zeytun, Urfa, Kilis, Beilan, Chorkʻmarzpan (Dörtyol), were not. In the first stage of the Armenian deportations in 1915, most of the northern Syrian towns served as locations of transit for the deportees from the Ottoman Armenian provinces. In the subsequent stage, the Armenian survivor refugees were subjected to massacre in many towns and villages of Syria, especially in the desert of Deir ez-Zore (cf. Kévorkian 2011, 289ff, 625-41; Mikʻayelyan and Topʻuzyan 2003, 337-38; Sanjian 2003, 291-92). The Ottoman blockade of Mount Lebanon, however, and the ensuing famine in 1915-1918, had claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands of Lebanese Christians and prevented the flow of Armenian genocide survivors to Lebanon (Fisk 2001, 58; Traboulsi 2007, 82).

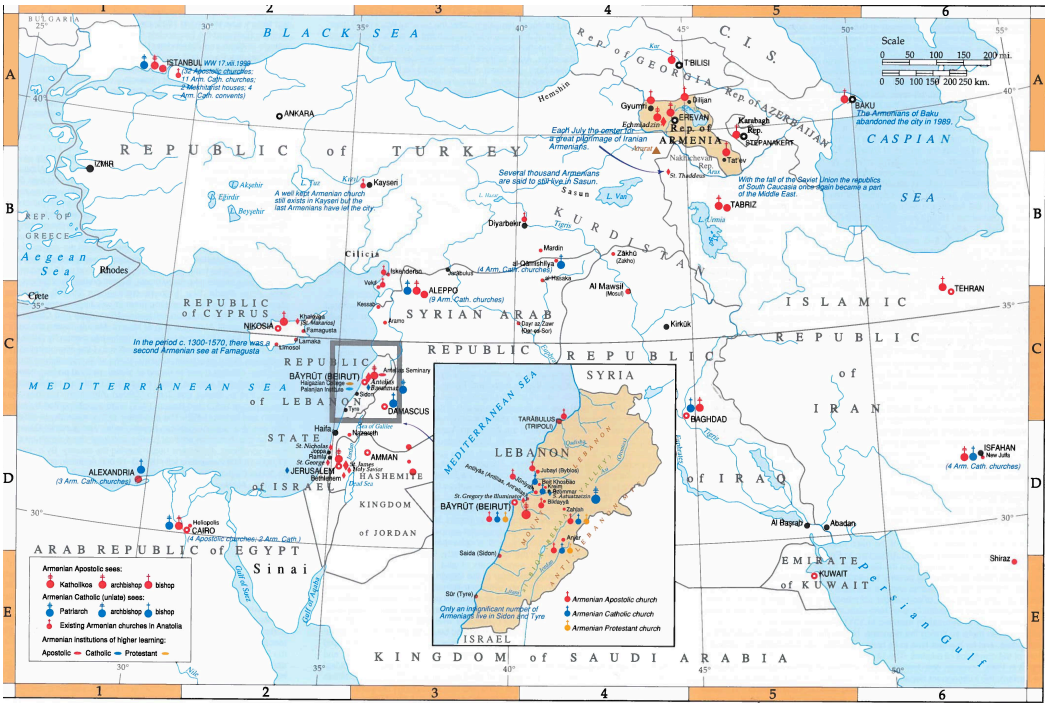
The armistice concluded in Mudros in October 1918 between the Allies and the Ottoman Empire provided certain conditions for the return of Armenians to some of their native towns and villages. Indeed, many Armenian survivors returned to their homes hoping that it was safe to return (cf. Hovannisian 1997c, 308; Mikʻayelyan and Topʻuzyan 2003, 338). The retreat of the Ottoman armies from Cilicia was hailed by a number of Armenians. It prompted the return of significant numbers of Armenian survivor refugees to their native villages and towns in Cilicia. Initial French backing seemed to be quite promising for Armenians, yet the French followed their own policies and had their own calculations. Three years after the Mudros armistice, after negotiations with the Turkish Nationalist Forces under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, the French troops retreated from Cilicia in late 1921. The French retreat resulted in a massive outflow of Armenians into Syria and Lebanon.

The major influx of Armenians into Lebanon, thus, occurred from late 1921. Following the French retreat from Cilicia, about 80,000 Armenian refugees and orphans arrived in Syria and Lebanon (Kitur 1962, 616; Migliorino 2008, 31). By 1925, according to various estimates, the number of Armenian refugees in Syria and Lebanon swelled reaching between 150,000 and 200,000, of which about 100,000-150,000 settled in Syria, between 35,000 and 40,0000 in Greater Lebanon, and the rest in Egypt and elsewhere in the Middle East (Abrahamyan 1967, 21-2; Hovannisian 1974, 20; Sanjian 2003, 292, Top'uzyan 1986, 169-70). An estimated 10,000 of these refugees were orphaned children, most of whom had settled in the seven orphanages founded by the American Near East Relief Society in the region (Schahgaldian 1979, 57; Top'uzyan 1986, 171). To host the Armenian genocide survivors in Lebanon, about six or seven camps or shantytowns were established in Beirut. According to different estimates, in 1923 camps in Beirut accommodated somewhere around 12,000 to 19,000 Armenian refugees, of which *Le Grand Camp* and *Quarantina* had the largest number of Armenians (cf. Boudjikanian 2009, 299; Tachjian 2007, 121; 2009, 64; Top'uzyan 1986, 172; Varzhabedian 1981a, 37). Camp conditions were miserable. Armenians lived in temporary tents, later turned into tin huts or rarely to wooden shacks, which could get extremely warm and humid in summers and quite cold in winters. Essential conditions for maintaining personal hygiene were absent; poverty, malnutrition and various epidemics claimed the lives of many.[105]

A few more waves of Armenians from Syria and Turkey augmented the number of the Armenians in Lebanon on the eve of WWII. After Aleppo and Beirut, the coastal region of

[105] On a number of occasions in his second volume, Varzhabedian (1981: 39-43; 60-4) provides many eyewitness accounts and quotes correspondence from various Armenian newspapers of the time, which describe the dire conditions, widespread diseases and poverty in the Beirut camps in the 1920s.

Alexandretta (Iskenderun) in northern Syria[106] had hosted the third largest Armenian refugee concentration Syria and Lebanon in the 1920s[107] (Map 2.6). In 1939 some 12,000 to 15,000 Armenians fled the Sanjak of Alexandretta as a result of the French ceding of the region to Turkey (Fig. 2.2). An estimated 12,000 to 15,000 Armenians found refuge mostly in Lebanon, forming a new camp near Beirut, known as the Sanjak camp (Sanjian 1956, 218; Karadjian 1986, 21; Paboudjian 2007b, 268-84). Armenians from the Musa Dagh villages constituted the most notable group among the Sanjak Armenians. Upon their arrival in Lebanon in 1939, they were settled on a land in the Bekaa valley, which later became the Armenian village of Anjar (Schahgaldian 1979, 78).



Map 2-6. The Armenians in the Middle East
(Source: Hewsen 2001, 269)

[106] The status of the Sanjak of Alexandretta was defined in the Franco-Turkish agreement of October 20, 1921 (known as the Franklin-Bouillon Agreement or the Ankara Agreement), which concluded the fighting between the Kemalists and the French in Cilicia. Article 7 stipulated that a special administrative regime would be established in Alexandretta, which would guarantee the rights of the Turkish inhabitants in the region and the usage of Turkish language (cf. Sanjian 1956, 19-22, 171-86; Paboudjian 2007a, 174-83).

[107] According to the diagrams presented by Greenshields (1981, 234), in 1928 Aleppo hosted the largest numbers of refugees, Beirut was the second largest and Alexandretta was the third (Fig. 2.1)

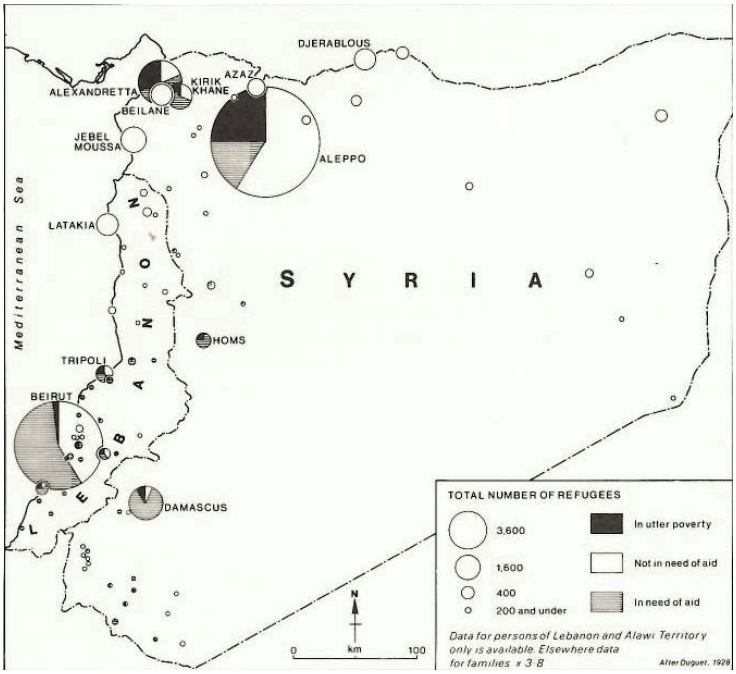


Figure 2-1. Distribution of Refugees in Syria and Lebanon (1928) (Source: Greenshields 1981, 234)

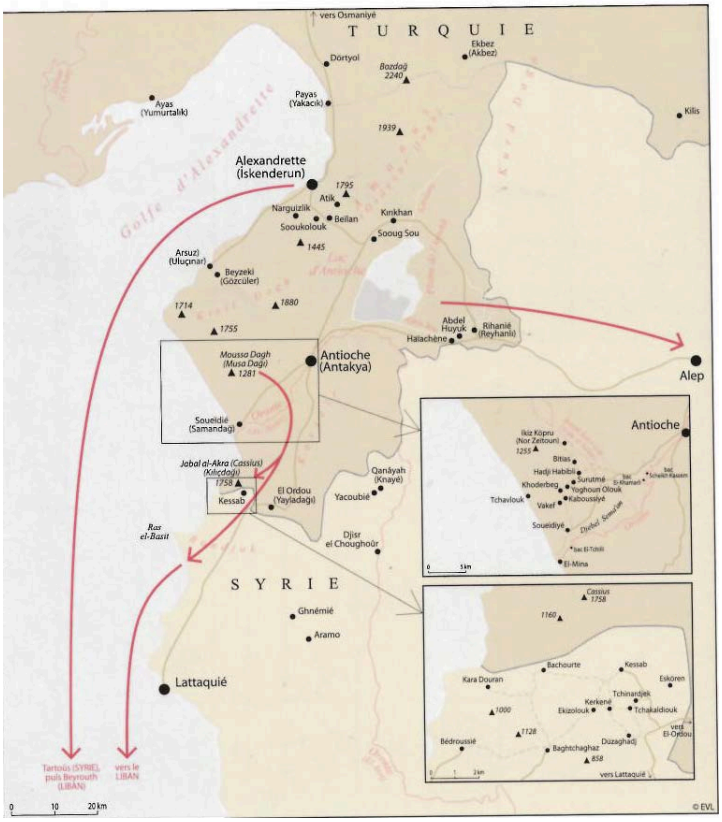


Figure 2-2. The Sanjak of Alexandretta (Iskenderun) and the Evacuation of Armenians in 1939 (Source: Paboudjian 2007, 148)

The Lebanese context: Naturalization and Social-Political Conditions in Lebanon

Following the Ottoman defeat in WWI and the Mudros armistice Syria and Lebanon came under French occupation.[108] Even though the peace treaty of Sèvres (August 10, 1920) between the Allied powers and Ottoman Turkey did not explicitly define a French mandate in the region, the Article 94 assumed the presence of a Mandatory in independent Syria and Mesopotamia "until such time as they are able to stand alone." In September 1920, the French administration implemented certain territorial and administrative restructuring in Syria by separating Greater Lebanon as an administrative unit (Maktabi 2000; 158; Julian 2009, 193). A few years later, in August 1922, the League of Nations officially granted France the mandate to administer the region (Migliorino 2008, 46). Despite some opposition both from Syria and from different Christian and Muslim sects in Greater Lebanon, the drawing of the Lebanese borders was completed by 1923 (Maktabi 2000, 159-61; Traboulsi 2007, 75-8; 80-7; Habib 2009, 48-9).

Lebanon is a country with a social-political system, which has been described by many scholars as "consociational democracy." The essence of "consociationalism" is the sharing of power among various confessional or ethno-religious and sectarian communities (Avsharian 2009, 387; Migliorino 2009, 480; Habib 2009, 21-43). The roots of Lebanese consociationalism go back to the late Ottoman period. The Mandate document of 1922 officially recognized the existence of different religious communities in Lebanon and guaranteed their interests, their rights to retain and control their properties (Article 6), their "freedom of conscience and the free exercise of all

[108] In 1916, the British and the French concluded a secret agreement, which became known as the Sykes-Picot agreement. According to it, in case of an Ottoman defeat in WWI they would respectively take control of the Ottoman Arab provinces. As a realization of this agreement, after the Mudros armistice, the coastal region from Cilicia to Lebanon fell under the control of the French (cf. Hovannisian 1997b, 282; Migliorino 2008, 46).

forms of worship" without discrimination on grounds of race, religion or language (Article 8). Article 8 went on to recognize the rights of each community "to maintain its own schools for the instruction and education of its own members in its own language, while conforming to such educational requirements of a general nature as the administration may impose…" ("French Mandate for Syria and the Lebanon" 1923, 178-79).

The Treaty of Lausanne between the Allied Powers and Kemalist Turkey, which recognized the Republic of Turkey in 1923, reconfirmed the end of the Ottoman presence in the Arab world. For the former Ottoman subjects, the Treaty of Lausanne provisioned that they could acquire either Turkish nationality or the nationality of the state, in which "the majority of the population is of the same race." This article of the treaty was put in effect in Lebanon on August 30, 1924, through the decree issued by the French High Commissioner. According to the decree "[a]ny person who was a Turkish subject … and resided in the territories of Greater Lebanon on August 30, 1924, is confirmed as a Lebanese and is regarded from now on as having lost the Turkish citizenship" (Article 1 of the Resolution 2825, quoted in Maktabi 2000, 157). In practice, the decree translated the corresponding article of the Treaty of Lausanne into a simple eligibility criterion: all who had settled in the country by August 30, 1924 were eligible for Lebanese nationality[109] (cf. El-Khoury and Jaulin 2012, 3; Hashimoto 1992, 75; Maktabi 2000, 157; Vernant 1953, 417).

At the beginning of the French Mandate in Lebanon, the French had to deal with roughly two major factions. Some favored the maintenance of a separate Lebanon; others advocated for

[109] Maktabi (2000, 147) argues that citizenship policies "were applied to reinforce the size of the Christian citizen population through the naturalization of Christian immigrants and refugees."

unification with Syria. Those supporting the maintenance of Greater Lebanon (Lebanonism) were associated largely with the Christians (predominantly Maronites). The supporters of unification with Syria (Unionism) were associated primarily with the Sunni Muslims (Trabousi 2007, 99; cf. El-Khoury and Jaulin, 2012, 2-3). The numbers of Christians and Muslims, therefore, were important in the making of Lebanon. The interests of the French mandatory power and the Maronite leaders coincided in the creation of Greater Lebanon.

The census of 1921, which was seen as an important political tool, was carried out without much participation by the Muslims, who refused to recognize the Lebanese state (cf. Jaulin 2009, 196; Maktabi 1999, 230-32; 2000, 162). The Census of 1921 registered only four Christian communities with the following numbers: the Maronites (175,702), the Greek Orthodox (64,416), the Greek Catholic (38,559) and the Protestants (3,730) (Jaulin 2009, 195). Six communities were large enough to have pre-allocated seats in the Administrative Commission appointed by the French High Commissioner in 1921. The Commission comprised 6 Maronites, 3 Greek Orthodox, 1 Greek Catholic, 1 Druze, 4 Sunnis and 2 Shiites, total of 17 representatives (Traboulsi 2007, 88). Apostolic Armenians did not constitute much numbers in 1921 prior to the influx from Cilicia.

The Lebanese constitution, promulgated a few years later in 1926, basically incorporated many of the articles of the Mandate document. The Constitution declared French and Arabic as the official languages of Lebanon, recognized the existence and interests of religious communities without privileging any of them. Article 9 of the Constitution declared absolute "freedom of conscience," and left matters of personal status, such as marriage, divorce, custody of children,

adoption, inheritance, under the jurisdiction of the religious communities (*The Lebanese Constitution* 1960, 6-7; cf. Migliorino 2007, 97; 2008, 47; Sanjian 2001, 155; Traboulsi 2007, 90). Article 10 of the constitution was basically the reformulation of the Article 8 of the Mandate document: "There shall be no violation of the right of religious communities … to have their own schools provided they follow the general rules issued by the state regulating public instruction" (*The Lebanese Constitution,* 1960, 6). The Mandate document and the Lebanese Constitution of 1926 endowed Lebanon's religious communities with certain rights to manage their internal matters, as well as establish and run their own schools and organizations. Moreover, the Constitution of 1926 guaranteed that all the religious communities were to be represented at the legislative power of the country and in the "public employment and in the composition of the Ministry" (*The Lebanese Constitution,* 1960, 12-3; 33; cf. Migliorino 2008, 48). The representation of various religious communities and the distribution of various offices among these communities had to be established according to their numbers.

The Constitution, however, did not put an end to tensions between the Christians and Muslims. Both in Syria and Lebanon, Sunni Muslim opposition to the French Mandatory administration continued in the 1930s. These conflicts eventually made the French conclude new agreements with Syria and Lebanon. Treaties of Friendship and Alliance were signed with Syria (September 9, 1936) and Lebanon (November 13, 1936), which promised independence to both states within a period of three years. The treaties basically preserved the territorial restructuring, significantly reduced the French administrative presence in the region, but the French would still maintain their military presence in Syria and Lebanon (Traboulsi 2007, 100-101). The growing aggressiveness of the Nazi regime in Germany in the second half of the 1930s and the

deteriorating political conditions in Europe, however, prevented the French ratification of these treaties. After the Nazi occupation of France in 1940, the French authorities were no longer able to keep a strong military presence in the Middle East and both Lebanon and Syria acquired independence toward the end of WWII.

Political inclusion of Armenians in Lebanon

The experience of political inclusion of the Armenian genocide survivors in Lebanon was in sharp contrast to the same process of Armenian immigrants in the United States or France. If Armenian immigrants and refugees had been arriving in states with long established traditions in the West, the Armenian refugees in Lebanon became part of the newly emerging state under a French Mandate. As former Ottoman subjects, like the other residents of Lebanon, Armenians, who had just arrived in the country as refugees, were granted Lebanese citizenship in compliance with the degree of August 30, 1924. In June 1925, Armenians voted in the elections of the Lebanese Representative Council. The favorable provisions for Armenians generated heated debates in the country between the Christians and the Muslims.[110] While the Christians, especially the Maronite leaders, supported and probably hoped to benefit from the political inclusion of Christian Armenians in the country, the Muslims were against the settlement of Armenians in Lebanon and granting them citizenship[111] (cf. Messerlian 1963, 60-1;

[110] Top'uzyan (1986, 168) quotes a letter addressed to King Hussein of Hejaz (Saudi Arabia) in 1924, in which the Syrian Muslims complained that the Armenian influx to Syria, Egypt and other Arab countries could eventually make Lebanon and Syria Armenia in a short span of time.
[111] By 1939, the disagreements of granting citizenship to Armenians had mostly faded out. Armenian refugees from the Sanjak of Alexandretta, who wanted to receive Lebanese citizenship, were granted without any difficulty (Messerlian 1963, 14).

Schahgaldian 1979, 58). The French Mandatory administration was also interested in the political inclusion of Armenians (El-Khoury and Jaulin 2012, 6; Maktabi 1999, 227).

Several months before the Lebanese census of 1932 the Maronite President of Lebanon had issued a decree (No. 8837) to make sure that "refugees from Turkish territories such as Armenians, Syriacs, Chaldeans and [members of the Greek Catholic and Orthodox churches] or other persons who are of Turkish origin, shall be counted [in the forthcoming census] as Lebanese provided they were found on Lebanese territories on 30 August 1924 according to Regulation 2825" (Article 13 of the Decree 8837, quoted in Maktabi 1999, 227). The census, which became the second and the last in the history of the country, registered Armenian Orthodox[112] and Armenian Catholic as two separate religious communities. According to the census data, the number of Armenians in Lebanon was 31,992 of which the Orthodox Armenians constituted 26,102 and the Catholic Armenians were 5,890. The number of Evangelical Armenians was not mentioned in the Census, because the Evangelical Armenians were not recognized as a separate religious community and were counted with the other Protestants[113] (Tableau 3 in Jaulin 2009, 200; Table 1 and Table 3, Maktabi 1999, 222, 235; Sanjian 2003, 291-292).

In contrast to France and the United States, where separation of the church and state constituted one of the founding principles of the making of both nations, the formation of the Lebanese

[112] Within Armenian circles, the term "Orthodox" is not applied to the church. The Armenian Church calls itself Apostolic and the community is referred to as the Armenian Apostolic community. In official documents and correspondence in Lebanon, however, this community is defined as the Armenian Orthodox community.
[113] Armenian Evangelical community is still not recognized as a separate religious community in Lebanon. The Evangelical Armenians are formally part of the Protestant community, but the Armenian Evangelical community developed separate institutions and, except being formally represented in the Lebanese political structures, otherwise enjoys all the rights for confessional communities.

nation was based on the mix of religion and politics. The confessional system in Lebanon, inherited from the Ottoman *millet* system, implied that the Armenian Apostolic, Catholic and, indirectly, Armenian Protestant communities, enjoyed the same rights as other confessional communities in Lebanon, including the right to maintain their own religious and educational institutions, and the right to enjoy certain autonomy in the management of the community matters. Because of this major difference, if during the interwar years in France and United States communitarian segregation was not encouraged and both countries sought ways to deal with their refugee or immigrant populations either by excluding or assimilating them, in the case of Lebanon the overall political make-up supported the existing religious communities and thereby encouraged communitarianism. The Lebanese political structure, an outgrowth of the Ottoman *millet* system, had one important difference from the latter: while the *millet* system had favored the Muslims over non-Muslims in the Ottoman empire, confessionalism in Lebanon did not make any of the religious communities more privileged. It, therefore, provided quite favorable conditions for the adjustment and establishment of Armenians in the region. The absence of assimilatory policies and structural discrimination, the recognition and occasional encouragement of especially Christian community rights, and the official acknowledgment of the Armenian Orthodox and Catholic communities, and indirectly the Armenian Evangelical community, made the building of exclusively Armenian communities possible in Lebanon. Regardless of one's personal choice, in sharp contrast to France and the United States, Armenians in Lebanon were expected and supposed to continue their communitarian and confessional affiliations, rather than assimilate into other confessional communities. Armenians were integrated into the Lebanese political system as Armenians, without having to abandon their ethnic-religious traits. The important condition of Armenian involvement in the Lebanese

political system was that they were expected to remain Armenian, retain their Armenian identities and their affiliation with their church(es) in order to be represented in various branches of government and the administration.

The Establishment of Armenian Churches in Lebanon

The peculiarities of the Lebanese social and political system pre-determined to a certain extent the establishment of Armenian Church hierarchy in Lebanon. If in the United States and France Armenian churches had been established predominantly thanks to some individual or community initiatives, the highest clergymen of Armenian churches were very active in the establishment of churches and church hierarchies in Lebanon.

The Armenian Catholic church had been established in the region since the eighteenth century. In the early 1930s, the Seat of the Armenian Catholic Patriarch moved from Istanbul to Lebanon and was reestablished in *Achrafieh* quarter in 1934 (Sanjian 2003, 299). Other Catholic Armenian orders - Armenian Sisters of Immaculate Conception and the *Mekhitarists*, established their congregations in Lebanon in 1927 and 1937 respectively (Ch‘ormisian 1975, 228-29; Messerlian 1963, 21-3; Migliorino 2007, 100-101; Varzhabedian 1982, 272-73).

The Armenian Apostolic church did not have long established roots in Lebanon. The only Apostolic church before WWI, Surb Nshan (Holy Sign) was constructed in Beirut in 1851 and mostly accommodated the Armenian pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem (Sanjian 1965, 62; 2003,

295). In the 1920s, when the number of Apostolic Armenians increased in Beirut and elsewhere, the leaders of the Armenian Church became concerned about the growing influence of the Catholic Church on Armenians. Surb Nshan could not represent the Apostolic Armenians arriving from Cilicia, because it was under the jurisdiction of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem, while the Apostolic Armenians arriving from former Ottoman provinces were formally affiliated with the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul or the Catholicosate of Cilicia.[114]

The cession of Cilicia to Turkey in 1921 forced out Catholicos Sahak II from his residence in Sis. From his exile in Damascus and Aleppo, following his flock, the Catholicos remained active in his support of Armenian refugees in Syria and Lebanon.[115] With his encouragement and support, the Armenian refugees in the Beirut Camp founded the small wooden chapel of Surb Khach‘ (Holy Cross), organized a camp administration, representation and started an Armenian school in 1925-26 (cf. Messerlian 1963, 10-2; Varzhabedian 1981a, 110-31, 182-85). The tension between Surb Nshan and Surb Khach‘ for representing Armenians was resolved in 1929, when the Patriarchate of Jerusalem ceded churches under its jurisdiction in Lebanon and Syria to the Catholicosate of Cilicia thanks to the intervention and approval of the Catholicos of Ējmiatsin (Sanjian 2001, 156). The following year, the Catholicos of Cilicia was finally able to find a permanent place to reestablish the Catholicosate of Cilicia. In response to his appeals, the

[114] The history of Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia goes back to the Middle Ages. According to tradition, the Armenian Church had been established in early fourth century in Ējmiatsin (ancient Vagharshapat). With the change of political situation in Armenia the seat of the Catholicos had been relocated to other places, usually following the Armenian kings and the nobility. The fall of the last Armenian kingdom on Armenian highland in the 11th century prompted an exodus of Armenians from their ancestral lands. After the establishment of an Armenian Kingdom in Cilicia in 1098, the Catholicosate moved to Cilicia and in 1293 it was finally established in Sis, the capital of the Kingdom. Despite the fall of the Cilician Armenian kingdom in 1375, the Catholicosate remained in Cilicia until 1441. In 1441, a church assembly gathered in Ējmiatsin, which decided to move the Catholicosate from Sis back to Ējmiatsin after nearly a millennium. The Assembly elected a new Catholicos in Ējmiatsin, but the Catholicosate of Sis continued with limited jurisdiction over churches in Cilicia (cf. Ormanian 1912, col. 2107-121, 2139-141)

[115] Iskandar (1999, 99-100) quotes the entire text of a circular of Catholicos Sahak II, issued in 1922, in which the Catholicos laments the destruction of the Cilician see, his exile in Damascus, where he did not have a cane, a seat or a council.

French High Commissioner granted permission to establish the seat of the Cilician Catholicosate in Lebanon in 1930.[116] Since the establishment of the Catholicosate of Cilicia in Antelias, Lebanon, the Armenian Apostolic community began forming its representative bodies in accordance with the Armenian Constitution of 1863. The relocation of the Catholicosate of Cilicia to Lebanon, as noted by Sanjian (2001, 156), "deemed important to strengthen the Armenian Apostolic Church against Catholic and Protestant proselytizing activity in the French-mandated territories."

Alongside the Armenian Apostolic and Catholic churches, Armenian Protestant churches also began appearing in Lebanon shortly after the influx of the refugees. Some historians trace the presence of Armenian Protestants in Lebanon to the early nineteenth century. Varzhabedian (1982, 51-57) and Atigian (1985, 62) argue that the Protestant Christian community in Lebanon was founded by two Armenian monks, former members of the congregation of the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem, who broke up with the Patriarchate in 1823-1825, converted to Protestantism and became the founders of Arab Protestant community in Syria and Lebanon. Until the 1920s, however, the Armenian Evangelical Protestants were indistinguishable from the local Arab or European Protestants. Initially, upon their arrival to Lebanon, the Evangelical Armenian refugees used to gather for services in local Arab or European Protestant churches and halls. The first Armenian Evangelical church in Beirut was established in 1921 and in 1924 the Evangelical Armenians formed the Union of Evangelical Armenian churches of Syria and Lebanon (of the Middle East since 1930) (Sanjian 2003, 300; Tootikian 1996, 195). The evangelical Armenians were quite active in schools and education since Ottoman times. Under new conditions in Lebanon, despite their small numbers in comparison to the Catholic and

[116] On the establishment of the Cilician Catholicosate in Lebanon see Eghiayan 1975, 209-21.

Apostolic Armenians, they continued to have active involvement within the Armenian community especially in the matters of education (cf. Messerlian 1963, 26).

Social Adjustment of Armenians in Lebanon

As elsewhere, Armenians arriving in Lebanon constituted diverse dialectal and subcultural groups. Church affiliation constituted one of the most important signifiers of Armenian identity. The majority of the Armenian refugees were adherents of the Armenian Apostolic faith and in that sense did not blend easily in the existing Armenian Catholic community in Lebanon (Schahgaldian 1983, 47). While the Armenian Apostolic, Catholic and Evangelical faiths connected Armenians originating from various provinces in the Ottoman Empire and these church affiliations predominantly defined their Armenianness, in other respects, such as language, customs and habits, Armenians originating from different parts of the Ottoman Empire represented diverse cohorts.

Shahgaldian (1979, 69; 1983, 48-49) argues that the "underlying divisions" eventually caused a split in the community into two basic factions between "Diaspora Armenians," who were drawn to Lebanon from non-Armenian Ottoman provinces, and the "native Armenians," or "…those born and raised in either Western or Eastern Armenia." According to him, about 80-85% of Armenians belonged to "Diaspora Armenians," who were in turn divided into several factions - "Cilician Armenians" (about 25,000 in 1926), who originated mostly from the former Ottoman vilayets of Adana and Aleppo; "Anatolian Armenians" (about 8,000), who arrived in Lebanon

from "various Armenian communities in central and western Anatolia in the 1920s;" and "local Armenians" (about 2,000), who had settled in Lebanon prior to the 1920s (Schahgaldian 1979, 69-70). He goes on to characterize these sub-groups, arguing that, for example, the "so-called Cilician and Anatolian subgroups of diaspora Armenians" were Turkophone, in most cases Catholic and Protestant (Schahgaldian 1979, 78). While the fragmented evidence provided by various histories of the compatriotic unions also seems to confirm Schahgaldian's observations,[117] such generalizations of "Diaspora Armenians" and "Native Armenians" or "Cilician Armenians" and "Anatolian Armenians" seems to be less helpful in understanding and explaining the primary identifications of the Armenian refugees in various Lebanese camps. As Schahgaldian (1979: 78) also noticed and as the evidence in the histories of compatriotic unions suggests, there were number of exceptions to the general pattern suggested by Schahgaldian. The Musa Dagh Armenians, who arrived in Lebanon in the late 1930s, were Armenophone and overwhelmingly Orthodox Armenians (Schahgaldian 1979, 78). Similarly, as Alboyajian (1937, 1618) noted, despite Kayseri Armenians were Turkophone, many villages in the region were Armenophone. In this regard, Schahgaldian (1979, 69) correctly notes: "Understandably enough, the existence of such [Diaspora Armenians, Cilician Armenians, Anatolian Armenians - V.S.] divisions has seldom been explicitly acknowledged by Lebanon's Armenians, and has remained unknown both to non-Armenians and even to Armenians residing outside Syria and Lebanon." He goes on to argue that "[d]espite many common denominations the overwhelming majority of diaspora Armenians in Syria and Lebanon were divided into more than two dozen traditionally-bound solidarities" (*ibid.,* 70). These "traditionally-bound" localized solidarities were exactly what people identified with and which made the Armenians refugee groups so diverse in

[117] Biwzant Eghiayan's (1970, 783-797) account on Adana Armenians, Alboyajian's (1937, 1607; 1618) work on Armenians in Kayseri, Ter-Minassian's (1997, 74-75) study of Armenian refugees in France, and many other similar works have demonstrated that Armenians in certain Ottoman villages were predominantly Turkophone.

Lebanon (and elsewhere). Camps provided the confined geographical space, in which all these diversities came to clash in Lebanon. Armenian identities at the time of their arrival to Lebanon, as in the United States or France, were highly regional, rather than confessional or even more so national (cf. Krikorian 2007, 34-5). While Schahgaldian's work significantly challenges the monolithic perceptions of Armenians as a coherent group with common markers of identity, the generalizations prevent him from arguing that even the "Cilician Armenians" from Sis, Adana or Marash, despite being Turkophone in many cases, would find each other quite different. Accordingly, the Armenians from Sis, Adana, Marash, or Hachn gathered in separate small camp neighborhoods, and Armenians originating from other villages or gowns grouped in other camps.[118] In a more comprehensive manner, Vahe Tachjian (2007, 121-2) suggests that Armenians originating from various small regions in Cilicia or elsewhere tended to regroup in the following small compatriotic settlements in *le Grand Camp*: Adana (which would include Armenians from Adana, Mersin, Tarsus, Djihan, Osmanie and Selefke), Sis (Sis, Kars Bazar, Feke, Tapan, Chokak); Hachn (Hachn, Dörtyol, Amanus, Karaköy); Marash (Marash, Ayntab, Fernouz, Zeytun, Findijak); Kayseri (Kayseri, Everek, Chomaklu, Tomarz, Yozgat); Sivas (Sivas, Chepni, Burhan, Karagöl, Zara, Severk, Tokat, Amassia, Gürün, Gemerek, Shabin-Karahisar); Kharberd (Kharberd, Malatia, Behensi, Adiyaman, Arabkir, Palu, Erzrum, Yerznka, Geghi, Taron, Diarbekir, Arzni, Urfa). Some smaller camps in Beirut were better known by the name of the village or the town in the Ottoman Empire, from where the Armenian survivors originated, such as, for example, camps *Adana, Amanos* or *Yozgat* (Fig. 2.3)

[118] Alboyajian's extensive work on Kayseri Armenians suggests, for example, that by 1931 the Armenians from Everek (a small village near Kayseri in the Ottoman Empire) had their own neighborhood in a camp in Beirut (Alboyajian 1937,1981). To emphasize the diversity of Armenians at *Le Grand Camp* in Beirut, Varzhabedian (1981a, 61) even compared it with the Babylonian tower: "The so-called Armenian shantytown (vranak'aghak') was a perfect Armenian Babylon!," a "miniature of Armenians of the Ottoman Armenia."

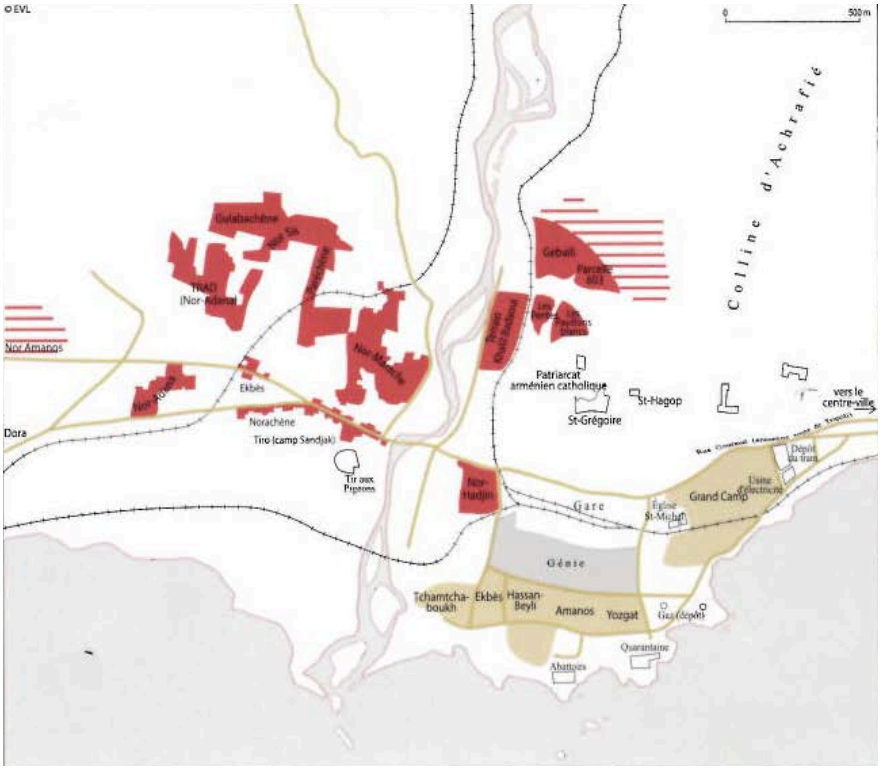


Figure 2-3. Armenian Camps (in light brown) and Armenian Quarters (in red) in Beirut
(Source: Tachjian 2007, 120)

Compatriotic affiliations and identities played crucial role in community building in Beirut and elsewhere in Lebanon. As Greenshields rightfully pointed out, "in clustering together" besides the attempts to preserve their unique customs, traditions and community structure, the Armenians were "genuinely concerned about their own security" (Greenshields 1981, 235). Having survived deportations and genocide, clustering together was the natural response of people arriving in foreign lands, who would rather rely on their family members, friends and compatriots for mutual aid and security, than the Maronites, the French and the external powers (cf. Tachjian 2007, 127; 2009, 64).

The failed attempt of the French High Commission to disperse the Armenians in the interior of Syria and Lebanon eventually made the High Commissioner consider constructing Armenian quarters for the resettlement of the Armenian refugees. In the beginning of 1926, the French High Commission submitted a proposal to the League of Nations for the construction of special permanent housing for the Armenian refugees. The proposition caused surprise in France. The Minister of Foreign affairs expressed a concern that the project of constructing "little Armenia" may entail dissatisfaction and new waves of opposition in Lebanon to the French mandate. But the High Commissioner successfully pushed the project forward. The construction of an Armenian town with its own municipality would help resolve several issues. First of all, the Mandatory authorities would deal with the problem of camps. Secondly, this new Christian settlement in the immediate proximity to Beirut could make another electoral district for Christians. Finally, it could satisfy the passionate desire of Armenians to maintain their subgroups rather than disperse throughout the country[119] (Greenshields 1981, 235; Tachjian 2007, 127-28; 2009, 65-7, 71). The joint efforts of the League of Nations Nansen Office (International Office for Refugees), the French High Commission, the AGBU[120] and other Armenian charitable organizations started to bear some fruit. By the 1930s several quarters had already been constructed for Armenians in the northeastern part of Beirut and *Achrafieh*.

Along with the AGBU and the League of Nations Nansen Office, it turned out that various compatriotic unions in the relatively long established communities in the United States were the

[119] Greenshields (1981, 239) argues that the principal effect of both economic and ethnic constraints was maintaining "a self-perpetuating process of concentration and segregation" for Armenians.

[120] Vahé Tachjian provides important details on how the AGBU became partners with the French High Commission in implementing the projects of Armenians' establishment in Syria and Lebanon. After Calouste Gulbenkian (Galust Gyulbenkian) became the president of the AGBU in 1930, "ce magnat de petrol," as Tachjian characterized him, whose residence was in Paris, developed close personal relations with the French High Commissar in Lebanon and Syria, Henri Ponsot. It was largely thanks to this friendship that the negotiations in 1931 made the AGBU a partner and a participant in the project initiated by the French High Commission (Tachjian 2009, 68).

major sponsors of the construction projects of their respective compatriotic organizations in Lebanon. To honor the sponsors, some of the quarters, such as Nor Hachn, Nor Marash, Nor Sis, Nor Adana, were officially named after the sponsor compatriotic organizations.[121] By the 1930s, compatriotic unions had emerged as truly diasporic transnational organizations capable of mobilizing resources for certain activities for their compatriots residing elsewhere.

Figure 2-4. Street Sign to an Armenian Quarter of "Nor Sis"
(Personal Photograph by Author. 2 June, 2012)

[121] In present days most of these quarters have lost the compatriotic coloring of neighborhoods, but some street signs in Bourj Hammoud are still salient reminders of the time, when Armenians used to concentrate in compatriotic settlements (Fig. 2.4). There were also some exceptions from this general pattern. Quarters like *Gullabashen, Pareshen or Haykashen* were not named after any compatriotic unions. Gullabashen, in particular, was constructed through the funding and active efforts of the AGBU by the initiative of Calouste Gulbenkian (cf. Tachjian 2009, 70, 73; Varzhabedian 1981b, 63).

From Adjustment to Transnational Activism: Compatriotic Societies and Projects from Afar

Conditions in the United States, France and Lebanon provided different possibilities for the political integration and adaptation of Armenian immigrants and refugees. Irrespective of the actual conditions in these countries, wherever the Armenians clustered together, they attempted to recreate their communal lifestyle and community structures, according to the old ways in their native towns and villages. A comparative glance at the concentration of Armenians in Marseille (France), in Worcester and Fresno (the United States), and in Beirut, (Lebanon) reveals some patterns of how Armenians sought to adjust to host societies. Regardless of the enormous differences in the social-political make-up of these countries, the first stage of the adjustment of Armenians usually involved the establishment of predominantly compatriotic communities or sub-communities within larger Armenian settlements. The geographical dispersion in the United States and France, as argued in previous sections, were defined by two major factors: employment and affordability of life, and family, compatriotic or, sometimes, confessional ties. In Lebanon, the small size of the country did not really provide many options for geographical mobility. The Armenian community stayed mostly grouped in the Beirut area first in the camps then in the newly established Armenian quarters. But even in Beirut, within the same camps, the Armenians originating from different villages and towns in the Ottoman Empire preferred to regroup in small compatriotic neighborhoods.

Contrary to the United States and France, however, the clustering of Armenians together in compatriotic settings was not hindered or challenged in the Lebanese social and political context. If in the United States and France the Armenian concentrations attracted much attention and made the Armenians a special target for discrimination and social exclusion, the concentrations and community building in Lebanon were relatively tolerated in the confessional political structure of the country. Finally, if the Armenians were expected to give up their ethnic peculiarities, assimilate in American or French societies and only thereby become politically included, in Lebanon, Armenians were granted Lebanese citizenship without putting much effort, the Apostolic, Catholic and, indirectly, Evangelical Armenian communities were recognized by the state, and the social adjustment of Armenians did not entail assimilation.

After initial clustering in compatriotic settlements, efforts to establish churches, informal Armenian language instruction and schooling usually followed. While Lebanese confessionalism, again, was conducive to such efforts, the official separation of church and state in France and the United States did not officially impede the setting up of churches either. The overall intolerant social and political context in the Untied States and France, however, significantly confined the scope of ethnic activism. Under such conditions, compatriotic settlements emerging in the United States and France eventually became more oriented towards their compatriots outside the United States or France.

Compatriotic Societies in the United States

First Armenian compatriotic societies were formed in the Untied States, where Armenians had settled in significant numbers prior to the 1920s. Most of these societies had been initially established as philanthropic or educational associations. Prior to WWI, the purpose of these societies was to send financial aid to their home communities in their native towns and villages in the Ottoman Empire in support of the local church or school related affairs, or the needy compatriots and orphans (cf. Bakalian 1993, 184; Ter-Minassian 2002, 73). One of the earliest compatriotic associations was the Educational Society of Husenik formed in 1888 in Worcester. The purpose of this society was to raise funds to support the church and the school in the village of Husenik[122] (Deranian 1987, 20; Malcom 1919, 113). Another association, Kharberd Union Educational Society, was founded in Boston, in 1893. Its goal was to promote education in their native village by supporting the existing Armenian parochial schools. The union annually contributed certain funds to the maintenance of schools and for fellowships to students in Kharberd. The Kiwrin (Gürün) Educational Union was founded in 1899 in Providence and remained quite active until 1915. Many other similar compatriotic associations emerged at the turn of the century.[123] The income of compatriotic societies was mostly generated from monthly membership dues and from occasional donations.

The founding of compatriotic societies comprising neighboring villages in the Ottoman Empire was quite common in the US at the time due also to mutual influences. The Everek Educational

[122] Husenik was one of the villages of Kharberd/Harput in the Ottoman Empire.
[123] The Kayseri Armenians founded the Kesaria Union in 1905. Armenians originating from Everek founded the Everek Mesropian Educational Society in 1906 in New York. Adana Educational Society and Tzak Village Educational Society emerged in Watertown in 1906 and 1910 respectively (Alboyajian 1937, 1965; Eghiayan 1970, 895; Melik‘set‘yan 1985, 110; Minasian 1974, 764-65; Mirak 1983, 174).

Society, for example, influenced the emergence of Fenesse Rubinian Educational Society (1908) and Tomarza Sahakian School Society (1909) (Alboyajian 1937, 1965-967). Quite often, Armenians originating from the same village or town started two compatriotic associations, usually independent from each other. One of them would aim to help the poor and the needy in the homeland; the other would focus on supporting churches and schools. In time, such smaller associations gradually merged into larger units to form a single compatriotic union (cf. Alboyajian 1937, 1965-981; Minasian 1970, 765-66). Separate compatriotic associations merged into village unions (such as the Everek Compatriotic Union or the Tomarza Compatriotic Union), and village unions quite often merged with greater regional compatriotic unions (such as, for example, the Greater Sivas Compatriotic Union, or the Kayseri Compatriotic Union). By 1906, according to Mirak (1983, 174), there were some 27 compatriotic unions in the Untied States. In most cases these greater compatriotic unions created chapters in various towns across the US and encouraged their compatriots to create similar societies in other countries (cf. Alboyajian 1937, 1977-981; Dallak'yan 2004, 228; Minasian 1974, 766).

Expanding compatriotic unions eventually became agencies connecting compatriots scattered in various corners of the host-countries and beyond their borders. In the case of the United States, as Mirak (1983, 174) observes, "in addition to their stated educational and charitable purposes, the compatriotic societies in America took on the new social function of enabling widely scattered immigrants from the same Old World town or village to reconvene, at least annually, to reminisce and relay news to each other."

The genocide and massive deportations of Armenians from their native hometowns and villages in the Ottoman Empire prompted the compatriotic societies to radically reconsider their former activities and programs. The initial program of the Educational Society of Kiwrin [Gürün] (founded in 1899 in Boston) declared that the goal of the society was to "establish a school of higher learning" and "support the needy schools in Kiwrin" (Minasian 1974, 743). The 1922 program of the Compatriotic Union of Kiwrin, which had been formed through the merger of the Educational Society and the Reconstruction Union of Kiwrin (founded in 1918), declared that the goal of the Union was to aid its compatriots both "materially and morally," and especially support the orphans (Minasian 1974, 750). Therefore, with no Armenians left in old Kiwrin because of the genocide, there was no longer a point in establishing a school of higher learning. The program and goals of the Compatriotic Union of Kiwrin underwent another significant revision in 1936: "The major goal of the union is to construct *Nor Kiwrin* in Soviet Armenia and to gather the Kiwrints'is residing abroad" in *Nor Kiwrin.* The second purpose of the Union was sending aid to the needy compatriots whether in Soviet Armenia or elsewhere (Minasian 1974, 793).

After WWI, schools, churches, and neighborhoods in the ancestral villages, now completely devoid of Armenians, could no longer serve as objects of care and support for the compatriotic unions. Having lost their homelands, under the new conditions, the compatriotic unions refocused their attention on sending aid to their compatriots in the refugee camps and orphanages in the Middle East. Alongside these activities, these organizations also became important contributors to the reconstruction projects both in Soviet Armenia and in the Middle East. By the 1930s, the search for new places for the (re)construction of new hometowns had become a

general trend among the compatriotic unions. Due to the influence of Armenian political parties, as well as the organizational challenges often posed by Soviet Armenia, not all compatriotic unions chose Soviet Armenia for constructing new quarters.[124] Many had to shift their attention from Soviet Armenia to the countries of the Middle East or Europe, where many Armenian refugees continued living in wooden or tin shacks.

Compatriotic Societies in France and Lebanon

New compatriotic societies or branches of existing ones also emerged in Lebanon and France from the mid-1920s and into the 1930s. In France such societies came about first of all as self-help organizations, aiming at providing aid and relief to their poor compatriots, supporting the elderly, orphans, the disabled and the sick, as well as "restoring relations with compatriots scattered in France and … abroad" (Temime 2007, 139). Various compatriotic unions, such as Marash, Sis, Van, Malatia, Kharberd, Trebizond, Kayseri and others, appeared one after another in France in the late 1920s and 1930s[125] (cf. Boudjikanian-Keuroghlian 1978, 163; Le Tallec 2001, 75-6). Boghossian lists about twenty compatriotic societies and unions operating in Marseille in the 1920s: a list, which according to him, was far from being exhaustive (Boghossian 2005, 230-32) A report published in *Haratch* on February 2, 1928, listed 32 compatriotic unions in Marseille and a total of 54 in France. The compatriotic societies in most cases operated informally, without formal state registration. Frequently, the address listed in their

[124] See next chapter.
[125] Old world hostilities among family clans often found expression in the new settlements as well. In Marseille, for example, two compatriotic organizations of Palu were founded in 1928 in the same neighborhood within three months (Le Tallec 2001, 76).

correspondence was a residential address, usually that of the president of the union or society, or, in some cases, that of a church (Boghossian 2009, 131).

In Lebanon, according to Varzhabedian, the number of compatriotic unions was about 33 in 1927 (Varzhabedian 1981b, 104; cf. Sanjian 2003, 307). Similar to the United States and France, compatriotic unions of Adana, Zeytun, Kharberd, Erzrum, Malatia, Ayntab, Mush, Van, Arabkir, Hachn, Marash and other places, emerged one after another in the 1920s and 1930s (Minasian 1974, 762; Eghiayan 1975, 230; Dallak‘yan 2004, 228). In most cases these were self-help organizations, but more often they were created directly for the purpose of community building and constructing compatriotic neighborhoods.

The loss of hometowns and villages in the Ottoman Empire, as well as the dissipation of all hope for return, inspired many of the compatriotic societies to turn to constructing quarters or towns in the host-countries and Soviet Armenia. If social-political conditions in the United States and France in the 1920s were not favorable for the construction of ethnic quarters and for naming them after the lost ones, conditions both in Lebanon and Soviet Armenia were quite conducive to such undertakings (cf. Le Tallec 2001, 76-7). In Lebanon, the League of Nations and the French High Commission became eventually quite interested in the construction of Armenian quarters. From the mid-1920s, the Communist party leadership in Yerevan also began encouraging investments from Armenian compatriotic societies and other diaspora organizations in order to construct quarters or villages for the repatriating Armenians. The trend of supporting

reconstruction projects became quite prominent among the compatriotic associations in the 1930s. Some compatriotic unions even formally reorganized into reconstruction unions.[126]

Sponsoring Construction Projects in Soviet Armenia and Lebanon

Between 1922 and 1936, compatriotic unions became actively involved in the construction of new quarters for refugees in Soviet Armenia through the branches of the Soviet Armenian Committee for Aid to Armenia (*Hayastani Ognut'yan Komite* - HOK) operating in the diaspora.[127] The union of Arabkir Armenians in the US was the first to make an appeal to the Soviet government in 1924 for approval to establish New Arabkir in Soviet Armenia. The next year, on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the Sovietization of Armenia on November 29, 1925, the government of Soviet Armenia announced the founding of the New Arabkir quarter in Yerevan (Pakhtigian 1934, 37; Melik'set'yan 1985, 111-12). The *Verashinats'* (reconstruction) Union of Kayseri, in turn, sponsored the founding of *Nor Kesaria* in Soviet Armenia (Alboyajian 1937, 1996, 1998-2004). The cooperation of the compatriotic unions with the chapters of HOK continued in the late 1920s and 1930s, resulting in the construction of the quarters of *Nor Malatia (1927), Nor Sebastia (1928)* in Yerevan, and the emergence of some new villages and towns, such as the village of *Nor Kharberd* (cf. Melik'set'yan 1985, 156-57; Minasian 1974, 768-72; Ter-Minassian 2002, 73, 76).

[126] Boghossian (2009, 131) mentions several such unions in France: the *Verachinatz* (reconstruction) de Palou, *Verachinatz* de Bythania, *Verachinatz* de Gamarak, and so on. There is some fragmented evidence that some compatriotic unions changed into reconstruction unions in the US as well. The Kayseri Compatriotic Union of New York, for example, was renamed to Kayseri *Verashinats* Union in 1929 (Alboyajian 1937: 1979-983).

[127] The Committee for Aid to Armenia was created by the Soviet Armenian government in 1921. The organization established many branches in many countries to solicit aid for the homeland (Soviet Armenia). In the same period, the Soviet authorities launched a repatriation campaign to return some Armenian refugees to the homeland. The activities of the Committee will be thoroughly discussed in the next chapter.

Besides contributing to projects in Soviet Armenia, compatriotic unions pursued significant projects in places with large concentrations of their respective compatriots. Following the permission of the French High Commission in 1926, compatriotic unions began mobilizing resources and expanding their chapters in Lebanon in order to establish quarters for their compatriots. The Beirut chapter of the Compatriotic Union of Marash, for example, was established in 1924. By 1929, the members of this union were able to raise enough funds for purchasing a plot of land and launched the construction of the Nor Marash quarter in Bourj Hammoud in 1931 (Tachjian 2009, 72; Varzhabedian 1981b, 109-110). Similarly, compatriots from the United States funded the local chapter of the Compatriotic Union of Hachn in Lebanon for the construction of the Nor Hachn quarter. Others followed the same pattern (Tashjian 2009, 72-3; Varzhabedian 1981b, 522-23).

In the 1920s and 1930s, compatriotic societies were instrumental in the organization of the Armenian refugee communities in the diaspora. Although fragmented along certain communitarian, compatriotic affiliations and identities, compatriotic unions played an important role in bringing together scattered compatriots in their new host-countries, in supporting needy compatriots, in memorializing the ancestral village or town by constructing and naming certain quarters, and finally in transmitting orally or in the form of various publications the peculiarities of local Armenian culture, customs, habits and dialects to posterity.

Several factors influenced the gradual decline of compatriotic societies and their transnational networks in the diaspora. First of all, the compatriotic societies and unions were staffed and run

by first generation compatriot immigrants, who in most cases personally knew most of the compatriots and all extended families in their village or town. For the second and third generations compatriotic affiliations were of less or no importance at all. The second and third generations did not have any memories of the birthplace of their parents and grandparents, extended families, relatives, neighbors. Secondly, in the West, the American and French milieu, in which the second and third generations grew up, erased the linguistic and cultural particularities of compatriotic neighborhoods. If the first generations spoke their dialects in the United States, retained local customs and traditions, often in close-knit communities, the second and third generations, in most cases, lost most of these distinctions. Lastly, the establishment of Armenian political parties and churches in the host-countries and the resumption of the interrupted by the genocide nation-building efforts by them accelerated the decline of compatriotic loyalties and identities, especially in the Middle East. The fragmented compatriotic affiliations certainly presented a challenge to the extending network of Armenian political parties, who sought to create a more homogeneous Armenian national identity since their founding in the Ottoman Empire. If in the United States and France compatriotic identities faded mostly because of the social and political milieu of these countries, in the Middle East they gradually yielded to the homogenizing projects of Armenian institutions. Political parties reorganizing in the diaspora, as the following chapter will discuss, found fragmented compatriotic affiliations quite challenging for gaining followers. The educational, cultural, athletic and other organizations established by them, therefore, had the intention to produce linguistically and culturally more homogeneous generations in the Middle East, for whom compatriotic identities and affiliations of the first generations would become less relevant and who would grow more oriented towards Armenian national matters.

Conclusion

Social and political conditions in various host-countries made a significant impact on the formation of Armenian communities in two important ways. First of all, they determined the ways in which Armenians had to adjust and integrate in those countries. In the United States, Armenians, as all other immigrants, were expected to assimilate and thereby integrate into American society. In France, Armenians, along with white Russians and other expatriate groups of the former Russian empire, posed an unprecedented problem: people who did not have a state - the *apatrides*. The special status of Armenians, however, did not prevent the French authorities from treating them differently from the other immigrants. If the Armenians had to stay in France, they had to become French by assimilating into French society. Both in American and French societies, in addition to formal state policies, informal discrimination, social exclusion and marginalization of Armenians at work, at schools and elsewhere, all these made the Armenians even more anxious about integration through assimilation. In contrast to these countries, in Lebanon Armenians were formally integrated at the political level almost at their arrival by receiving Lebanese citizenship. After formally receiving equal rights with all other Lebanese, they were expected to create their own communal institutions and representations according to the Lebanese political system. The Lebanese system, therefore, was quite conducive for the Armenian collective efforts of founding churches, schools and other community organizations. It was also the most similar to the Ottoman system, in which Armenians had lived for generations.

Secondly, country contexts made a significant impact on the role of the Armenian Apostolic church in the host-countries. While the separation of church and state was the norm both in the United States and France, American and French societies had developed different perceptions of religion and religiosity. In the United States, church affiliation and attendance had been part of the American culture and the American way of life. Assimilation into American society or becoming an American implied, therefore, affiliation with and regular attendance of church services. Armenians, who were eager to be socially included, to be fully integrated and assimilated, often through sacrifices like name changes, would still remain affiliated with a Protestant church or with the Armenian church. In French society, the French identity had been separated from any religion. Church affiliation and attendance was not part of the French *laïcité*. Armenians seeking to integrate into French society, therefore, did not see church attendance as one of the important attributes of being French. In Lebanon, finally, church affiliation was not even a choice. As Lebanese citizens, Armenians had to be affiliated with one of the confessional communities - Apostolic, Catholic or Evangelical. These particularities of contexts, thus, determined the absolute importance of the Armenian Apostolic and other Armenian churches in Lebanon, the centrality of the Armenian Apostolic Church in the United States, and the somewhat insignificant role of the Armenian Church in France in the shaping of Armenian communities. For this and some other reasons, as the following chapter will discuss in detail, in struggling to define their attitudes towards Soviet Armenia and to gain followers to their cause, the political parties made the Armenian church a battleground in the United States and Lebanon, while in France the church was spared major confrontations.

Chapter 3

In Search of Armenia Between the Two World Wars

Introduction

The Sovietization of Armenia and the loss of hope for achieving any larger Armenia after the Treaty of Lausanne posed serious questions for the Armenian political parties, now all operating in the diaspora. As the first chapter concluded, they had to redefine their respective attitudes towards the small portion of the homeland that survived under the guise of a Soviet republic, in the government of which none of them were permitted to participate. The first part of this chapter analyzes the dynamic interrelations between Soviet Armenia and the Armenian political parties in the diaspora, which eventually shaped the conflicting orientations towards Soviet Armenia among the Armenian political parties. The second and third parts examine the implications of the pro- and anti-Soviet orientations taken by the top decision making bodies and leaderships of these parties in their respective host-countries, and the struggle among the Armenian political parties for gaining influence among the diverse Armenian immigrant and refugee masses. This chapter argues that the Armenian parties developed different and often conflicting perceptions of Armenian homeland and Soviet Armenia and actively contributed to the production of mutually exclusive identities, ideologies and discourses in the diaspora. Compatriotic identifications and narrow perceptions of homeland associated with ancestral

villages or towns in the Ottoman Empire, outlined in the previous chapter, were challenged and mostly replaced with idealized and conflicting images of the Armenian homeland, promoted by the political parties. Those Armenian parties which assumed a more pro-Soviet orientation, began propagating Soviet Armenia as the homeland of Armenians and actively supported projects initiated by the Soviet Armenian government. The Dashnaktsutyun, which assumed a more anti-Soviet orientation, envisioned itself as the government in exile, sought to dominate the Armenian community affairs abroad, retained the symbolism of the short-lived Republic of Armenia (1918-1920), and propagated a more abstract homeland, an Armenia to be achieved in future. The struggle among the Armenian political parties resulted in tensions, conflicts and violence in many communities and led to a schism in the Armenian Apostolic community in the United States. In their attempts to gain followers, the parties, in the meantime, significantly contributed to the forging of a more homogeneous Armenian identity, especially under more favorable social-political conditions for community building in Lebanon.

Because the archives of the Armenian political parties are not available, editorials, articles and correspondence authored by the eyewitnesses, immediate participants and agents of these events published in political party periodicals or often as separate pamphlets, are treated in this chapter as primary sources. Relying on a large body of such works[128] by former and active Dashnak leaders,[129] the leaders of Soviet Armenia,[130] the Hnchakyan[131] or Ramkavar activists,[132] as well

[128] Full list of these sources is provided in Bibliography.
[129] Such as Hovhannes K'ajaznuni (1923), Simon Vrats'yan (1923a, 1923b, 1923c, 1924, 1928), Shavarsh Missakian or Ruben Ter-Minasian (in *Haratch*), Shahan Natali and others (in *Husaber, Mardgotz* and other Dashnak-leaning newspapers).
[130] Such as Alexander Martuni (Miasnikyan) (1925) and Ashot Hovhannisyan (1925).
[131] Such as Mihran Aghazarian (1926).
[132] Such as Arshag Ch'obanian and his *Anahit*.

as on published documents of other Armenian organizations[133] and secondary studies, rather than treating the Armenian organizations as monolithic structures, this chapter presents the debates and tensions within and among the Armenian political parties in detail and more accurately, than previously provided in secondary sources. The discussion here and in the following chapter is meant to demonstrate how in the process of defining attitudes towards Soviet Armenia and in their rivalry for power in Armenian communities, the Armenian political parties became instrumental in the shaping of Armenian diasporic identities and in the transformation of the Armenian dispersion into a transnational diaspora.

[133] Such as the *Documents on the Schism in the Armenian Church of America* (1993) published by the Diocese of the Armenian Church, or the founding documents of the Committee for Aid to Armenia (Sargsyan 2003).

Homeland Reconsidered: The Sovietization of Armenia and the Formation of the Pro and Anti-Soviet Attitudes in the Diaspora

The Sovietization of Armenia in 1920, the politics of Soviet Armenian government towards the Armenian refugees and diasporic organizations in the 1920s and 1930s and the Treaty of Lausanne, which sealed the Armenian question and recognized the Republic of Turkey, all these in many ways determined the policies of reorganizing Armenian political parties in the diaspora. The agreement signed by Boris Legran, the Bolshevik diplomat, and Dro (Drastamat) Kanayan, the Defense Minister and the representative of the Republic of Armenia, on December 2, 1920 transferred power in Armenia to the Bolsheviks. The Bolshevik-Dashnak agreement promised not to persecute the Dashnaks and members of other socialist parties, and the leaders of the outgoing Republic, such as Simon Vrats'ian, Dro, Alexander Khatisian, did not leave thereafter Armenia immediately. The promise was broken after the Military Revolutionary Committee (*Revkom*) assumed power in Armenia. Many Dashnak leaders were soon harassed and imprisoned. Some were exiled, and property expropriations became the norm. This was in part due to the new economic policies of War Communism[134] (Vrats'ian 1923a, 73-4; 1923b, 66-75; Hovannisian 1997c, 343; Suny 1997b, 348-50). Tension between the Bolsheviks and the Dashnaks led to a massive uprising against the *Revkom* and the Bolsheviks on February 18, 1921, which temporarily restored Dashnak power in Erevan and adjacent provinces of Armenia. The Committee of Salvation of the Homeland (*Hayrenik'I p'rkut'yan komite*), founded and

[134] Economic policies of the Bolsheviks during the Russian civil war of 1918-1921 later came to be known as War Communism. This policy included coercive nationalization of industry and banks, restrictions on the market and increasing control over the food production and distribution (for more details on War Communism, see Raleigh 2006, 157-63; cf. Suny 1997b, 348).

headed by Simon Vrats‘ian as a temporary government, had to cede the power to the Bolsheviks a second time, now by force, as the revolt was suppressed by the advancing Red Army in April 1921. The uprising left no chance of reconciliation between the Bolsheviks and Dashnaks. Intolerance and mutual enmity escalated and most Dashnak leaders and supporters of the revolt had to flee to Iran. The February uprising was one of the reasons, which forced the Bolshevik leadership in Moscow to reconsider its policies in Armenia and Transcaucasia. The *Revkom* was replaced by a new government under the leadership of Alexander Miasnikyan, who had proved to be a loyal Bolshevik at positions he held in western Russia (Suny 1997b, 351). The Treaty of Kars concluded with Turkey in October 1921 established peace in the region and conditions for the rebuilding of Armenia as a Soviet Socialist Republic. The Armenian homeland, as it had been imagined in the nineteenth century, reimagined following WWI as the United and Independent Armenia and partially actualized on paper in the Treaty of Sèvres and the Wilsonian award, was now reduced to an actualized tiny Soviet Republic (Map 3.1). The Armenian political parties, now reorganizing in the diaspora, had to define their orientations towards Soviet Armenia, towards its Soviet-Bolshevik regime. These new orientations would depend on Soviet policies in Armenia and policies towards Armenians in the dispersion. While the twin Armenian Delegations in Paris were still negotiating with the Allied Powers the possibility of creating the Wilsonian Armenia in the summer of 1921 (see Chapter 1), the Soviets from Armenia initiated a series of policy programs towards the Armenian refugees and orphans[135] dispersed in Europe and the Middle East.

[135] The Armenian Genocide produced tens of thousands of orphans, who became a matter of concern not only for Armenian organizations and Soviet Armenia, but also many international humanitarian organizations. Among these international organizations, the American Near East Relief was the most active in the opening and maintenance of Armenian orphanages across the Middle East, in Asia Minor, in the Republic of Armenia (later Soviet Armenia). Armenian organizations, such as the AGBU, were also actively involved in the projects for Armenian women and orphans (cf. Melk‘onyan 2005, 81ff; Kévorkian 2011, 759-60).

Map 3-1. Armenia in the Soviet Period (1921-1991)
(Source: Hewsen 2001, 243)

Soon after the Bolshevik takeover of the country, the new leaders announced a repatriation of Armenians to the homeland (Step‘anyan 2010, 36). On September 13, 1921, the government of Soviet Armenia created the Committee for Aid to Armenia (*Hayastani Ognut‘yan Komite,* hereafter HOK) with the purpose of raising funds from Armenians in the diaspora in order to ease the plight of the economically devastated country and support the large number of starving refugees and orphans (cf. Melik‘set‘yan 1985, 152-53). The inaugural appeal of HOK to the Armenian people in the diaspora, read, in part, as follows:

> ***To the Armenian People dispersed in four corners of the world*** [emphasis in original]
> Listen! The Committee for Aid to Armenia is calling on you! The council of Armenian activists of all currents convened and literary scholars in the capital of Armenia is appealing to you. You have perhaps never heard their voices in such unison and unanimity…. The free and independent Armenia is finally rising … [t]oday the Committee for Aid to Armenia [HOK] hereby announces to all the Armenians everywhere that peace has already been established in our homeland and [she is] in peaceful and

> harmonious relations with its old neighboring peoples. She is now attending to healing her wounds and recovery. The government has mobilized all its resources to help people survive the prevailing and the anticipated famine in particular and to rebuild the destroyed country. …
>
> … At a time, when the neighboring proletarian peoples are extending their hand of brotherly assistance to the Armenian workers today…, when the American people are continuing their aid with greater effort, is it possible for you to remain indifferent to her sufferings and efforts of construction – you, her migrant exiled brother; you, who are far from the homeland, with all your thoughts harking back to the homeland? It is impossible!
>
> Yes, the HOK realizes full well that you too are divided along various political party lines, just as any people in a political and civil society. The HOK itself is made up of people with different political viewpoints, but it is fully aware that saving the Armenians from starvation and the rebuilding of the destroyed Armenia are above all political disagreements. And [it is with such] reasoning [that] they have all rallied around this noble cause, have formed an independent and a non-partisan public body and invite everybody, one and all to action. Of like mind is the government of Armenia's Soviet republic, which not only grants full rights for activities, but also supports everybody and every organization, all those who want to help – to come in person, witness and supervise their assistance. Now, listen Armenians, wherever you are – from Europe to America, Egypt to India and everywhere else. Hear the call of the homeland and hasten to help in anyway you can, so that you may achieve what you have dreamed of for centuries – a free and prosperous homeland (quoted in Sargsyan 2003, 184-5).

The appeal of the government of Soviet Armenia and HOK was quickly disseminated to all diaspora communities. In two respects the appeal and the activities of HOK made an important impact on Armenian political parties and other Armenian organizations in the diaspora. First of all, the appeal explicitly promoted Soviet Armenia as *the* homeland, bringing the debates on Armenian homeland to a completely new level: the homeland was not only defined in strictly territorial area, Soviet Armenia, but also by its Soviet leadership. Secondly, because of this amalgam of the country with its leadership, the appeal to cooperate with the homeland basically meant cooperation with the Soviet Armenian Bolshevik leadership and their representatives. The Armenian parties, now in the exile, were expected to define their attitudes not only towards accepting or rejecting Soviet Armenia as the homeland, but also, and perhaps more importantly, towards the Bolshevik regime established after the Sovietization.

The new conditions posed serious challenges especially for the Armenian National Delegation, dominated by members of the AGBU and the Ramkavar party, and the Delegation of the

Republic of Armenia, represented solely by the members of the Dashnak party. Armenian political parties and delegations were reluctant to immediately convene World Congresses and respond to the appeal of the government of Soviet Armenia. The delay in the implementation of the provisions of the Treaty of Sèvres, the unstable situation in Turkey, the resumed negotiations between the Allied Powers and Turkey in 1922-23 in Lausanne and the opposition of the Allied Powers to the expansion of the Russian Soviet regime instilled some hope that the state of affairs could change in favor of Armenians and for the rise of a larger Armenia, than the Soviet Republic.

The Treaty of Lausanne, concluded in July 1923 between the Allied Powers and Turkey, made no reference to Armenians or Armenia and recognized the Republic of Turkey. Without directly referring to the treaties concluded with the Bolsheviks in Moscow and Kars, the Treaty of Lausanne, however, also indirectly recognized Turkey's borders with Soviet Union (Soviet Armenia) as final. At Lausanne, all hopes for an independent or large Armenian homeland vanished into thin air. Following the treaty of Lausanne, Armenian political parties convened their world congresses to (re)define their goals, future objectives, and their orientation towards Soviet Armenia and the Bolshevik leadership under these new conditions.

The Sovietization of Armenia and the Hnchakyan Party

Among the three Armenian political parties, the Hnchakyans enthusiastically hailed the creation of Soviet Armenia. The pro-Bolshevik orientation of the Hnchakyans had taken shape since the

formation of the Comintern (Communist International) in 1919, and on May 1, 1920, the Hnchakyans participated in the rally in Yerevan, organized by the Bolsheviks against the Dashnak government (Djeredjian 2002, 174). A few months after the Sovietization of Armenia, on February 23, 1921, *Eritasard Hayastan,* the official organ of the Hnchakyan party in the Untied States, wrote:

> The absolute safety of the Armenians is guaranteed thanks to the Sovietization of Armenia. The Armenian Workers [upper case in original] should no longer think that they do not have a homeland, that they do not have a future. They have it all. Soviet Armenia is the homeland, the home, the future (*K'arasnameak* 1944, 41-42).

The Hnchakyan newspaper declared Soviet Armenia as the homeland, the future of Armenian-American workers, while the same party a few years ago was reluctant to recognize the Republic of Armenia and anticipated that the Russian revolution would reach not only Transcaucasia, but also Ottoman Armenia as well (*ibid.*). In this context, the Hnchakyans had to reconsider their relations with the Comintern. In February 1923, The Comintern leadership expressed for the dissolution of the Hnchakyans party in all countries and called on the Hnchakyans to join local Communist or Workers' parties abroad (Djeredjian 2002, 189). In response to this, between 1923 and 1926, the Hnchakyan chapters in Russia and Transcaucasia mostly dissolved, while chapters in the diaspora were torn by internal disagreements. Many Hnchakyans individually left the party and joined the local Communist or Workers' parties in Lebanon, Greece or the United States, but the proponents of the independent existence of the party continued running the chapters and the Hnchakyan organs, like *Eritasard Hayastan*[136] (cf. Djeredjian 2002, 183-89, 193-209).

[136] Yeghig Djeredjian's (Yeghik Cherechian) (2002) article, "SDHK-Komintern Haraberut'iwnnerě" [Relations between the Hnchakyan Party and the Comintern], sheds an important light on the internal discord and disagreements among the Hnchakyans on the party's relations with the Comintern.

The official stand of the proponents of the independent Hnchakyan party towards Soviet Armenia was defined in the Eighth World Congress, convened in October 1924 in Athens. Despite the strained relations with the Comintern, the Congress determined that Soviet Armenia was the realization of the goals pursued by the Hnchakyans for thirty-eight years, ever since the foundation of the party in 1887 (Kitur 1962, 516; cf. Libaridian 2007, 38; Walker 1990, 354). However, it was not the end for the Hnchakyan party. The party envisioned itself as the advocate and defender of Soviet Armenia in the diaspora against other "nationalist" parties (Djeredjian 2002, 205). In realization of this goal, the party apparatus, current and former rank and file in various countries significantly contributed to the formation and development of HOK branches in France, the Untied States and elsewhere (Ch'ormisian 1975, 111, 115; Kitur 1962, 495, 499-500). Despite the internal controversy around the Comintern, most of the active Hnchakyans remained pro-Comintern and continued favoring the Bolshevik regime in Soviet Armenia (cf. Djeredjian 2002, 208-9).

The Sovietization of Armenia and the Dashnaktsutyun

The Sovietization of Armenia had a near devastating effect on the Dashnaktsutyun. The ceding of power to the Bolsheviks in Armenia led to one of the most critical periods for the party. Internal disputes, mutual criticisms, accusations, accompanied by self-reflexive critique and evaluations of the immediate past of the Dashnak party, often resulted in open confrontations and intra-party violence. The Conference of Bucharest, convened in April 1921, in view of the failed

February uprising and in the absence of some Bureau[137] members, strongly criticized the recent activities of the Dashnak Bureau because "it had not risen up to the historic moment, had not worked to forge a strong Party organization, [had instead] entered the government, abandoning the organizational ranks" (Dasnabedian 1990, 150). Two years later, in April-May 1923, in another Dashnak conference in Vienna, Hovhannes K'ajaznuni, the first prime minister of the Republic of Armenia, presented a lengthy and controversial report on the recent activities of the party. In his retrospective analysis of the Dashnak activities since 1914 K'ajaznuni believed whatever the party had planned and executed turned out to be detrimental to the Armenian people. Therefore, he concluded that the continuation of the Dashnaktsutyun could bring further harm to Armenians:

> Turkish Armenia no longer exists. The Great European powers have abandoned our cause. Half of the Armenian people has been massacred or dispersed in four corners of the world; the other half is homeless and bleeding and is in need of long period of rest. The Republic of Armenia is attached to Soviet Russia as an autonomous province; we cannot separate our State from Russia, even if we wished to, and we must not wish it, even if we could. The Party is beaten and has lost its authority, has been expelled from our country, and cannot return home, while it has no business to pursue in the communities abroad (K'ajaznuni 1923, 70).

K'ajaznuni could no longer see any reason for the existence of the party and suggested a political "suicide." For K'ajaznuni, the Armenian Bolsheviks were the legitimate successors of the Dashnak party, because they had been able to end wars and to secure the borders of Armenia – two existential ends that the Dashnaks had failed to meet (*ibid.,* 64-5; 74). The title of his presentation expressed the essence of his proposal: "Dashnaktsutyun Has Nothing to do Anymore" [*H.H. Dashnaktsutiwnĕ anelik' ch'uni ayl ews*]. The speech and the book, which came out the same year, entailed much recrimination and controversy, but at the same time significantly contributed to the reevaluation and redefinition of the goals of the Dashnaktsutyun.

[137] The Bureau is the highest executive organ of the Dashnaktsutyun. The Bureau members are elected at the Dashnak World Congresses, which convene usually every 4 years (cf. Dasnabedian 1974).

The majority of leaders within the party did not share K‘ajaznuni’s extreme criticism and especially disagreed with his verdict. While some could agree with some of his comments, many rejected his call for self-abolition. A number of responses appeared to K‘ajaznuni’s speech. Simon Vrats‘ian, a prominent Bureau member and the last prime minister of the Republic of Armenia, delivered one of the most comprehensive responses to K‘ajaznuni. In a book entitled *Kharkhap‘umner, H. Kajaznunu “H.H. Dashnakts‘ut‘iwně anelik‘ ch‘uni aylews” girk‘I aṙt‘iv* [Gropings. On K‘ajaznuni’s “Dashnaktsutyun has nothing to do anymore”], published in 1924, Vrats‘ian addressed K‘ajaznuni’s criticisms in detail and justified the policies of the Dashnak party since 1914. Justifications provided by Vrats‘ian relieved the Dashnak leaders for being held responsible in the misfortunes of Armenians. More importantly, however, the book defined the reasons why the party should continue to exist in the diaspora. The reasons, as suggested by Vrats‘ian, can be summarized in three major points. First of all, Vrats‘ian insisted that Bolshevism was alien to Armenians. It was anti-Armenian and dictatorial; therefore the Dashnaktsutyun must oppose the Bolsheviks abroad (Vrats‘ian 1924, 168; 172; 172-74). Secondly, as Vrats‘ian assumed, dictatorships usually did not last long, and the Dashnaktsutyun must keep the masses in the Armenian communities ready for their return to Armenia when Bolshevism eventually fell (*ibid.,* 177-178). Finally, Vrats‘ian believed that the Armenian workers in the diaspora did not sympathize with the Ramkavar party, and the Hnchakyans were no longer influential. The Dashnaktsutyun, therefore, remained as the only political party to represent the interests of Armenian masses in the dispersed communities (*ibid.*, 183-85). Vrats‘ian did not rule out the possibility of an alliance with Turkey against the Bolsheviks. He declared that the Independent Republic of Armenia and the Armenian people “had no bigger enemy than Russian Bolshevism” (*ibid.*, 21).

Vrats‘ian’s account was the reflection of his personal experience with the Bolsheviks and the Kemalists. Between the two foes, he would rather rely on the Turks than on the Bolsheviks. In 1921, as the leader of the Committee of Salvation of the Homeland during the February revolt in Soviet Armenia, Vrats‘ian and his administration were even ready to solicit Turkish military assistance to fight against the Bolsheviks in Armenia. In his series of publications in the *Hairenik* monthly titled *Republic of Armenia,* Vrats‘ian wrote in retrospect:

> We even made an appeal to the Turks[138] asking for military assistance against the Bolsheviks. And we sent one of our officers to the Turkish command in Igdir for this purpose. Of course we were aware that the Turks would not help us against their ally [i.e. the Russians – V.S.], but with our appeal we wanted to stress our friendly attitude and to inspire confidence in us. … When in the middle of March the situation on the frontline worsened, I inquired from many of our officers, our commander in chief, the members of the Salvation Committee of the Homeland and the representatives of political parties as to what they thought of Turkish assistance; and they all, one and all, asked me to appeal to the Turks for assistance. One can imagine how hated the Bolshevik rule was, that even the Turkish Armenians preferred the Turks! (Vrats‘ian 1923c, 43-4)

Vrats‘ian, who persecuted and was persecuted by the Bolsheviks, who led a rebellion against them and had to flee the country, had a pro-Turkish bias. He had no problem cooperating with the anti-Bolshevik forces and the Turks. Some sources suggest that Vrats‘ian and his former colleagues in the government, who knew the exiled leaders of the Georgian Mensheviks and Azerbaijani Musavatists, occasionally met with them in the early 1920s allegedly in search of ways to join their efforts in the anti-Bolshevik struggle (Nat‘ali [1928] 1992, 143-45; Dallak‘yan 2004, 82). K‘ajaznuni was certainly aware of the Dashnak leadership’s attempts to regain power in Armenia at all costs, and, if needed, by allying with the Turks. In fact, K‘ajaznuni himself was the proponent of the pro-Turkish orientation during the Dashnak revolt in February 1921.[139] In his speech at the Vienna conference in 1923, however, K‘ajaznuni occasionally discussed the

[138] *Tajik* in the original.
[139] Vrats‘ian quotes an extensive excerpt from K‘ajaznuni’s letter to the Committee of Salvation of the Homeland, written in March 1921, to show the discrepancy between the latter’s beliefs in 1921 and 1923 (Vrats‘ian 1924; 13-23)

possibilities of the Russian or Turkish orientations, now calling for a pro-Russian/Bolshevik orientation:

> Today, there are two real powers that we must recon with, Russia and Turkey. It so happens that our country today is in the Russian orbit and is largely secured from Turkey. If Russian hegemony is eliminated, Turkish-Tatar hegemony will inevitably replace it. It is Russia or Turkey, the Bolsheviks or the Milli Turks [Kemalist Nationalists – V.S.] – we do not have any [other] choice. When we are faced with such alternatives, it seems to me that there should not be hesitations: of course Russia and not Turkey, of course the Bolsheviks and not the Milli Turks (K'ajaznuni 1923, 65).

K'ajaznuni's calls for a pro-Bolshevik orientation, however, were overshadowed under the heavy criticisms of his verdict by Vrats'ian and others. Vrats'ian's book expressed the viewpoints of most of the Bureau[140] members and other leaders of the party, who had held various governmental positions in the Republic of Armenia, while K'ajaznuni's viewpoints did not have many supporters among the highest leadership of the party.

The Tenth World Congress convened in Paris in November 1924, shortly after the publication of Vrats'ian's response to K'ajaznuni. It established the anti-Soviet orientation of the Dashnaktsutyun and reelected most of the previous Bureau members. The majority of the newly elected Bureau, three out of five – Simon Vrats'ian, Ruben Ter-Minasian, Arshak Jamalian, had been ministers in the former Republic of Armenia[141] (Ch'ormisian 1975, 96-8; Dasnabedian 1974, 146; 1990, 160-61). The 1924-1925 World Congress, thus, bestowed legitimacy on the previous leaders, and the top echelon of the Dashnaktsutyun bypassed the question of holding them accountable for the party's failures. In a sense, the "same leaders" declared themselves "innocent." Yet, the anti-Bolshevik orientation adopted by the Vienna Conference and the Tenth World Congress was not widely shared even among the leaders of the Dashnaktsutyun.

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[140] The incumbent Bureau members were elected in 1919, at the Dashnak World Congress in Erevan.

[141] Vrats'ian was the last prime minister, Ter-Minasian was the former Minister of Defense and Jamalian was the former Minister of Communications in the Republic of Armenia. The other two were Shahan Nat'ali and Shavarsh Missakian (Dasnabedian 1974, 146).

Shahan Nat‘ali (1884-1983), one of the Bureau members elected in the Tenth World Congress, later strongly criticized the attempts of some leaders of the party to cooperate with the Georgian Mensheviks and the Azerbaijani Musavatists against the Bolsheviks and voted against joining the pro-Turkish and anti-Bolshevik Union of Caucasian Peoples (also known as "Prometey"[142]) (Ch‘ormisian 1975, 101, Dallak‘yan 2004, 83; Nat‘ali [1928] 1997, 16, 143-47; Walker 1990, 353). Probably for his radical views, but formally accused of embezzling funds, Nat‘ali was suspended and eventually expelled from the party prior to the Eleventh World Congress of 1929. The intra-party tensions between the anti-Bolshevik and anti-Turkish factions, however, did not end.

The discord of views erupted in September 1932, when several known Dashnak figures in Paris began issuing a new Armenian-language newspaper called *Mardgotz* (*Bastion*). The founders announced *Mardgotz* to be the official organ of the Dashnak Western European Central Committee. In the first issue of *Mardgotz* (September 11, 1932), the title of the centered front page announcement read in bold: "**OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation [Dashnaktsutyun] (1890) Western Europe Central Committee**." Right below the title a small text-box quoted from *Haratch*:[143]

[142] Nat‘ali accused Simon Vrats‘ian and Ruben Ter-Minasian for their involvement with the pro-Turkish organization called "Prometey," the Union of Caucasian People, which aimed at liberating Caucasus from the Bolsheviks. In his booklet *Turkism from Ankara to Baku and Turkish Orientation*, Shahan Nat‘ali brings evidence from various publications by Vrats‘ian and Ter-Minassian to prove their pro-Turkish orientation (Nat‘ali [1928] 1992, 147-58). The internal tensions and conflicts spilled over into the public sphere, when Shahan Nat‘ali founded the newspaper "Azatamart" and openly criticized the policies of his colleagues. He was supported by the local Dashnak Central Committee and many rank and file members in Paris (Nat‘ali [1928] 1992, 14-6)

[143] *Haratch* was the semi-official organ of the Dashnaktsutyun in Paris, established in 1925. Formally, it was independent from the Dashnaktsutyun, but the founder, Shavarsh Missakian, was a member of the Dashnak party, was elected to the Dashnak Bureau at the Tenth World Congress in 1924-25 and reelected at the Eleventh World Congress in 1929 (Dasnabedian 1990: 200-201).

EXPULSION
Due to grave anti-disciplinary violations the following comrades of the European Region are hereby expelled from the ranks of the A. R. Federation [Dashnaktsutyun]: A[bo] Aboyan, L[evon] Mozian, V[azgen] Shushanian, M[krtich'] Yerits'ants', and M[esrop] K'uyumjian.

ARF Bureau

Haratch 4. Sept. 1932, #1974.

The text of the *Official Announcement* introduced the expelled comrades as members of the Dashnak Western European Central Committee.[144] They had been reelected in the party's European Regional Congress, the highest local decision making body on August 18, 1932. Therefore, the editors of *Mardgotz* argued that the Bureau's decision could not go into effect. Except from revealing the escalating conflict between the Bureau and the Western European Central Committee, the first issue of *Mardgotz* did not elaborate much on specific problems causing the rift. However, the subsequent issues did. On October 13, 1932, Mesrop K'uyumjian published a "Fourth Letter," which accused some of the Bureau members for ceding Kars to the Turks, for abandoning Western Armenia by signing the Treaty of Alexandropol and for abandoning Russian Armenia by the agreement concluded with Boris Legran.[145] Reflecting on K'ajaznuni's work, the article concluded: "…the party Bureau-state not only has nothing left to do, but also stands accused before the public court of Turkish Armenians." The article reminded its readers that the mission of the Dashnaktsutyun had always been secondary in the Caucasus and had ended after the Sovietization of Armenia. However, the Western Armenian Cause still preserved its urgency.

[144] Lewon Ch'ormisian, a member of the Dashnak party at the time, wrote that besides this five, there were four others in the Central Committee - Levon Kevonian, Sahak Ter-T'ovmasian, Serenekian and Meldonian (does not mention the first names). According to him, these four toned down the criticism of the Bureau, were forgiven and not expelled from the party. They later became strong advocates of the Bureau (Ch'ormisian 1975, 101-102).

[145] The article did not explicitly name Simon Vrats'ian or Ruben Ter-Minasian, but they were the only members of the Dashnak Bureau reelected at the 1929 World Congress, who occupied high posts during the last months of the Republic of Armenia in 1920.

Shahan Nat'ali joined the *Mardgotz* movement and accused the same Bureau members of their perverse expulsions of many, as Nat'ali thought, worthy Dashnaks.[146] In his front-page column "Who Ousts Whom!" on October 20, 1932, he wondered why and by what authority the Bureau, whom he referred to as *the Vrats'ians,* expelled so many influential Dashnak comrades from the party. Similar to K'uyumjian and his other comrades in *Mardgotz,* Nat'ali believed this was because the Caucasian Armenians could not relate to the problems of the Ottoman Armenians, but who had been running the Bureau since 1919. Nat'ali thought some Ottoman Armenians, who cooperated with *the Vrats'ians,* were serving the interests of the Caucasian Armenian leadership: "Long life to Shavarsh Missakians, Karo Sasunis and Vahan P'ap'azians; there had always been Ottoman Armenians, who in the pursuit of personal interests … served as tools for the Turkophilia of *the Vrats'ians'* " (*Mardgotz*, October 20, 1932).

Accountability, which had been avoided by Vrats'ian and the critics of K'ajaznuni, and the anti-Bolshevik orientation taken at the 1924-1925 World Congress, became eventually the major reason behind the rift between the faction representing the Caucasian Armenia (Simon Vrats'ian, Ruben Ter-Minasian, Hamo Ohanjanian), and the others, representing the diaspora (Dasnabedian 1990, 159). The *Mardgotzakans*[147] wanted a change in the Bureau leadership and in its policies. They believed that the anti-Bolshevism pursued by the Bureau cast a dark shadow on the real mission of the Dashnaktsutyun – the Ottoman Armenian Cause. The *Mardgotzakans* expressed a concern for the almost decade-long "indolence" of the party in pursuit of the Ottoman Armenian

[146] After Nat'ali was expelled from the Dashnaktsutyun in 1929 he made a trip to the United States. Apparently, he could not solicit many supporters among the local Dashnaks for the anti-Turkish orientation. A few years later, he had to return to France and join the expelled members of the *Mardgotz* Central Committee (cf. Walker 1990, 445).
[147] The Bureau and the pro-Bureau faction referred to the anti-Bureau faction gathered around *Mardgotz* as the *Mardgotzakans* [literally - the Mardgotz affiliates].

Cause. They demanded action and the revival of the revolutionary traditions of the first generation party leaders. In order to reach these goals, they believed some of the Bureau members should be removed and should be held accountable before the Dashnak World Congress, in the anticipation of which they continued acting as the Western European Central Committee.

To the greatest disappointment of the *Mardgotzakans,* the Twelfth World Congress, convened in February-March 1933 in Paris, in the absence of the *Mardgotz* leaders approved all the accusations and claims against them and reconfirmed the Bureau's decision to expel them. If before the World Congress the *Mardgotzakans* argued that the Bureau did not have the authority to expel the members of the Western European Central Committee, they could no longer claim legitimacy after the Congress. The decision of the 1933 World Congress marginalized the *Mardgotzakan* movement and, by January 1934, it had come to an end.[148] In January 1934, the former *Mardgotzakans* founded the Western Armenian Liberation Pact [*Arevmtahay azatagrakan ukht*] in Paris and began publishing the weekly *Amrotz* (*Fortress*). But the movement became less and less influential, as it continued to be heavily persecuted by the Dashnaktsutyun (cf. Lalayan 2001, 9-12).

The Bureau leadership of the Dashnaktsutyun, despite internal conflicts in the party, forged a solid anti-Bolshevik and anti-Soviet orientation through severe disciplinary actions, like suspensions and expulsions, against the most disloyal elements. In parallel to the internal "cleansing," they claimed of being a government in exile. Following the course suggested by

[148] One of the *Mardgotzakans*, Mesrob K'uyumjian, was exposed as a collaborator of Soviet secret services, which created an internal conflict among the followers of Mardgotz and accelerated its decline.

Simon Vrats'ian, the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia continued to represent "Armenia." The Delegation continued issuing Armenian passports to Armenians from their office at *71 avenue Kléber* in Paris. After the recognition of the USSR by France in 1924, the French government ceased to recognize such Armenian passports, although the party continued to project itself unofficially as the government-in-exile until 1965[149] (cf. Tölölyan 1991a, 181-82; Ter-Minassian 2010).

The institutionalization of strong anti-Bolshevik and anti-Soviet attitude in between the wars refocused the efforts of the leaders of the Dashnaktsutyun from Soviet Armenia and homeland to internal matters of self-discipline and to matters of community building effort in the diaspora (Panossian 2006, 294 cf. Atamian 1955, 330; Ch'ormisian 1975, 55; Le Tallec 2001, 34-5; Ter Minassian 1997, 75). Rejecting the Bolshevik-Communist leadership of Armenia, the Dashnaktsutyun occasionally entertained the idea of *anhayrenik' petut'yun,* literally "a homeland-less state" in an attempt to rally the Armenian refugees around a pan-diasporic organization. In public addresses, speeches and newspaper articles, the Dashnak leaders often redefined the idea of homeland and state to bypass Soviet Armenia. In a public speech given in Cairo, Egypt, on January 20, 1924, for example, Nikol Aghbalian, the former Minister of Education and Culture in the Republic of Armenia, declared:

> It is necessary, that the Armenians colonies abroad create a supreme organization with appropriate branches, and organize regional, communal bodies, to be united through a special and relevant constitution of a central council; a sort of moral state, a homeland-less state [*anhayrenik' petut'yun*] with all state attributes, and national and international legal systems. That will be the supreme body for the Armenians abroad, it should rally the Armenians scattered everywhere, as well as their national, cultural and economic

[149] The delegation created the *Office Céntral des Refugies Arméniens* in 1926, which by the decree of January 11, 1930, provided special certificates to Armenian refugees for administrative purposes (cf. Le Tallec 2001, 185). Alexander Khatisian, the last president of the Republic of Armenia, succeeded Avetis Aharonian as the head of the Delegation, and Hrant Samuelian succeeded Khatisian in 1945. In 1965, the delegation was reorganized into the Comité de Défense de la Cause Arménienne [Committee for the Defense of the Armenian Cause] - CDCA (see chapter 5, cf. Mouradian and Kunth 2010, 40; Ter-Minassian 2010)

> activities through state and civic interrelations. On the other hand, each community should isolate itself, should not become citizens of [their] country of residence, to join through such separation its national organization, an organization which corresponds to its nationality, which should be recognized by the League of Nations (*Husaber*[150] (January 22, 1924). Quoted in Top'uzyan 1986, 206).

Nikol Aghbalian's "homeland-less state" surfaced with slight variations in public speeches of the Dashnak leaders elsewhere. In his interview to *Haratch* on May 7, 1926, Avetis Aharonian remembered a recent speech of his in Lyon: "The Armenians … should not perceive themselves as expatriates, but must connect with the homeland by heart; because the homeland is not only the land, but the person with all his feelings, ideals, traditions and aspirations." In another article in *Haratch* (October 20, 1926), reflecting on the role of compatriotic unions in Armenia, Ruben Ter-Minasian, stated: "The word "Armenia" means very little to the exiled masses, because Lake Van is not next to Lake Sevan, and Surb Karapet of Mush has not been saved with Ējmiatsin." Even if formally the Dashnaktsutyun came out in favor of reconstruction and repatriation programs in Soviet Armenia,[151] in the attempt to rebuild the party and gain influence in the diaspora, many of its leaders preached an abstract homeland, especially for the Middle Eastern Armenians, focusing on the rallying the dispersed and diverse Armenian refugee masses around the party leadership causes, as will be shown below.

[150] *Husaber* was the organ of the Dashnak party in Cairo, Egypt.
[151] Shahgaldian (1979, 104-6) quotes some excerpts from the decisions taken at the Tenth (1924-1925) and Eleventh World Congresses (1929) to argue that the party was "decidedly in favor of the emigration of all Armenian refugees to their homeland." According to him, the policy of supporting repatriation and reconstruction was revised only at the Thirteenth World Congress in 1938, at the time of the Great Purges, in which the party just stated its non-opposition to "repatriation drives and reconstruction efforts."

The Sovietization of Armenia and the Ramkavar Party

The Sovietization of Armenia made an impact on the Sahmandir Ramkavars and Reformed Hnchakyans as well, who merged into a single political party in October 1921, in Constantinople (Dallak'yan 1999, 12-3). The founding congress of the Democratic Liberal Party (*Ramkavar-Azatakan Kusaktsut'yun* or Ramkavar) determined the party's attitude toward Soviet Armenia and defined relations with the Dashnaktsutyun. Acknowledging that the Bolshevik government ensured the security of Armenians in Soviet Armenia, the Ramkavar congress pledged to assist the government of Armenia in economic development at the same time, as it would pursue the Western Armenian Cause in Europe. The Ramkavars remained relatively open to the possibilities of cooperation with the Dashnaks in assisting Soviet Armenia (Dallak'yan 1999, 31-2).

After the Treaty of Lausanne two issues became paramount for the Ramkavar party: the preservation of Armenian identity in the dispersion, and assistance to Soviet Armenia as the only surviving Armenian land. In response to the anti-Soviet orientation of the Dashnak party at the Vienna Conference in 1923, the Second World Congress of the Ramkavar Party, convened in Paris in 1924, repudiated the Dashnak stand and refused to recognize the Dashnak led Delegation of the Republic of Armenia. The congress referred to it as the "Delegation of the Former Government of Armenia" thereby denying its legitimacy (Dallak'yan 1999, 84, 2004, 91-2). The ideological differences of the liberal-democratic Ramkavar and the Soviet regime in Armenia did not prevent them from accepting the Bolsheviks' legitimacy in Armenia as long as it provided for the safety and security of the Armenian people. Compared to past disagreements, tensions and conflicts with the Dashnaks, the incompatibility of the Liberal-Democrat (Ramkavar) and

Communist (Bolshevik) ideologies was less relevant in the Ramkavar attitudes towards Soviet Armenia. If in 1918-1920, the Ramkavars participating in the Boghos Nubar National Delegation would often refuse to recognize the Dashnak governed Republic of Armenia as the homeland (see the previous chapter), after the Sovietization and Lausanne, Arshag Chobanian, one of the leaders of the party, could write in the party organ *Apaga* in 1923:

> The Armenians abroad have now turned their eyes to the Republic of Erevan, which is their national center, their free homeland; and consider assisting it as their chief ideal, their greatest duty and solace… (quoted in Dallak'yan 1987, 368)

In this excerpt Chobanian continually refers to Soviet Armenia as the "Republic of Erevan" but he defines it as the homeland to which the Armenians in dispersion should feel affinity and belonging. During the 1920s and 1930s, Chobanian's designations for Soviet Armenia gradually transitioned from "Republic of Erevan" to "our little Armenia" and finally to "Hayastan" – Armenia (cf. Dallak'yan 1987, 364-72).

Since most of the leaders of the Sahmanadir Ramkavar party had been members of the Boghos Nubar National Delegation in Paris, the close cooperation with the Delegation continued after the founding of the Ramkavar Azatakan Party (cf. Dallak'yan 1999, 84). At the thick of political adversities in Paris, the National Delegation was quick to realize that after the Treaty of Lausanne the Armenian passports provided by the Dashnak government in exile could not get international recognition. Following the appeal of the Delegation made in the summer of 1924, the League of Nations International Office for Refugees made *Nansen Passports* available for the Armenians as well (cf. Melik'set'yan 1985, 144). After the French Recognition of Soviet Union in October 1924, the Armenian National Delegation dissolved on November 30 and proclaimed itself the Central Committee for Armenian Refugees [*Hay gaght'akanats'*

kedronakan handznazhoghov] to deal with the problems of refugees and orphans (Ch‘ormisian 1975, 55, 95).

The Sovietization of Armenia and other Armenian Organizations in the Diaspora

The establishment of Soviet Armenia posed a number challenges not only to the Armenian political parties, but also to various other organizations. Many compatriotic unions operating in the Untied States from the end of the nineteenth century, as the previous chapter demonstrated, had to redefine their goals and forge relations with Soviet Armenia in order to either perpetuate means of their compatriots, to help them settle in Soviet Armenia or to construct quarters or small villages/towns. The Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) also responded positively to the calls of repatriation and cooperation with the government of Soviet Armenia. From the summer of 1923, Boghos Nubar began negotiating with the government of Soviet Armenia about the possibilities of transferring Armenian orphans to Armenia. In October 1923, the AGBU was officially permitted to extend its activities to Soviet Armenia, which was unprecedented in the relations of other diasporic organizations with the government of Soviet Armenia (Melk‘onyan 2005, 171-72; 176-79). In his address in the AGBU World Congress in December 1924, Boghos Nubar spoke of the future of the orphans, stating that the orphans over 17 years old could not stay in the orphanages anymore, but they could be transferred to "Armenia, where it is hoped that they can find employment in land cultivation or small industries…" He went on to comment: "thereby, their dispersion in foreign countries would be partly prevented and the number of Armenians residing in *our homeland* [italic added] would

correspondingly increase…" (quoted in Melk'onyan 2005, 173-74). The chairman of the Armenian National Delegation, who in 1919 and 1920 would refer to the Republic of Armenia as the "Araratian republic," in his 1923 address not only referred to Soviet Armenia as Armenia, but also called it "our homeland." The Treaty of Lausanne and the dissipation of hope that Armenia would become any larger than Soviet Armenia had certainly influenced the choice of words and expressions by such an established diplomat as Boghos Nubar. Accepting Soviet Armenia as the homeland determined the course of the AGBU charitable activities in Armenia. The organization sponsored the construction of villages, hospitals and schools, donated to various educational and scientific programs in Soviet Armenia, as well as sent relief to the needy families and refugees (Melk'onyan 2005, 180-201). Although often criticized by the Soviet Armenian authorities for not focusing all their activities on Soviet Armenia, it contributed most significantly to the rebuilding of Soviet Armenia.

For the Ottoman Armenians, the homeland – the Ottoman Armenia, "no longer existed." Boghos Nubar, Chobanian and some other Ottoman Armenians, who accepted Soviet Armenia as the homeland, did it with certain reluctance. They were not born in Eastern Armenia; they actively refused to recognize the former Republic of Armenia as *Armenia*, which was on the same geographical location as Soviet Armenia. Boghos Nubar expressed a concern even for Soviet Armenia, that the Armenian orphans would eventually become Bolsheviks in Armenia and feared that the Bolsheviks may not allow the orphans to learn their language, history and religion.[152] Yet because of the realization that Soviet Armenia had become the only Armenian state after the Treaty of Lausanne, Boghos Nubar and many other Ottoman Armenians perceived

[152] Boghos Nubar expressed this concern in 1923 in a private conversation with one of the Ramkavar leaders, Avedis Terzibashian, who devoted one of his memoirs to Boghos Nubar (published in 1939) (cf. Melk'onyan 2005, 170)

its Bolshevik regime as the lesser evil compared to the prospect of the dispersion and assimilation of Armenians in foreign countries (cf. Melk‘onyan 2005, 170).

Soviet Nationality Policies, HOK and the Political Polarization of Armenian Factions in the Diaspora

The Sovietization of Armenia and the appeal of the Soviet Armenian government for cooperation through the channels of HOK, thus, became important factors determining the pro- and anti-Soviet orientations of the Armenian elites and institutions in the diaspora. The orientations of the higher decision making bodies of the Armenian political parties and organizations were expressed in the actual task of cooperating or competing with the Soviet sponsored HOK branches, which began appearing in various countries after 1924.

Prior to 1923, HOK was not very active in establishing branches abroad, but after 1924 many HOK branches appeared in various countries with significant Armenian population. According to Melik‘set‘yan by the mid-1930s, HOK had been able to organize more than 200 branches outside the Soviet Union with more than 10,000 members (Melik‘set‘yan 1959, 35). In many countries HOKs acquired legal recognition by local governments, such as in the United States and France, and this provided extra impetus to their activities (cf. Abrahamyan 1967, 385; Ch‘ormisian 1975, 117). To better understand the role of HOK in organizing Armenian communities and its influence on the formation and institutionalization of various Armenian factions, it should be analyzed in the context of Soviet nationality policies. After all, HOK chapters could not operate

independently of the Soviet policies, and, on the whole, HOK became the instrument of the Soviet nationalities policies extending beyond the physical borders of the Soviet Union.

The solution of the nationalities problem in the Soviet Union, contrary to expectations, became conducive to the nation building especially of "small" nations, as many scholars have rightfully noticed. Vladimir Lenin, the ideologist and leader of the Soviet Union, and Joseph Stalin, the first Commissar of Nationalities, shared similar views on this issue. They believed that the best way to deal with nationalisms was to grant them what they aspired for and grant them "forms" of nationhood.[153] The Resolution on Nationalities Policy, adopted at the Twelfth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in April 1923, affirmed the support for the national "forms." Among other recommendations, the resolution specifically suggested to staff the organs of national republics by locals, who spoke the language, knew local customs and traditions; to adopt special laws which would ensure the usage of national languages in local governments and all institutions of the constituent republics; and encouraged the development of Marxist and other ideological literature in national languages (*Dvenadtsatyĭ s"ezd* 1968, 696-7). These policies were directed towards the "suppressed" nations and minorities, and were implemented nationwide. The reforms became known as *korenizatsiia* (179eneration179ion) – the

[153] The Soviet "affirmative action empire," as Terri Martin (2001, 3, 18) defines the "positive support of the forms of nationhood" in the Soviet Union, was the strategy aimed at disarming nationalism by granting what were called the "forms" of nationhood. Lenin distinguished between the "oppressor" and the "oppressed" nations, arguing that the nationalism of the oppressed nations was not dangerous, while the nationalism of oppressor nations should be avoided. Lenin, thus, could tolerate nationalisms and the right to "national self-determination" of the "oppressed" nations, but fight what he called the Great Russian Chauvinism (cf. Martin 2001, 3, 6). Lenin's ideology on nationalities was shared and supported by Stalin, the author of the text *Marxism and the Nationalities Question* (1913-1914. In their attempts to spark a global revolution, Lenin and Stalin envisioned using the nationalisms of small nations as a way of projecting influence beyond the borders of the Soviet Union. Such a policy was attempted at the Western borderland and proved successful in Ukraine, about which a leading Soviet Ukrainian newspaper wrote in April 1924: "There was a time when Galicia served as the "Piedmont" for Ukrainian culture. Now, when Ukrainian culture is suffocating in "cultured," "European" Poland, its center has naturally shifted to the Ukrainian SSR" (quoted in Martin 2001, 9).

establishment of national territories based on national languages and cultures (Marin 2001, 11; Hirsch 2005, 145-46).

Armenia also benefitted from the Soviet Nationalities policies and *korenizatsiia.* It was designated as an Armenian territorial unit and Armenians living elsewhere in the Soviet Union were encouraged to settle there permanently. Armenians were declared a "titular nationality" in Soviet Armenia, which implied that Armenian nationals were privileged to run various administrative positions in their republic. The Armenian language was to be used in all public institutions as the official language of the Republic. Armenian was officially endorsed as the language of instruction, as well[154] (Suny 1993, 154-56). Shortly after the Twelfth Congress, the leader of Soviet Armenia, Alexander Miasnikyan (Martuni) (1885-1925) in his speech published in *Bakinskiĭ Rabochiĭ* [Baku worker] in 1924 noted:

> We know that form and framework are one thing, in which the cultures of different nations develop, and it's altogether another, when these national cultures develop and not only do not hinder, but also complement one another. The best Turkish [means Azerbaijani – V.S.] cultural elements complement the Armenian cultural elements; the best experienced, educated Georgian professors promote Armenian and Azerbaijani culture. We [the Transcaucasian people] are striving to become equals, not to lag behind one another, but we are at the same time creating our culture, [and] our socialist, proletarian culture (Martuni 1925, xxxv).

Miasnikyan was expressing the essence of the Twelfth Congress, which, within less than a year, would be formulated by Joseph Stalin as "proletarian in content, national in form"[155] (Stalin [1925] 1952, 138). The proletarian or socialist content promoted by Miasnikyan ("…we create our culture, our socialist, proletarian culture") and other leaders of Soviet Armenia were applicable not only to the internal matters in Armenia, but also in their relations with Armenians

[154] By the end of the 1930s, Armenia had experienced a cultural renaissance: many cultural, educational, and artistic centers and organizations had emerged; many artists, writers and scholars had been able to produce Armenian literature and art works; the country had achieved full literacy of the population by mandatory schooling (Suny 1997b, 356-57).

[155] In 1930, Stalin reformulated this doctrine as "socialist in content, national in form" (cf. Martin 2001, 12)

abroad. Several months later, Miasnikyan's speech was reproduced in the introduction to his book on the Armenian political parties in the diaspora, entitled *Kusaktsut'iunnerě gaghut'ahayut'yan mej* [Political Parties in Armenian Diaspora]. Miasnikyan's analysis of the Armenian political parties was first of all intended for a diasporan Armenian audience. The leader of Soviet Armenia provided the guidelines of the policies towards the Armenian political parties in the diaspora. His speech in the introduction served as a general point of departure: relations with diasporic political parties could in no case hinder the creation of "socialist, proletarian culture" in Soviet Armenia.

The creation of "socialist, proletarian culture," however, as Miasnikyan envisioned, was not detrimental for Armenia or Armenianness. In response to the Dashnak criticism that Armenia had lost her independence and was suppressed under Bolshevik rule, Miasnikyan quoted many articles from the Ramkavar or AGBU affiliated newspapers to demonstrate that other factions in the diaspora had different perspectives. To illustrate this, Miasnikyan quoted an article from *Gotchnag*:

> You know that you are in Armenia, which despite being linked to Russia through political federation, oversees its internal culture in accordance with its wishes, completely independently, without being accountable to anyone. In reality, Armenia, as a *national Soviet state* [emphasis added], is a sovereign [*ink'nuruyn*] state with its Armenian language and its Armenian culture. Pure, literary Armenian prevails in all institutions, from the people's commissariats to military barracks. There is a special decree, announcing Armenian as a state language (quoted in Martuni 1925, 49).

For the supporters of Soviet Armenia, Armenia was seen as not just a Soviet state, but as a *national* Soviet state [*azgayin khorhrdayin petut'yun*]. Such important national signifiers, as language and Armenian autonomy, in the eyes of many other diasporan organizations mattered more than the *Soviet* regime. The fact that Miasnikyan quoted the passage without omitting the word "national" (in italic) or the expression "Armenian culture" implied his agreement with the

author of the article in *Gotchnag*, which dragged him into a long distance argument with the Dashnaks over the issue of independence. He contrasted the prosperity, security, economic and cultural advancements of Soviet Armenia during its first few years of existence to the short-lived independent Armenia of the Dashnaks, to argue that she now enjoyed a better independence than Dashnaks could imagine (Martuni 1925, 50-2). Drawing extensively on Armenian-language newspapers published in the diaspora (usually those not affiliated with the Dashnaktsutyun), Miasnikyan concluded:

> …There are two [opposing] social poles in Armenian life – communism and nationalism, or Bolshevism and Dashnakism. The former is the new Armenia; the latter is the old Armenia. The former is our revolution, our present and, moreover, our future; the latter is the regressive life of Armenians, the bad past, which is breathing its last (Martuni 1925, 83).

As paradoxical as it may sound, Miasnikyan defined both Communism and Nationalism as two opposing poles in the "Armenian life." However, whether willingly or unwillingly, the Soviets' commitment to national forms, especially to language, was actually forging a kind of Armenian culture in Soviet Armenia, even if "proletarian" or "socialist" in content. It was for this reason that such apolitical unions and organizations, as the various compatriotic unions or the AGBU, and political parties, as the Ramkavars, could develop a pro-Soviet Armenian orientation. Their interest was not promoting socialist ideology or a global communist revolution, but to contribute to the Armenian *national* projects, which they could find plenty in Soviet Armenia, of which they wrote in their newspapers, and to which Miasnikyan referred in his book.

The frequent references to Ramkavar newspapers and authors, however, did not refrain Miasnikyan from criticizing the Ramkavars as well. The strong proponent of socialism defined the Democratic Liberal Ramkavars as the more "peaceful" "bourgeois party of the diaspora," but as another opposite pole to the Bolshevism: "Ramkavars and Bolsheviks are opposite poles.

Regardless of the extent of one of the poles' temporary sympathy towards the other, the confrontation will always continue" (Martuni 61-2). The Hnchakyans were not spared either. Miasnikyan did not even consider the Hnchakyans as a political party, arguing that they had been strong until 1897 and had declined afterwards yielding their place to the Dashnaks (Martuni 1925, 66). In response to Hnchakyan claims that the Bolsheviks were born out of the Hnchakyan party, Miasnikyan wrote:

> The Hnchak is the same Dashnak but more shrouded and from the outset wrapped up in a false socialist veil. There have been Armenian socialists before the Hnchak, fitting their own times. There are socialist elements in Nalbandian's thought. We have comrades, who have gone through the Dashnak way of thinking. Such were those times. We have comrades who, before communism, were in the Hnchakyan ranks, which does not give us any right to consider the Hnchak as our precursor (Martuni 1925, 76).

The principles and orientation towards the Armenian diasporic parties projected by the leaders of Soviet Armenia naturally became guiding principles for the HOK leadership from the mid-1920s through the 1930s. In 1925, Ashot Hovhannisyan, the secretary of the Communist party of Armenia at the time, specifically defined the future perspectives of HOK:

> HOK should stop serving as an arena for the consolidation of the national "living forces," national classes and political parties. It should turn into an organ for organizing the masses of proletariat, which by putting an end to the empty mentality of the convergence of incompatible classes, should contribute to the class stratification of the nation (Hovhannisyan 1925, 23).[156]

In the light of processes in Soviet Armenia, HOK was gradually transformed into what Dallak'yan (2004, 34) refers to as a "non-partisan political party." While created for philanthropic purposes as a Committee for Aid to Armenia (*Hayastani Ognut'yan Komite*), HOK branches formed in the Armenian diaspora became active political agents of class segregation and proponents of the "socialist, proletarian" content. HOK cultural unions, libraries, clubs, theatrical and dance groups appeared one after another in diasporic settlements; HOK produced propaganda material, including literature, films and exhibitions, various albums and postcards

[156] I want to thank Ara Sanjian, who directed me to this source.

about Soviet Armenia. It founded newspapers, through which it reached the Armenian population in the diaspora (cf. Abrahamyan 1967, 385; Melk‘onyan 2005, 220; Melik‘set‘yan 1959, 35-6; 1985, 165).

The policies of HOK were first of all directed against the Dashnaktsutyun, whose name became widely used as the synonym of “anti-revolutionary elements.” The first step towards the implementation of the new policies was defining the criteria for HOK membership. According to the new guidelines, the membership was open to all those who had “friendly attitude towards Soviet regime in Armenia,” and who accepted it as “the native government of our country.” Such politicization of HOK actively excluded the Dashnaktsutyun and its sympathizers from Soviet Armenia related activities. While the Dashnak leadership was confronting significant tensions and internal conflicts on matters of party’s orientation towards Soviet Armenia in the 1930s, the discriminating policies of HOK significantly contributed to the strengthening of the anti-Bolshevik and anti-Soviet orientations among the Dashnak rank and file and sympathizers.

Gradually the new policies of HOK marginalized the Ramkavars and Hnchakyans as well. HOK began distancing itself from what they called “the masked friends” [*dimakavor barekam*] who were thought to be “as dangerous as the non-disguised enemies.” By “masked friends” they basically referred to the Ramkavars, the Hnchakyans and the AGBU (Dallak‘yan 2004, 36). By 1929, many Ramkavar members of HOK quit the organization. The Hnchakyans also began rejecting the exclusivist political orientation of HOK (Dallak‘yan 1999, 104, 138; Kitur 1963,

178). In practice, it seems, in the 1930s, HOK became almost identical with local Armenian Communists.[157]

When an organization, representing the homeland, calling on the diaspora to put aside all political disagreements and come to the assistance of the homeland suddenly began discriminating and defining who could and who could not help the homeland or repatriate, it naturally alienated and provoked counter actions of rejecting the representatives of the homeland, the regime in the homeland, and even the homeland itself. As Ch'ormisian ([1965] 1995, 121-22) concluded, the creation of HOK branches abroad formed three types of allegiances among Armenians:

- Pro-Soviet – who perceived Soviet Armenia and Soviet regime as the best of all possible options for the Armenian people [HOK, Communists and a substantial group among the Hnchakyans];
- Pro-Soviet Armenia – who did not have any particular preference for the Soviet regime in Armenia, but who also did not see any benefit for the Armenian people in being against it [the Ramkavars and the AGBU];
- Anti-Soviet – who considered the Soviet regime as fatal and dangerous for the preservation of the Armenian people and believed it could be replaced by some other regime through constant anti-Soviet struggle [the Dashnaktsutyun].

In practice these options, however, boiled down to anti-Soviet and pro-Soviet orientations, especially during the years of Cold War. The Ramkavars, who were ideologically incompatible

[157] HOK chapters, generally, encouraged Armenian workers to join local Communist or Workers parties in France and the United States (cf. Dallak'yan 2004, 35-8; Djeredjian 2002, 192). The relations between HOK and Armenian Communists, however, need further scholarly attention.

with the Soviets and in theory were in the opposition to the Soviet regime, as it will be argued in the following sections, did practically nothing to oppose to the Soviet regime in Armenia. Instead, they celebrated the Sovietization of Armenia and joined efforts with the ideologically pro-Soviet groups against the Dashnaktsutyun, thereby indirectly supporting the perpetuation of the Soviet regime in Armenia. Therefore, the pro-Soviet Armenia faction, which the Ramkavars represented in theory, was in essence pro-Soviet as well.

Political Rivalries and the Institutionalization of the Armenian Pro-Soviet and Anti-Soviet Factions in the Untied States and France

Since the establishment of Armenian institutions in the diaspora, especially the churches and political parties, tensions and conflicts had become inseparable part of the dynamic processes within Armenian communities abroad. Differences in the social-economic and political contexts in the United States, France and Lebanon, events happening in the homeland or concerning the homeland, as well as the varying conditions under which the Armenian refugees arrived in large numbers to these countries, determined, in many ways, the peculiarities, nature and intensity of these conflicts in each of these host countries. Conflicts, usually between the Armenian Church and Armenian revolutionary political parties and/or among the political parties themselves, had different manifestations, intensity and repercussions in the United States, France and Lebanon.

If in France and Lebanon Armenians formed significant communities only in the 1920s and 1930s, in the United States the formation of Armenian communities had begun several decades earlier. Political competition, rivalries, disagreements and conflicts defined allegiances, affiliations and attitudes in the nascent Armenian communities in the United States long before the Sovietization of Armenia, the emergence of HOK branches in Armenian communities abroad and the Soviets' anti-Dashnak propaganda. Relations between Armenian institutions in the United States in the interwar period, therefore, developed not only in response to events happening thousands of miles away in the homeland, France, or the Middle East, but also as reflections of unique continuities shaped within the Armenian-American context. This section

will start by addressing the Armenian-American institutional context and its continuities prior to WWI. It will then proceed to the examination of events, which led to the formation of mutually exclusive orientations both in the United States and France.

Armenian Political Factions in the Untied States (1880s to 1910s)

By WWI, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation or the Dashnaktsutyun had become the largest Armenian political party in the United States. Between 1903 and 1914, as Mirak (1983, 241-2) observes, the number of local chapters of the Dashnaktsutyun increased from 36 to 77 and the number of members increased from 1,005 to 1,728. The other parties, like the Reformed Hnchakyans or the Sahmanadir Ramkavars, hardly equaled the numbers of the Dashnak party in the United States.[158] The coordination of activities between the local branches, regional central committees and the global central executive bodies of the Armenian political parties were made through the field workers (*gortsich'*) and through various circulating party organs (cf. Mirak 1983, 243). The first Dashnak and Reformed Hnchakyan chapters in the United States appeared in the mid-1890s, and aimed at raising money in support of party activities in the Ottoman Empire.

In order to propagate the Armenian cause, to organize fund raising, and to have access to larger audiences, the revolutionary parties founded periodicals, and took a close interest in being represented on parish and communal councils. The first party papers were *Tzayn Haireniats*

[158] According to the statistics provided by Mirak (1983, 242), the Hnchakyans had about 400-500 members, while the Reformed Hnchakyans, many of whom joined the Sahmanadir Ramkavar party in 1908, were estimated to have around 1,000 followers.

(Voice of the Homeland) and *Hairenik* (Homeland/Fatherland), founded by the Reformed Hnchakyans and the Dashnaks respectively. Both were founded in New York in 1899, but soon moved to the Boston region. *Tzayn Hayreniats* lasted only until 1907. It ceased publication following the schism within the ranks of the party. The two branches, after the schism, established their own newspapers – *Azk* (in Boston) and *Bahag* (in Providence) (Mirak 1983, 251). *Hairenik,* on the other hand, continued and soon became the most prominent Armenian language periodical in New England. The third newspaper was *Gotchnag* (Church Bell), founded in 1900 in Boston. It was sponsored by Evangelical Armenian ministers with no political affiliation (Tootikian 2005, 15). *Gotchnag* served as a neutral alternative to the nationalist propaganda of *Tzayn Haireniats* and *Hairenik*. It encouraged the Americanization of Armenians, educated the readers about "American citizenship obligations, American history and the virtues of republicanism" (Mirak 1983, 249-50). In 1903, the Social Democrat Hnchakyans also founded their newspaper *Eritasard Hayastan* (cf. *Hisnameak* 1953, 5; Federal Writers 1937, 81). In Fresno, California, which also hosted a significant Armenian community, the Dashnaktsutyun was the first to establish its paper *Asbarez* (Arena) in 1908.[159] The Ramkavars did not have any official organ in California until the mid-1920s, but *Nor Kyank* was considered to express their views. *Nor Kyank* was founded by Haigag Eginian (Haykak Ekinian) in 1915, the Reformed Hnchakyan sympathizer in 1914, and after his death *Nor Kyank* was taken over by the Ramkavars (Kooshian 2002, 138-39, Babloyan 1986, 106).

To rally the crowds around them, the political parties also founded clubs and societies, which served as places of socialization, discussion and lectures, as well as informal instruction in

[159] *Asbarez* was preceded by another periodical, *Kaghakatsi (Citizen)* (1902-1909), founded and published by Haigag Eghinian, who was sympathetic to the Reformed Hnchakyans, but the paper remained independent (Kooshian 2002, 137-38; Babloyan 1986, 56).

Armenian history, language and culture. An eyewitness left the following account of one such Hnchakyan clubs in Boston in 1914:

> By 1914 Hunchags maintained clubs in Watertown, Chelsea, Cambridge and elsewhere. Boston was the center. At the Tremont Street club, the rooms were open day and night, receiving members from outlying towns as well as Boston. The tables were crowded with comrades reading papers, books, disputing…. It was a kind of school. One evening each week there were lecture groups, at which the educated comrades spoke on scientific, political and social questions; college and university students were invited to speak on their specialties. … Later the group turned into an educational hearth, which assisted the illiterate to be educated; we promoted the zeal for self improvement (quoted in Mirak 1983, 253).

The diversity of Armenian settlements in New England, California and elsewhere made the mobilization of large number of Armenians around a political cause a difficult task for the political parties. First of all, most of the Armenian immigrants, in the majority of cases former peasants, were illiterate and unable to read an Armenian language newspaper. Secondly, as discussed in the previous chapter, for some, Armenian was not their mother language: Western Armenian, the language of the newspapers, was not used by a significant number of Turkophone Armenian immigrants.

The parties realized that the church had larger followers and in order to reach out to broader audiences, they had to penetrate the church and her flock. Back in the old country, the revolutionary parties had frequently taken the church as a platform to disseminate their revolutionary propaganda (cf. Ormanian [1912] 2001, 5323-326; Papazian 1934, 33-6). Some supporters and members of Armenian revolutionary parties carried the tension of hostilities that had plagued the relations of church and partisan leaders.

Soon after the establishment of an Armenian church in Worcester in 1891, the Hnchakyans[160] began disseminating revolutionary literature in the Untied States. The copies of P'ortugalian's *Armenia* from Marseille, the Hnchakyan organ, *Hnchak,* Raffi's works and other revolutionary literature became widely available at the National Library housed in the church, despite the opposition of the Bp. Sarajian. His attempt to ban this literature raised tensions between his supporters and the Hnchakyans during a meeting on March 26, 1893 to such an extent, that the next day the *Worcester Daily Telegram* reported in bold headlines: "PRIEST WAS IN FIGHT," "ARMENIANS SMASH EACH OTHER WITH TABLES AND CHAIRS" (Mirak 1983, 184; cf. Deranian 1987, 24-5; Kooshian 2002, 91-2; Minassian 2010, 73-4). The violent event led to the dissolution of the Armenian Academy[161] and resignation of Bp. Sarajian in 1893. In order to avoid similar incidents, the board agreed to ban any political discussions at the church (Mirak 1983, 184-85). The incident was the reflection of the strained relations between the Armenian Church and the Hnchakyans[162]. While the church and its leadership were opposed to the violence and the revolutionary tactics of the parties, the Hnchakyans and later the Dashnaks sought to use the church and its leaders to attain certain political ends.

If the first stage of conflicts was marked by antagonism among the Armenian church leadership, their conservative supporters and the Armenian revolutionary parties in general, the conflicts following the foundation of the Armenian Diocese in 1898 gradually developed into antagonisms among political parties. After establishing the Diocese of Armenian Church in the United States

[160] The Hnchakyans were the first to organize branches in the United States. The first Hnchakyan convention in the US was in 1894 in Worcester. The Dashnak branches were forming at the same time, but their influence grew in parallel with the decline of the Hnchakyans after the split in 1896 (cf. Kooshian 2002, 130-32)

[161] The Academy was the organization, which initiated the founding of the first Armenian Apostolic church in Worcester (see the previous chapter).

[162] In 1890, the Hnchakyans organized a demonstration in Constantinople and forced the Armenian Patriarch to hand a petition to the Ottoman Sultan. They remained opposed to the patriarchate thereafter (Hovannisian 1997a, 218).

in 1898, Catholicos Khrimian appointed Bishop Sarajian as the first primate of the diocese. The Diocesan constitution was adopted in 1902, which regulated the relations of the diocese with parishes, church congregation and membership, as well as the election of the primate, the Diocesan delegates, and parish councils (cf. Mirak 1983, 186-87; Phillips 1986, 118). The primate's appointment, rather than selection by the Diocesan Assembly from a list presented by the Catholicos, local assembly or both, and a number of other issues aroused the opposition of the political parties. Coming under intense pressure, Bp. Sarajian had to resign a second time in 1906, now from the position of the Primate of the Armenian Diocese (Ashjian 1948, 23; Minassian 2010, 112-13; Mirak 1983, 187). The right to select a primate, vested in the Diocesan Assembly in the by-laws of the Diocese, made the parish councils very attractive to the Armenian political parties. Obviously, through the parish councils the political parties could exert their influence on the church and its leadership and through the church network on the community.

The founding of the Armenian Constitutional Liberal party (*Hay Sahmanadrakan Ramkavar*, hereafter Ramkavar or the Ramkavar party) in the Ottoman Empire in 1908 found many supporters among the conservative Armenians established in the United States. In contrast to the Dashnaks or Hnchaks, the Ramkavar party was a non-revolutionary party. One of the wings of the Reformed Hnchakyans and their newspaper *Azk* joined the Ramkavars upon their establishment in the United States. Because of its liberal-democratic ideology, church affiliated conservative circles, as well as some well-off Armenian business circles associated with the AGBU, favored the Ramkavars over the revolutionary Hnchakyans and Dashnaks, and many even joined the party (cf. Ghazarian 1988, 21-2; Mirak 1983, 240, 256-57). The Dashnaks

wielded a good deal of influence by the 1910s, as did the Ramkavar party, as its supporters acquired influence by being elected to parish councils.

Following the resignation of Bishop Sarajian, the seat of the primate remained vacant until 1910, when the bishop of Adana, Mushegh Seropian, came to America and was considered as a candidate for the position. Lacking the support of Ējmiatsin, because Adana was affiliated with the Catholicosate of Cilicia, Seropian hoped he could get the office of the Primate by allying with one of local Armenian factions in the elections to the Diocesan Assembly. Among the three Armenian political parties, the non-revolutionary Ramkavars presented a more preferable option for a conservative priest. As Seropian confessed in *Azk* in November 1910, "If I were not a priest, I would join the [Ramkavar] party, I encourage them, I praise their direction, I speak at all their pulpits where I am invited" (quoted in Mirak 1983, 188). Seropian was elected primate in 1911, which sparked another wave of tensions and conflicts between the pro-bishop Ramkavars and anti-bishop factions, including the Dashnaks. With the intervention of Ējmiatsin, Bishop Seropian had to resign several months later and order was restored at the Prelacy in 1913 with the election of Arsen Vehuni, the candidate supported by Ējmiatsin (Ashjian 1948, 25; Minassian 2010, 155-57; Mirak 1983, 189).

The outbreak of WWI provided new grounds for disagreement and tensions among the political parties and the church in the United States. At first, however, the common goal of supporting the Armenian cause in the Ottoman Empire brought all Armenian factions together. On November 12, 1914, the four major Armenian political parties in America – The Hnchakyans (Social Democrat Hnchakyan Party), the Dashnaks (Armenian Revolutionary Federation), the Reformed

Hnchakyan Party and the Ramkavars (Armenian Constitutional Democratic Party) formed a coalition in Boston with the purpose of assisting the Armenians in organizing self-defense groups in the Ottoman Empire (*Documents* 1993, 4). The AGBU, which by then had developed a large network of chapters in the United States, was involved in humanitarian aid and charitable activities in the Ottoman Empire and elsewhere[163] (Mirak 1983, 177; Melk'onyan 2005, 147-150).

Seeking to unite all these efforts, the Diocesan Assembly of November 26-27, 1914 entrusted the Primate of the Armenian church to "officially take upon himself the task of providing moral and financial assistance to Armenia" and with the help of the Plenipotentiary Committee "secure the cooperation of the Inter-party Committee of Boston" and the AGBU (*Documents* 1993, 6). After meeting with the representatives of the parties, the Diocesan Plenipotentiary committee was able to form the American Union for the Defense of [Armenian – V.S.] National Interests [*Azgayin shaheru pashtpanut'yan Amerikayi handznakhumb*] in 1914. The AGBU and the Armenian Evangelical Church also joined the National Defense Union, and Primate Arsen Vehuni became the President of the Union (*Documents* 1993, 7).

The Union did not last long and was dissolved in 1917 due to internal tensions and disagreements. The Dashnaks insisted that 50% of the raised funds should go to Tiflis in Transcaucasia for the organization of the Armenian volunteer corps in the Russian Empire. The Dashnak proposal was rejected and the party withdrew from the Union. The rivalry and opposition of Armenian political parties, stemming from different policies pursued toward the

[163] The first AGBU chapter was established in Boston in 1908. In the course of next five years, by 1913, the organization had already established 54 chapters in the United States with the support of the Protestant Armenian clergy. The total members of the AGBU in 1913 were about 2,400 (Melk'onyan 2005, 147-50).

Ottoman Empire, were actively acquiring new dimensions in the United States. The AGBU was not spared from criticism either. The Dashnak papers of the time accused all members of the AGBU for being affiliated with the Ramkavar party (*Documents* 1947, 9-10). *Hairenik* even charged the AGBU as "parasites … negligent in their calling … inefficient … the pawn of bureaucrats … a juggler of figures" (quoted in Mirak 1983, 178). Because of their antagonism to the AGBU in the Untied States, the Dashnaks had formed their own charitable organization, the Armenian Red Cross (*Hay Karmir Khach'*) in 1910 in New York. The organization was entirely represented by women and aimed at providing aid and relief to needy families in wartime, and supporting various Armenian initiatives, events, projects in peacetime (Mirak 1983, 178; Sonentz-Papazian 2010, xi, 3-4).

Before the Sovietizaiton of Armenia in 1921 and the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, antagonisms and alliances of the parties with the Diocese of Armenian Church in the Untied States, thus, fluctuated, reflecting events taking place thousands of miles away. In 1917, at the initiative of the Armenian National Delegation led by Boghos Nubar, the Armenian political parties formed the Armenian National Union of Egypt. Nubar had been able to negotiate with the European powers in Paris the creation of an Armenian legion as part of the Eastern Legion to fight against the Turks in Palestine. The Armenian National Union of Egypt sent three representatives to the United States – Step'an Sabah-Gulian (Hnchak), Artavazd Hanemian (Dashnak) and Mihran Damadian (Mihran Tamatian) (Ramkavar) in order to restore unity among the Armenian-Americans, as well as to solicit their support for the initiative of the Armenian National Delegation (Djizmedjian 1930, 344-46). The efforts of the representatives proved fruitful, as once again all four political parties, the Diocese of the Armenian Church, the Armenian

Evangelical Church and the AGBU came together to form the Armenian National Union of America in March 1917. The Union recruited 1172 volunteers for the Armenian Legion in 1917 (Djizmedjian 1930, 353). Yet the rapidly changing wartime political conditions in the Old Country, the collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917 and the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in 1918 once again sparked disagreements and frictions that led to the eventual dissolution of the Union. Armenian factions in the United States, thus, entered the interwar period with the experience of some cooperation but most often of tensions and conflicts, which intensified in the following decades.

The Republic of Armenia and Armenian Political Factions in the United States

Having consolidated its hold over the independent Republic of Armenia by the late 1918, the Dashnaktsutyun gradually developed a self-perception as the only legitimate power to represent the Armenians. In the declaration of May 28, 1919, the *de facto* Dashnak dominated government of the Republic of Armenia declared itself as the government of the aspired "United Armenia." In addition, in the eyes of the European powers, the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia, headed by Avetis Aharonian, became a more legitimate representative of the Armenians, than the Armenian National Delegation, appointed by the Catholicos of Armenians in 1912 and led by Boghos Nubar. The National Delegation could not tolerate another Armenian delegation headed by some "unknown people from Erevan" and was reluctant even to recognize the Republic as that of "Armenia." In Boghos Nubar's imagination Armenia was much larger and also encompassed the lands of the Ottoman Armenia and Cilicia (see chapter 1). The declaration by

the Dashnaktsutyun in Armenia made on May 28, 1919, and the disagreements between the two delegations in Paris translated into renewed disagreements and conflicts between the Ramkavars and the Dashnaks in the United States. The Dashnaktsutyun demanded that the Armenian-American National Union recognize the government in Yerevan as the legitimate government of United Armenia. The Union, created at the initiative of the Armenian National Delegation and dominated by the Ramkavars, could not agree to such demands. Unable to achieve their goals, the Dashnak representatives withdrew from the Union. The Hnchakyans had withdrawn earlier, after they had realized that their small representation could not affect the decisions of the Armenian National Union (Djizmedjian 1930, 363; 390-1).

After quitting the Union, the Dashnaktsutyun attempted to regain control over it by controlling the Diocese and its representatives on the Armenian National Union of America (cf. *ibid.,* 364). Following the deposition of Fr. Vehuni in 1917 by the Diocesan Assembly, Bp. Shahe Kasbarian (Shahe Gasparian), with the approval of the Catholicos of Ējmiatsin became the Locum Tenens. Fr. Vehuni, the incumbent, refused to resign, and was supported by the Dashnaktsutyun. On October 20, 1918, in a separate Assembly in Providence, Vehuni was elected Primate of the Armenian Diocese, causing a split from the Diocese in Worcester. After having gained control over the Diocese based in Providence, the Dashnaktsutyun elected three representatives to the Armenian National Union, hoping thus to break the Ramkavar majority therein. The Dashnak representatives, however, were rejected by the Union as illegitimate (Ashjian 1948, 31; Djizmedjian 1930, 365; Kooshian 2002, 181).

In Los Angeles, where the Dashnaktsutyun was stronger, the incipient Armenian community experienced a similar rift in the elections to the Holy Cross Church board in 1919. As a result of fraudulent elections, the previously Ramkavar-dominated board came under the domination of the Dashnaks, who attempted to separate this church from Worcester Diocese and join the Dashnak-controlled Diocese in Providence (cf. Kooshian 1987, 93; 2002, 117-18; 138-39). In a letter addressed to Bp. Shahe Kasbarian, the Dashnak board of the church accused the Primate of turning "into an agent of a political faction" and of favoring the Union. Hence, the Dashnaks refused to recognize him as "the religious leader of [Armenians in] America" (quoted Kooshian 2002, 117).

The church schism was resolved only in 1920 with the intervention of Catholicos Gevorg V Surenyants (1847-1930). His Plenipotentiary, Archbishop Khoren Muradbekian, arrived from Ējmiatsin to reconcile the factions and restore the unity of the Armenian Church in America. The election of Archbishop Tirayr Ter Hovhannesian as the new Primate and the withdrawal of the Church from Armenian National Union brought the factions together and put an end to the schism in the church (Achjian 1948, 31; *Documents* 1993, 12-8; Djizmedjian 1930, 364-65; Minassian 2010, 205). The unity of the church did not last long, as once again, the rapidly changing conditions in Armenia and Europe thousands of miles away made the Armenian Church in the United States a major stage for fateful political confrontations.

The Sovietization of Armenia, Formation of HOKs and the Crystallization of the pro- and anti-Soviet attitudes in the United States and France

Accusations and recriminations between the Dashnak and the Ramkavar sponsored newspapers flamed up anew as the news of the 11th Red Army marching into Armenia reached the shores of the United States (Kooshian 2002, 306-309). The response of the Dashnak California chapter to the Sovietization of Armenia was calm. On December 10, 1920, *Asbarez* wrote:

> Yesterday we stood at the side of the Armenian state. Today we are at the side of the Armenian government. It doesn't matter if that government is Soviet or non-Soviet. And with the appearance of Soviet Armenia we have the hope that our nation's desires will be attained more than we were able to achieve attached to European imperialism (quoted in Kooshian 2002, 305).

As elsewhere, anti-Soviet attitudes among the Dashnaks in the United States crystallized gradually, through internal discords in the 1920s. Similar to France, many American Dashnaks, as Kooshian (2002, 313-15) argued, were critical of the leadership and their anti-Bolshevik stand. The anti-Bolshevik (Soviet) attitudes of the Armenian-American Dashnaks took shape under the influence of the party's official anti-Soviet course adopted by the Tenth World Congress (November 1924 – January 1925) and the leadership who sought to implement the decision, but very significantly also in the relations with HOK branches in the United States.

The first HOK branches in the United States appeared in 1922. The Hnchakyans greatly contributed to the founding of HOK branches in the United States following the visit of the representatives of Soviet Armenia, Grigor Vardanyan and Artashes Karinyan. Grigor Vardanyan was a former Hnchakyan, who encouraged the local Hnchakyans to support the creation of HOK branches (Kitur 1962: 499). Despite the decree of the Hnchakyan Executive Committee of America, which instructed the Hnchakyan branches to "cooperate with the Committee for Aid to

the Homeland [*sic*]" (Kitur 1962, 499), Vardanyan personally met with the Hnchakyan branches in New England and New York to ensure cooperation with Soviet Armenia. Meanwhile, he urged the Hnchakyans to join the Communist party in the United States (Djeredjian 2002, 192). "Now that the short and long term goals of the Hnchakyan party have been realized by [the establishment of] Soviet Armenia," Vardanyan argued, "there is no longer a need for the Social-Democrat Hnchakyan Party" (quoted in Kitur 1962, 500).

In 1925, after the momentous HOK plenum, which redefined its mission abroad,[164] the government of Soviet Armenia sent a new delegation abroad to promote the activities and facilitate the formation of new branches of HOK and the (Soviet) Armenian Red Cross.[165] The three members of the delegation, Karen Mik'ayelyan, Grigor Vardanyan and Dr. Spandarat Kamsarakan, the Red Cross representative, left Armenia on November 1925 and returned in December 1926 (Melik'set'yan 1958, 39). One of the first destinations on their itinerary was Paris, where the fate of the Armenian people had been discussed at the Paris Peace Conference six years earlier, where the headquarters of the twin Armenian delegations were located, and where some of the most prominent leaders of the Armenian organizations had clustered from the early 1920s. The HOK delegation spent a few weeks in France (Vardanyan 1984, 85-6). The mission was quite effective, as during the visit the delegation was able to establish three HOK branches in Paris and other branches in Lyon, Vienne, Sent-Étienne, Valence, Marseille, Nice,

[164] As the previous section discussed, HOK thereafter became an agency of spreading Soviet propaganda abroad.
[165] For a while, there were two Armenian Red Cross organizations: one was founded by the Dashnaks in 1910 and the other by the representatives of Soviet Armenia in the mid-1920s. The Dashnak sponsored Armenian Red Cross was soon renamed to Armenian Relief Society [*Hay ognut'yan miut'yun*]. Similarly, in France, where the chapters of Soviet Armenian Red Cross began operating in the 1920s, the Dashnaktsutyun had to rename their Red Cross organization *Croix Bleue des Arméniens de France* (CBAF) in 1928. Quite often, however, *Haratch* referred to the *Croix Bleue* as the *Fransahay karmir khach'* [Armenian Red Cross of France] (see for example Simon Vrats'ian's article on the Armenian Red Cross in *Haratch*, December 23, 1933).

and elsewhere. Among the Armenian working class in France, HOK branches quickly became very popular (Ch‘ormisian 1975, 112-14).

The founding of HOKs created tensions and conflicts within the French-Armenian community, especially between the proponents and supporters of HOK and the anti-Bolshevik Dashnaks. Since its founding in August 1925, *Haratch* published a number of articles, revealing these tensions, disagreements and often violent conflicts between the pro-communist HOK sympathizers and the Dashnak rank and file. Initially, Shavarsh Missakian, the Dashnak Bureau member and the editor of *Haratch*, occasionally published open-minded articles about HOK. In November 22 and December 6, 1925, *Haratch* even published an extensive interview with Karen Mik‘ayelyan, and included another extensive coverage of the report of the HOK representatives, elaborating in detail the activities of HOK in Soviet Armenia. Gradually, however, *Haratch* took an intensely anti-HOK stand, after Missakian realized that HOK was not a politically neutral organization and it pursued Soviet policies abroad. Article 4 of the HOK program, quoted by Missakian in his December 6, 1925, editorial, read: "…All those, who do not have a negative attitude against Armenia can become HOK members." It was interpreted as an explicit invitation for struggle against HOK. In effect, HOK actively discriminated against the sympathizers and affiliates of the Dashnaktsutyun, fearing their alleged "anti-revolutionary" and "anti-Bolshevik" connections. The antagonism between HOK and the Dashnaks intensified after 1926 and escalated into occasional fistfights, violence and even bloodshed. *Haratch* reported about an incident on May 5, 1926 in Lyon, where a clash broke out between the "red bastards" (pro-Soviets) and those who attended the talk of Avetis Aharonian, the president of the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia. The pro-Soviet propagandists accused Aharonian of describing the

"patriotic calls of HOK representatives as howls" and wanted to disrupt his public address. The conflict ended with one of the demonstrators shot to death. Similar incidents happened later in Valance, Grenoble, Paris and elsewhere (Ch'ormisian 1975, 126). Both factions effectively utilized the social-political conditions of France and Europe, where international workers' movements and exploitation at workplaces encouraged workers to join socialist and communist organizations, all the while the capitalist and national-socialist regimes resisted and repudiated the workers' movements and the spread of communism.

In 1926, the HOK delegation arrived in the United States. As in France, the delegation began disseminating pro-Soviet Armenia propaganda in various Armenian communities in the United States. The propaganda materials included a documentary entitled *Soviet Armenia* and other materials, which promoted the image of Armenia as a "Worker's Paradise" (Kooshian 2002, 331). The Delegation arrived in Fresno in July and met with the community at the Fresno Civic Auditorium on July 23, 1926. The HOK chapter in Fresno had been formed several months ago and hosted these events. While the "enemies of Soviet Armenia," i.e. the Dashnaks, were not expected to attend the meeting, the local clergy, both Apostolic and Protestant, were invited to share the platform with the delegates from Soviet Armenia. HOK leaders perfectly realized that the community in the diaspora would be interested not in Socialism, but in the rebuilding of Armenia, as well as the preservation of the Armenian language and churches. Therefore, they much emphasized and elaborated on those topics through their propaganda materials. When the documentary *Soviet Armenia* began with the first Armenian letters appearing on the screen, the public clapped and shouted in excitement. Karen Mik'ayelian narrated the film for the audience: "Here is Erevan, here are the streets of the city, the university, the library, the statues of Freedom

and Gamar Katipa;[166] and the President of Armenia, Mr. [Sargis] Hambardzumyan. Happy people, smiling, working!" Then the documentary moved from Yerevan to Leninakan, Vagharshapat (Ējmiatsin), to the ruins of the medieval cathedral of Zvart'snots'. Mik'ayelyan continued narrating: "…see Khach'ik Vardapet [Dadian], see the pitiable former conditions of our orphans, see the opening of the Shirak Canal, see the happy dances!" (quoted in Kooshian 2002, 334-35). The narration was national, both in form and content: the emphasis on Yerevan, Leninakan, Vagharshapat (Ējmiatsin), Zvart'nots', the mentioning of Khach'ik Vardapet, Gamar Katipa, was all about Armenia and Armenian content. Socialist content was only implied – all this was achieved under the Bolshevik rule. The Bolsheviks were reconstructing Yerevan and Leninakan and brought happiness to the people. As Mik'ayelyan reported to the HOK Central Board on their missions, the documentary created much excitement among the Armenian audiences wherever it was screened (Vardanyan 1984, 81; 85). Some local Armenian newspapers considered the Bolsheviks just "as patriotic… and just as cultivated as the Armenians of California" (quoted in Kooshian 2002, 336). Even the radically critical Dashnak organ *Asbarez* reported that the documentary made a good impression on "homesick" Armenians (Kooshian 2002, 342). As in Fresno, so throughout the US, the mission of the HOK delegation was successful. Upon their return from the States, Karen Mik'ayelyan's final report detailed that HOK had established 45 branches and the Armenian Red Cross had founded 61 branches in various cities of the United States. The next country to host a large number of HOK branches at that stage, was France with 32 chapters (Vardanyan 1984, 86).

[166] *Gamar Katipa* was the pen name of an influential and inspiring nineteenth century Armenian poet Raphael Patkanian.

The exclusion of Dashnak sympathizers and party members from the HOK and Soviet Armenia-related activities created much resentment among the followers of the party. On various occasions, the party condemned the Bolsheviks and "their fellow-traveling bourgeois foreign elements" for using HOK to neutralize and isolate the Dashnaktsutyun (cf. Kooshian 2002, 332). Following the earthquake in Leninakan in October 1926, *Asbarez* condemned the Bolsheviks on December 31 for accepting aid from their class enemy, the bourgeois AGBU and liberal Ramkavars, but rejecting it from the Dashnaks. *Asbarez* commented that the enmity towards the Bolsheviks was by no means directed against the Armenian people in Soviet Armenia. The Dashnak criticism expressed in their press had certain objective grounds. As Karen Mikʻayelyan's reports also confirm, during their global tour, the HOK delegation did not have any intention to damage relations with such wealthy Armenians, as Boghos Nubar or other members of the AGBU. By establishing friendly relations with the AGBU notables, the HOK leaders anticipated to secure all their wealth and funds for Soviet Armenia.[167]

In parallel to the Dashnak exclusion from HOK, the Dashnak press in New England began actively propagating an anti-Soviet orientation among its readership. To reinforce the revised ideological and policy course of the party in the United States, Reuben Darbinian, the former

[167] Friendly relations with the AGBU, however, did not last long. Upon the return of the HOK delegation, when the collected donations and pledges seemed to be much less than they had anticipated, Karen Mikʻayelyan published a book, entitled *Hay zhoghovrdakan harstutʻyunnerĕ artasahmanum* [Armenian National Wealth Abroad] in 1928. The book targeted first of all the AGBU, accusing it of unwillingness to invest all its resources in Soviet Armenia and for "hiding" the national wealth of the Armenians (Melikʻsetʻyan 1959, 40). The alienation of the AGBU continued in the following years and culminated after a speech given by Aghasi Khanjian, the First Secretary of the Communist Party in Armenia (from 1930 to 1936). Khanjian accused the AGBU and its new president, Calouste Gulbenkian, for sponsoring the Dashnaks in their attempts to create an "Armenian home" in Syria, for the "anti-Soviet imperialist intervention" (Melkʻonyan 2005, 223). Gulbenkian had assumed the AGBU leadership in 1930, after the death of Boghos Nubar. Following this incident, he resigned in 1932 (Melkʻonyan 2005, 225). While the AGBU continued contributing to various projects in Soviet Armenia and to the repatriation of Armenian refugees, the volume of aid significantly declined and the organization began sponsoring projects in the Middle East. The tightening of social and political space in Soviet Union during the Stalinist socialist offensive and the subsequent dissolution of the AGBU in Armenia in 1935 also contributed to the refocusing of the AGBU efforts entirely to diaspora until WWII.

Minister of Justice of the Republic of Armenia, moved to the United States after being expelled from Soviet Armenia in 1921. Darbinian had experienced persecution and imprisonment at the hands of the Bolsheviks and was a fierce anti-Bolshevik. Almost immediately upon his arrival in the United States, Darbinian assumed the editorship of *Hairenik Daily*[168] in 1921 (Federal Writers 1937: 76). In 1922, the Dashnaktsutyun chapter in the United States began publication of the literary-political journal *Harenik Monthly* with Darbinian as the editor in chief. In the inaugural editorial of *Hairenik Monthly,* Darbinian wrote that national independence and "political freedom had become … an existential issue" for the Armenians. He declared that the creation of an independent Armenian State was the ultimate purpose of the current generation and that *Hairenik Monthly* was to be devoted to this purpose. Following the mission declared by Darbinian, the monthly began actively publishing political essays by Darbinian and his colleagues Simon Vrats'ian and Ruben Ter-Minasian. Darbinian's *Hay k'aghak'akan mtki degerumnerĕ* [Wonderings of the Armenian Political Thought], Simon Vrats'ian's *Hayastani Hanrapetut'iwn* [Republic of Armenia], *Ejer motik ants'yalits'* [Pages from the Near Past], Ruben Ter-Minasian's *Hay heghapokhakani mĕ hishatakaranĕ* [The Memoirs of an Armenian Revolutionary], as well as various other essays by such well known Dashnak figures as Armen Garo (Garegin Pastrmachian), the first ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to the United States; Avetis Aharonian and others. These essays served the purpose of justifying and forging the anti-Bolshevik stance of the Dashnaktsutyun and defining its future mission of liberating Armenia from the Bolshevik-Communist dictatorship. The articles in *Hairenik Monthly* were instilling anti-Bolshevism as an inseparable part of the Dashnak identity.

[168] *Hairenik* weekly was founded in 1899, became a daily in December 1915 and continued to be the official organ of the Dashnaktsutyun in America (see also "Patmutyun," http://hairenikweekly.com/history. Accessed August 26, 2014).

Two processes, thus, institutionalized the anti-Bolshevik attitude of the Dashnaktsutyun and solidified its ranks vis-à-vis the pro-Bolshevik faction in the United States and France: the top-down implementation of the anti-Soviet course adopted at the Vienna Conference in 1923 and the Tenth World Congress (1924-1925), which often included coercion and expulsions,[169] and the exclusion of party members and sympathizers from HOK activities. The parallel processes eventually were channeling the Dashnak leadership, the rank and file and sympathizers toward the same direction of forming a solid anti-Bolshevik and anti-Soviet stand in the course of the 1920s and 1930s. Compared to France, the internal crisis of the Dashnaktsutyun in the United States, following the expulsion of the Dashnak leaders from Soviet Armenia, was apparently resolved relatively easier. By 1920, the Dashnaktsutyun was an established party in the United States with a considerable number of followers. The longer established the Dashnaktsutyun with stronger roots as an Armenian-American community organization in the United States, was quite different from the emerging Dashnak chapters throughout France and elsewhere. The independence of Armenia reinforced the self-perception of the Dashnaktsutyun in the Untied States as the only legitimate power to represent the Armenians. The Sovietization of Armenia and the expulsion of the Dashnak leaders from Soviet Armenia generated some dissatisfaction among the party ranks and even some dissenters, but the party ranks in the US remained coherent compared to the internal conflicts in France (cf. Djizmedjian 1930, 512-13). The internal coherence of the Dashnaktsutyun in the US was provided by already institutionalized tensions and conflicts with their opponents (particularly the Ramkavars), which also had a specifically American context. In the past decade, since 1914, whatever had happened elsewhere, for the

[169] The adoption of anti-Soviet stand was, however, not a rejection of Soviet Armenia. Initially, the Dashnaktsutyun, as argued above, was even supportive of the programs, repatriation and rebuilding of neighborhoods for Armenian refugees in Soviet Armenia as reported in the decisions of the Tenth and Eleventhes World Congresses (cf. Shahgaldian 1979, 104-106).

Dashnaks on the American soil it had boiled down to a struggle against the Ramkavars and church leaders so as to gain full control over the Armenian Diocese and Armenian churchgoers.

Political Polarization, Church Conflict and the Schism of the Armenian Community in the United States

The reluctance of the United States to recognize the Soviet Union until 1933 enhanced the Dashnaks' self-perception as the only legitimate political party to represent the Armenians. The party retained the symbolism of the 1918-1920 Republic of Armenia and continued celebrating the anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Armenia on May 28 annually. The immigrant Armenians, who were still hesitant about accepting Soviet Armenia as 'the homeland,' were more inclined to sympathize with the Dashnaktsutyun (cf. Tölölyan 1991a, 181-82). The supporters of Soviet Armenia, allied with the HOK branches, on the other hand, celebrated November 29, the day of the Sovietization of Armenia, as the date of the "real" rebirth of Armenia. The differentiation of national celebrations, symbolism, partisan and organizational affiliations further polarized the community. One of the major symbols distinguishing the Dashnaks from their opponents in their public events was the Tricolor flag of the Republic of Armenia. All the events organized by the Dashnaks had the Armenian Tricolor, while their more fragmented pro-Soviet opponents did not use the old flag of the Republic. For the Dashnaks, the use of the Tricolor became a symbolic act expressing their protest and rejection of the Soviet government in Armenia. For the Dashnak opponents the flag of the Republic belonged to the past; it was increasingly losing its initial meaning and becoming solely the symbol of the

Dashnaktsutyun.[170] As long as events were scheduled and organized on different days or at different times, disagreements and conflicts did not produce any clashes and violence. But during the commonly celebrated events, church holidays, or during parish council elections, clashes often were unavoidable. Armenian churches and the Diocese in the United States provided a common space where confrontations between representatives of different factions would occasionally occur.

Many Armenian church councils in the US were dominated by Ramkavar/AGBU or Dashnak members and sympathizers.[171] The fact that the ecclesiastical head of the Armenian diocese was under the Soviet rule in Ējmiatsin was a matter of concern first of all for the anti-Soviet Dashnaks. The party leadership, however, did not take any action against the incumbent Primate, Archbishop Tirayr Ter Hovhannesian. The Primate was elected several months before the Sovietization of Armenia, in July 1920, and remained an explicit Dashnak sympathizer. The Dashnak opponents condemned the Primate for permitting the celebrations of May 28 inside church premises (*Documents* 1993, 18; Minassian 2010, 203). The presence of many Dashnak members in church councils and the political activity of the Armenian churches in the United States were brought to the attention of the Catholicos in Ējmiatsin as well. Under pressure from Ējmiatsin and local community, Archbishop Ter-Hovhannesian resigned in 1928. On June 26, 1929, in the name of the Catholicos, the Supreme Spiritual Council of the Holy See of Ējmiatsin sent the following circular to all Armenian Church Primates:

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[170] Some fierce critics of the Dashnaktsutyun went as far as to call the Tricolor "a piece of rag not deserving any honor" (cf. Dallak'yan 1999, 276; Varzhabedian 1981a, 77).

[171] The Soviet policies officially separated the church from the state in 1922, and although not officially, significantly discouraged and suppressed the influence of Ējmiatsin both within Soviet Armenia and in the parishes abroad (Matossian 1962, 90-95; Minassian 2010, 200-203). Following this policy, HOK branches in the diaspora, in general, refrained from involving in parish board, councils and church affairs.

> From the day of its establishment until now, Holy Etchmiadzin, and the Armenian Church, has throughout its history kept away from factional and political strife, realizing that the Church is the spiritual parent of all Armenian faithful and, at times of political difficulties, it has a moral obligation to be the loyal guardian of their interests.
>
> Etchmiadzin still maintains the same policy today and conducts itself according to the same principle, but,
>
> Considering that there are partisans, particularly Tashnags, who are trying to turn the Church and Church assemblies into forums for political propaganda and making anti-Soviet speeches there – for example, according to information that has reached us, such incidents have taken place in certain places in the diaspora – and that our representatives, the clergy, have not prohibited the delivery of such speeches;
>
> Also considering that there are individuals and groups who have intentionally spread, and are spreading, wicked slanders about Etchmiadzin for the sake of their personal or organizational monetary interests;
>
> The Holy See hereby declares that [the Church] is far from adhering to any party nor will it protect the interest of any faction but … she states her loyalty and friendship towards the Soviet regime and advises all the Diocesan Primates as well as the religious jurisdictions and the clergy subject to them to be likewise loyal and friendly towards the Soviet regime. Having as a guide the principle of division of church and state, they are asked not to allow speeches against the state or to permit the exploitation of Church functions and institutions for anti-Soviet propaganda. The Armenian faithful must be advised to follow the same course. It should be made known that the opposite course is and will hereafter be disapproved and subject to censure (*Documents* 1993, 20-21).

Gotchnag published this circular on August 31, 1929. The circular explicitly instructed the Primates not to favor especially the Dashnaks, who were "trying to turn the Church and Church assemblies into forums for political propaganda and making anti-Soviet speeches;"[172] called them to be loyal to the Soviet government in Armenia and implicitly rebuked the former Primate, Tirayr Ter Hovhannesian, for having permitted "the exploitation of Church functions and institutions." The next Primate, Archbishop Ghevond Tourian (Ghevond Durian),[173] elected at the Diocesan Assembly in May, 1931, immediately embarked on implementing the requirements of the Supreme Spiritual Council of Ējmiatsin. Church reforms initiated by Abp. Tourian marked a certain retreat from his predecessor's stand. In April 1932, he banned all clergy under his jurisdiction from participating in any commemoration events on April 24 outside of the church. The note was very brief, but very strict:

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[172] The circular prompted criticism from the Dashnaks targeting the Holy See of Ējmiatsin. They labeled the clergy and their adherents as "Communist agents." After Catholicos Gevorg V passed away in 1930, the Dashnak circles reportedly entertained the possibility of transferring the Holy See from Ējmiatsin out of Soviet Armenia (cf. Minassian 2010, 248-49).

[173] Abp. Tourian was the former pastor of the Armenian Church in Manchester (*Documents* 1993, 18-19; Minassian 2010, 255, 267).

> According to latest Prelacy order, no clergy is allowed to preside or participate at any mourning ceremonies outside of the Church.
> Bishop Tourian (*Documents* 1993, 23)

The telegram was publicized by the former Primate, Tirayr Ter Hovhannesian, and became a matter of heated discussions at the Diocesan Assembly in January 1933 (Achjian 1948, 39-40). The restrictive policies of Tourian were first of all directed against the Dashnaktsutyun. The party however, did not have much resource to respond. After losing control over the diocese, with the resignation of Ter Hovhannesian in 1928, the Dashnaktsutyun also lost majority support within the Diocesan Assembly. During the January Assembly, the Dashnaktsutyun even attempted to achieve a vote of non-confidence and remove the Primate from office with no success (*Documents* 1993*,* 24).

Tensions escalated further in the summer of the same year, during Chicago's *Century of Progress International Exposition* World's Fair.[174] Along with other American citizens of different ethnic origins, Armenians were also invited to participate at the celebrations and the fair. Primate Tourian was invited to preside over the Armenian Day festivities on July 1, 1933. The organizing committee of the Armenian Day had a hard time deciding whether or not the Tricolor flag of Armenia should be used during the celebrations. Eventually, in order to avoid any potential conflict, the committee decided that no Armenian flag would be displayed. When the day arrived, it turned out that the stage on which Archbishop Tourian was invited to give his opening address, was decorated with an Armenian tricolor flag. Shortly before the address, several women and children lined up at each side of the stage with Armenian tricolors flags in their hands. The Primate refused to take the stage until the flags were removed. As the

[174] The World's Fair was organized to celebrate the centennial of the founding of Chicago.

announcement of the organizing committee reported later, the attempt to remove the Armenian flag aroused much discontent, which turned into fistfights, and was brought under control only after police intervened. The police gathered the flags and arrested some of the trouble makers (*ibid.,* 28-29). Following the incident, the Dashnak condemnation of the Primate became more and more aggressive and fierce. *Hairenik* called the Primate "imposer, fraud and traitor" and urged the people to "teach him a lesson" (*ibid.,* 33; Minassian 2010, 279). On July 12, 1933, an editorial in *Hairenik*, entitled *"*An Undeserving Primate*"* demanded his impeachment:

> By his undesirable conduct in Chicago, Archbishop Tourian sentenced himself to moral death. The Armenians of America have no recourse but to banish him from his exalted office. The Armenian communities must consider it their national responsibility to morally censure this unworthy clergyman and must mobilize all legal avenues to impeach him (quoted in Minassian 2010, 279).

The anti-Primate Dashnak faction saw the Diocesan Assembly that was to convene in New York in September 1933 as a perfect occasion to settle scores with the Primate.

The Assembly scheduled to convene in the Saint Illuminator Church in New York had to be reconsidered because of the heated atmosphere between the pro- and anti-Primate factions and the presence of a large crowd in the church hall. In response to appeals made by some delegates, Archbishop Tourian had to instruct the delegates to change the site of the Assembly to Hotel Martinique in New York. The Dashnak affiliated delegates remained at the St. Illuminator Church and most anti-Dashnak delegates moved to Hotel Martinique. Archbishop Tourian was not participating in either of the Assemblies because of sickness. The results of the rival Diocesan Assemblies were quite predictable. While the assembly convened at Hotel Martinique "expressed its confidence in the Primate," the other Assembly at the church, voted to depose the Primate. Both Assemblies sent their minutes to Ējmiatsin for approval (*Documents* 1993, 39-43). Ējmiatsin recognized the decision of the Assembly convened at Hotel Martinique, and

considered the Assembly convened at the church as illegitimate and unconstitutional. Furthermore, the Catholicos asked Archbishop Tourian to "summon a new Assembly at the proper time to meet under his presidency, and give the opportunity to the delegates to gather and come to an accord" (*Documents* 1933, 44). The Primate, however, did not have a chance to invite another Diocesan Assembly. On December 24, 1933, as Archbishop Tourian was processing to the altar through the single central aisle of the Holy Cross Church in uptown Manhattan, six men surrounded him between the fifth and sixth pews and stabbed him to death with a butcher's knife (*New York Times*, December 25, 1933). Although the Dashank party denied any involvement in the assassination at the time, the arrested perpetrators were all members of the Dashnak party. Nine Dashnaks were convicted with two of them being sentenced to life imprisonment (Atamian 1955, 369). The event was widely covered by the American press of the time. In most, the Dashnaktsutyun was attacked for being a "small terrorist clique endangering the American way of life" (Atamian 1955, 367).

The murder deepened the implacable enmity between the pro-Soviet and anti-Soviet factions, which was now acquiring anti-Dashnak and pro-Dashnak coloring. HOK and its supporters even initiated the creation of a "United Front of Anti-Dashnaks." Anti-Dashnak propaganda was spreading everywhere. The Dashnak opponents boycotted businesses owned by Dashnaks; business owners were called on to fire their Dashnak employees; several assassination attempts were made on some prominent Dashnaks, as well as on clergy supporting them (Atamian 1955, 367-68; Minassian 2010, 308-309; 322). The church schism, which initially seemed to be reconcilable, had become irreconcilable after the assassination of Archbishop Tourian because of the intensifying enmity and mutual hatred among the factions. The excommunication of the

Dashnak-sympathizing clergy and the defrocking of two of them by Ējmiatsin exacerbated these disagreements and tensions. Attempts at reconciliation initiated by the Catholicos of Ējmiatsin and his Plenipotentiary Archbishop Karekin Hovsepian (Garegin Hovsep‘ian) in 1936 proved futile. Archbishop Hovsepian's endeavors were challenged not only by the distrust of the Ramkavar and the Dashnak controlled church councils, but also by the pro-Communist groups. Armenian Communist *Panvor* accused Archbishop Hovsepian of attempting "under the auspices of the Armenian church … to make the two segments of the Armenian bourgeoisie – the Ramgavars and the Tashnags – sit at the round table and reconcile their differences by forming a *united front* against Soviet Armenia" (quoted in Minassian 2010, 335).

Meanwhile, the separated clergy, supported by the Dashnak-controlled church councils, remained loyal to the Central Executive Committee formed at the Diocesan Assembly in September, 1933, and refused to recognize the Primate's authority and Ējmiatsin as the administrative head of the Armenian church (Minassian 2010, 321-22). Even after the election of Karekin Hovsepian as the Primate of the Armenian Diocese in America in 1938 the dissident Dashnak-controlled Central Executive Committee refused to recognize his authority. Churches, where Dashnaks could secure majority in the parish councils, joined the dissident Central Executive Committee. In many locations, two rival Armenian churches appeared.

Repercussions of the Schism in France

The murder of 1933 and the split of the Armenian Church in the United States had major repercussions not only for the Armenian-American community, but also for many other Armenian communities outside the United States. While reluctant to accept Dashnak complicity in the assassination, Shavarsh Missakian in his *Haratch* editorial on December 30 responded: "…even if Dashnak individuals had planned and implemented the assassination, as it is suspected by the police, the party cannot be held accountable for such a barbarity." In the next day's editorial (December 31, 1933) he continued accusing the Ramkavar opponents in committing what he labeled as "the crime of crimes:" "Archbishop Ghevond is first of all the victim of the stubborn blockheadedness and vile mobocracy of the Ramkavar party and other [parties] masked in different colors." He went on to explain that Tourian became the enemy of the Dashnaktsutyun because the Ramkavars and his other supporters turned him into a "symbol of patriotism;" this clergyman, who insisted on bringing down the Armenian Tricolor [during the Chicago fair].

While Missakian targeted the Ramkavars, HOK and the pro-Communist Armenians in France called on their followers to mobilize against Dashnak terror. In January 1934, the official organ of HOK connected the assassination of Archbishop Tourian with the earlier killings of HOK activists by the Dashanks and stressed the urgency of a "broad united struggle against Dashnak terrorism" (*HOK monthly*, January 1934, 5). Several months earlier, in September 1933, HOK had published a call to the diasporan Armenians, in which it had referred to a number of assassinations instigated by the Dashnaks from Beirut in the Middle East, to Athens in Greece,

Lyon and Grenoble in France, and the United States, declared of the formation of a *Committee for the Defense of the Victims of Dashnak Terror* and called on Armenians to join:

> Only under the huge wave of united popular anger will the Vrats'ians and Jamalians hide in their dens and not disturb the peace and future of the diaspora Armenians by their adventurous political games (*HOK monthly*, Sept. 1933, p. 58-9).

Violence by some individual Dashnaks, implicitly encouraged by the party leadership, generated significant opposition to the party and its leadership. If the Dashnaktsutyun could resist and even attain a greater degree of coherence from such confrontations in the Untied States, the party was not as successful in France. In the United States the Dashnaktsutyun had laid strong roots before WWI and had developed a certain degree of flexibility to respond to changing situations. In France, most of the Dashnak chapters were in the formative stage in the 1920s and 1930s. The evidence scattered in *Haratch* and *Mardgotz* suggests that the internal discord on the matter of Russian or Turkish orientation had found expression in various regions of France – Marseille, Lyon, Décines, Valence, and elsewhere.

The French recognition of the Soviet Union in 1924 and the subsequent refusal by the French government to recognize *nationalité 215eneration* was another factor, which contributed to the relative weakening of the Dashnak position in France. If until the US recognition of the Soviet Union in November 1933, the Dashnaktsutyun could legitimately claim to represent the interests of the Armenian people as a government in exile in America, the decisions of the French government erased such grounds for Dashnak claims. Finally, the strength of the French Communist party in the 1930s also significantly challenged the authority of the Dashnaks. Some studies suggest that there was a strong relationship between immigration, the rising number of workers in France and the strengthening of the French Communist party before WWII (cf. Schain 2008, 45-46). If Armenian members of the French Communist party encouraged the

participation of Armenian workers in the strikes and demonstrations, the Dashnaktsutyun tried to keep them away from participating in local politics. Benefitting from the overall pro-communist atmosphere, the Armenian Communists organized public meetings for Armenian workers in Paris and elsewhere to explain the need to participate in local movements. In one of such putlic meetings, Missak Manoushian, a young Armenian Communist condemned the Dashnaks for "isolating Armenian workers from local working people" and thereby preventing them "to receive such an enormous civilizational education, which they could and they must acquire [by interacting with] local progressive people" (quoted in Drambyan 1979, 42). For large masses of Armenians, who had been employed in the French industries and factories, who had been facing everyday discrimination, exploitation and marginalization at workplaces, and who sought to integrate into French society and finally become eligible for the French citizenship, the message of the Armenian communists was much more appealing.

The hardening economic crisis in France and the massive strikes in various regions augmented the ranks of the worker's movements and leftist parties. After HOK was dissolved in Soviet Armenia at the height of the Stalinist purges in 1937, many previous HOK branches merged to form the *Union populaire franco-arménienne* (cf. Drambyan 1979; 43; Le Tallec 2001, 143). The name of the newly established association resembled the name of the French *Front Populaire*, the coalition of leftist parties, which had come to power in May 1936. The anti-Nazi French-Soviet pact of 1935 provided an added confidence to the Communists. Now working under more favorable conditions, the Communists often charged the Dashnaks as Fascists and provoked persecution of the party members by the French authorities. Despite the crisis, the Dashnaktsutyun preserved its chapters in Paris and in the suburbs. In Marseille Dashnaks

members even constituted the majority in some church councils and enjoyed the sympathy of Archbishop Balakian. The crisis, however, caused the Dashnak Bureau to move to Egypt in the late 1930s. Compared to France, social-political conditions and the strength of the Dashnaktsutyun in Cairo made Egypt more preferable and safe for the activities of the party (Ch'ormisian 1975, 104).

Beyond Political Factions and Schisms

Dynamic processes and conflicts, which happened in the course of the 1920s and 30s in the United States and France, may create an impression that Armenians, regardless of the diversity of origins, dialects, customs and habits, were vigorously involved in the pro- and anti-Soviet factions. Yet, many Armenians, as described in the previous chapter, remained uninvolved in the partisan or even church activities. The emergence of the first English language Armenian newspapers in the United States – *The Armenian Mirror* in 1932 founded by the Ramkavars, and *the Hairenik Weekly* in 1934, founded by the Dashnaks, indicated that the second generation coming of age was not able to read Armenian and was hardly interested in Armenian matters. In order to recruit the youth in the 1930s both the Ramkavars and the Dashnaks founded their youth organizations – A.D.L. Juniors and *Tseghakron*[175] respectively (cf. Federal Writers 1937, 60; Walker 1990, 355). The parties sought ways to integrate younger generations through their respective youth organizations, but in the assimilating contexts of the American and French societies the second generation had more incentives to disengage and distance themselves from

[175] *Tseghakron* movement was started by Garegin Nzhdeh in 1933 in Boston, who then travelled to many other communities in the US to rally the Armenian youth around the new movement (Panossian 2006, 301)

their Armenian roots. The inability of the Armenian Church to adjust to the needs of the Armenian flock in the United States on the other hand, made American churches more preferable for the second generation. In 1937, for example, in the project accomplished by *Federal Writers*, the authors concluded:

> In the matter of religion the American-born generation seems to have a preference for American institutions. Of recent years special efforts have been made to interest them in the Armenian Church but these efforts have met with only partial success. Even in such large centers as Boston, Watertown, and Worcester the percentage of the new generation in church congregations is very small (Federal Writers 1937, 122).

If amid internal conflicts, the Armenian institutions in the Unite States and France had to also struggle for reaching the diaspora-born generations, in more compact territories and under different social-political conditions, such as in Lebanon, they became instrumental in the shaping of diaspora-born generations.

Political Rivalries and the Forging of a "Diasporic Nation" in Lebanon

The institutionalization of Armenian political parties in Lebanon in the 1920s was accompanied by parallel efforts to be represented at local parish and community councils and to recruit followers from among the diverse groups of Armenians originating from different villages and towns of Western and Central Anatolia and Cilicia. Compared to France and the United States, with the absences of HOKs, until the 1930s, the pro- and anti-Soviet orientations were less defining in everyday relations of Armenian political parties in Lebanon. As a measure of precaution against the potential spread of anti-imperialist and pro-communist propaganda, the French mandatory administration prevented the formation of HOK chapters in the Middle East. In some cases HOK operated semi-legally or illegally, but could not exert as much influence over Armenian matters in Lebanon as in France and the United States[176] (cf. Melik'set'yan 1959: 45; Abrahamyan 1967: 385-86).

The Armenian refugee settlements and camps in Lebanon represented a mosaic of compatriotic identities and affiliations, defined by linguistic and cultural, often mutually unintelligible particularities. Catholic, Evangelical and Armenian Apostolic churches were the only formal institutions connecting the diverse groups of Armenians through their networks. The French mandatory authorities recognized Dr. Baghdasar Melkonian, who was appointed by Boghos

[176] The Soviets still exerted some influence in Lebanon through the Lebanese Communist party, which was formed in 1924. Some Armenians were also very active in the Communist Party in Syria and Lebanon. The party, however, did not have much success under the French Mandate and was banned in 1939. After the Lebanese independence in 1943, the ban was lifted and the Communists began participating in the Lebanese elections (cf. Colelo 2003, 147).

Nubar as the representative of the Central Committee for Armenian Refugees (former Armenian National Delegation) in Lebanon and the representative of Armenians. Melkonian was a respected professor at the Université Saint Joseph, and headed the Armenian National Union in Lebanon, then formally comprising the representatives of the Armenian denominations and political parties. The Union soon dissolved because of the rivalry of the Armenian political party chapters (Top'uzyan 1986, 208). As elsewhere, upon its establishment in Lebanon, the Dashnaktsutyun sought ways to establish itself as the legitimate government of Armenians in Lebanon, and as elsewhere, conflicts between the nascent Armenian political party organizations began shaping the formation of the Lebanese Armenian community.

While the Catholic Armenians did not allow the participation of laymen in the church affairs and the Protestant Armenians were cautious of political activists in churches, the 1863 Constitution of the Armenian *millet,* which regulated church and community affairs in the Ottoman Empire, established the involvement of laymen in the administrative matters of the Armenian Church and community. After settling in Lebanon, the political parties, especially the Dashnaktsutyun sought ways to be involved in the Armenian Apostolic church affairs and bring the communal structures under their control. Conditions in Lebanon, however, were not as favorable for the party initially. In one of the letters in June 1924, the Central Committee of the Dashnaktsutyun in Syria and Lebanon reported to the higher Dashnak leadership structures abroad:

> The [Armenian] masses are confused and pessimistic. … Our party suffers from the fact that for the first time in recent history, the ARF has lost its influence among the masses. … Party members are split ideologically and otherwise; they do not know whence to proceed and what to do. … The religious heads, exploiting the mentality of the refugees, continually try to disrupt and neutralize secular bodies and extend their rule over them… (quoted in Schahgaldian 1979, 155).

The report complained that the Catholicos of Sis disregarded the party and provided a significant competition by meddling in politics:

> He is not only satisfied with his religious prominence, but actually meddles in politicos with local and foreign elements. … He does not even consult us in his political activities. … Although we know very little about what is going on in the Catholicosate, we are dead sure of one thing: the leadership of this community cannot be entrusted to the Catholicos and the people around him (quoted in Schahgaldian 1979, 155).

As the above quotes suggest, the Dashnak Central Committee aimed at establishing its authority and dominance in Syria and Lebanon, but the internal split around the future course of the party, and the general apathy of masses towards the Armenian political parties impeded the party's progress.[177]

After a lot of Dashnak agitation, in 1925 the Catholicos Sahak II Khabayan of Sis invited the political parties to organize a Diocesan (*gavarakan*) Council. According to the electoral decree adopted in June 1926, all Armenians above 25 years of age could vote in the elections if they were members of the Armenian Apostolic community. The Surb Nshan church in Beirut and the Surb Khach' church at the Camp were designed to serve as polling stations in Beirut and its suburbs (Varzhabedian 1981a, 88-91; 189). The chance to finally get involved in communal matters was provided. The major contestants, as expected, were the representatives of the Armenian political parties – the Hnchakyans, Ramkavars and Dashnaks. The Hnchakyans and Ramkavars, sharing more identical interests after the Sovietization of Armenia, joined into single coalition against the Dashnaks. In the elections of the Diocesan Council in 1926 the Dashnaktsutyun received the majority of votes. The opponents, however, refused to recognize

[177] The Dashnaktsutyun was able to take the control of the Surb Nshan (Holy Sign) church in downtown Beirut, but the Armenian refugees were largely concentrated in camps, in which the party was not able to gain much success. The Surb Khach' (Holy Cross) church in *Le Grand Camp*, founded in 1923, was composed of a very diverse congregation of Armenians originating mostly from various places in Cilicia, and initially remained out of the control of the Dashnak party (cf. Varzhabedian 1981a, 184-87).

the elections as fair and accused the Dashnaks of the manipulations of votes. Disregarding the concerns of the Hnchakyans and others, the Catholicos approved the results of the elections. Rather than boycotting the elections, the elected Hnchakyan representatives decided to continue the struggle against the Dashnaktsutyun within the Council.

The first sessions of the Council in September 1926 produced heated discussions and conflicts between the adversaries. On September 28, 1926, Vahan Vartabedian (Vahan Vardapetian), one of the Dashnak delegates, was found dead when some unknown young men disrupted the session and opened fire after the lights had gone out. Mihran Aghazarian, one of the fiercest Hnchakyan opponents of the Dashnaks, was arrested and charged for the death (Varzhabedian 1981a, 194-6). Aghazarian left the session just before the incident, but because of previous confrontation with Vartabedian, the Dashnaks and the police assumed he planned the assassination. Aghazarian wrote down his impressions on the Diocesan Council elections in prison, which was published the same year, in 1926 (Varzhabedian 1981a, 132-33). The 147 page long essay entitled *Sisi verjin at'orakalĕ ew ir meghapart gavarakanĕ: Libananahay gavarakan ĕntrut'eants' arṫ'iv* [The Incumbent of Sis and His Culpable Provincial Council: On the Elections of the Lebanese-Armenian Diocesan Council] doubted the legitimacy and legality of the Diocesan Council elections because, as the author argued, the Catholicos of Sis did not have jurisdiction over Lebanon and could not invite Diocesan Council elections.[178] Aghazarian condemned the Catholicos for his submission to the Dashnaktsutyun (Aghazarian 1926, 7-14).

Aghazarian's essay was published under the headline *Depi anhayrenik' petut'iwn* [Towards Homeland-less State] and the second chapter of the book was entirely devoted to the idea of

[178] Churches in Lebanon came under the jurisdiction of the Catholicosate of Sis in 1929 (see the previous chapter).

"homeland-less state" pursued by the Dashnaktsutyun. Aghazarian speculated that the creation of the Lebanese-Armenian Prelacy through the Diocesan Council served the interests of the Dashnaks in the realization of the "homeland-less state." According to the Constitution of the Armenian Church of 1863, the "National Council" (or the Diocesan Council) formed Civic and Religious Boards to run the national-secular [*azgayin*] and religious affairs of the Armenian Apostolic Community. By approving the results of the elections and by legitimizing the Dashnak dominated Diocesan Council, Aghazarian thought that the Catholicos endorsed the Dashnak pursuit of the "homeland-less state" (*ibid.,* 16-18). Defining Soviet Armenia as the center, Aghazarian (1926, 19-25) juxtaposed the "centrifugal" and "destructive" activity of the Dashnaktsutyun in Armenian diasporic communities to the "centripetal" and "constructive" projects of the Hnchakyan, Ramkavar and other "patriotic factions:"

> *A* HOMELAND-LESS-STATE *for the Armenians abroad, relying on Western diplomacy, against the rising Armenia* [upper case and emphasis in original]
> This is the centrifugal political program of the Dashnaktsutyun, which is so telling in Dashnak speech and pen, although wrapped in tattered rags.
>
> *Forward towards statehood, unity and ties with Armenia, and away from deceptive Western diplomacies* [emphasis original]
> This is the centripetal direction of the Hnchakyan, Ramkavar and other patriotic groups towards Armenia, which will of course clash with unscrupulous Dashnak enmity everywhere… (*ibid.,* 22-23).

Aghazarian's call to clash "with the Dashnak dishonest enmity" had been going on for several years in Lebanon.

Aghazarian's detention was a significant loss to the Hnchakyan-Ramkavar bloc in the Diocesan Council. With the most active of their only two delegates detained,[179] the Diocesan Council came under the complete control of the Dashnaktsutyun. The incidents led to the political distancing of the congregations of Surb Khach' and Surb Nshan. Surb Nshan remained under Dashnak

[179] The other delegate was Antranig Gendjian (Andranik Kenchian) (Varzhabedian 1981a, 96).

influence, while the clashes of the Dashnaks with the anti-Dashnaks at the Camp gradually established the dominance of Hnchakyan, Ramkavar and AGBU faction at *Le Grand Camp* over Surb Khach‘ church and Sahakian school.[180]

As a possible act of revenge, three years after the assassination of Vahan Vartabedian, some Dashnaks killed Sarkis Dkhruni (Sargis Tkhruni) in January 1929. Dkhruni was a prominent Hnchakyan intellectual and the vice-principal of Sahakian school at the time. He was a strong proponent of Soviet Armenia and a fierce anti-Dashnak, but he had not been involved in the murder of Vartabedian. The assassination of Dkhruni provoked massive discontent among Armenians in *Le Grand* camp (Varzhabedian 1979, 216). Another political assassination followed a few years later. Mihran Aghazarian, who had spent several years in prison for the alleged complicity in Vartabedian's killing, was shot dead in October 1933 (Messerlian 1963, 66; Varzhabedian 1981a, 197; 216-18). The assassinations of Sarkis Dkhruni and Mihran Aghazarian naturally accelerated the polarization of the Armenian community in Lebanon.

The violent events often leading to clashes among the rank and file and the sympathizers had a dual effect on the Armenian refugee masses at large. On the one hand, occasional fights and assassinations made the matters more personal, mobilizing the networks of relatives, friends, family clans, and compatriots against each other. On the other hand, political struggles were repelling for many Armenian refugee groups. Most compatriotic societies developed internal agreements to remain uninvolved in the struggles among the Armenian political parties. Compatriotic societies, moreover, often were targeted as challenges to the expansion of party

[180] Sahakian school was established by the efforts of Armenians settled at the Camp. The school was named after Catholicos Sahak Khanabian of Sis (Varzhabedian 1981a, 184-85)

influences. The problem was especially acute for the Dashnaktsutyun, who sought to achieve a dominant position among Armenians in the diaspora. The leaders of the Dashnaktsutyun became especially vocal about the need to deal with compatriotic societies and affiliations. Reluctantly and gradually from the 1930s through the 1960s, compatriotic societies came under the control of political parties, occasionally through splitting and the creation of parallel compatriotic unions.

Struggle Against Compatriotic Societies

The prominence of diverse compatriotic affiliations and societies in all Armenian communities from the United States to the Middle East drew the attention of the highest leadership of some Armenian political factions and organizations. The chapters of HOK, founded in the Untied States and France, cooperated with the apolitical compatriotic societies and unions channeling their resources to social and economic projects in Soviet Armenia. The Hnchakyans and Ramkavars also largely developed cooperative relations with compatriotic unions. However, the policy of the Dashnaktsutyun towards the compatriotic societies developed within the framework of its attempts to act as the government-in-exile of the dispersed Armenians.

The Tenth World Congress of the party in November 1924 – January 1925, declared the beginning of '*une 225enera d'action pour la restructuration des nouvelles colonies 225eneratio et la 225eneration des orphelins devenus adults'* [a period of action for the restructuring of the new dispersed colonies and for the generation of orphans who became adults] (quoted in

Panossian 2006: 294). The orientation towards the dispersed colonies meant developing certain strategies of the recruitment of followers from among the diverse refugee and immigrant Armenian masses, which were then actively organizing into compatriotic societies.

In August 1926, *Haratch* in France published a series of articles by Ruben Ter-Minasian on compatriotic unions. The first part of Ter-Minasian's analysis appeared on August 8, 1926. The author praised the Compatriotic Unions as organizations preventing the assimilation of Armenians in countries with strong assimilationist policies. The second part of the article appeared a week later on August 15, 1926, entitled "Compatriotic Unions: Good in Colonies, Evil in Armenia." In the opening paragraph Ter-Minasian stated:

> But there is no good without evil. There are places, where the Armenian people are free from the danger of assimilation, where [they] live their national life and [preserve their national] culture, and [they] constitute a majority, or represent the local government, or are on their way [to such an end]. In such places not only does the existence of Compatriotic Unions become meaningless, but [it is] even detrimental to the formation of a full union and a unified will…

Taken out of context, this message could well be interpreted in Lebanon as an invitation to fight against compatriotic unions. Having been granted Lebanese citizenship in 1925, Armenians in Lebanon were not subjected to certain assimilationist policies, and Lebanese confessionalism provided certain grounds for Armenians to become a majority in certain areas and form a "government" of their own. Yet Ter-Minasian continued, further clarifying his point:

> Regardless of [the type] of the government ruling in Armenia, whether independent or not, whether Dashnak or Bolshevik, in Armenia the damage caused by compatriotic unions is greater than the good they make. Promoting local patriotism to its extreme, the idea of a common homeland and the basic interests of Armenia will pale in comparison to local interests, which may lead to … factionalism. The promotion of local patriotism will become an obstacle to physical, moral, mental and economic integrity; and the strong organization of compatriotic unions may create a compatriotic state within a state, a new church inside a church, a local political party within a political party and so on. This will render it impossible to establish one language, one integral power and authority. For this reason, the existence of compatriotic unions both in the present and future United Armenia will become a negative phenomenon, which needs to be uprooted, replacing it with the patriotism of the entire Armenians, and that of Armenia as a whole…. In short, for the sake of the Armenian people and the supreme interests of Armenia, we should oppose the formation compatriotic unions in Armenia (*Haratch*, August 15).

In the final part of this lengthy analysis, published on August 20, 1926 in *Haratch*, Ter-Minasian analyzed the reasons of why Armenians formed compatriotic unions in "colonies" and in the conclusion he stated:

> …As abroad, so in Soviet countries the compatriotic unions are the result of the disorganized political and internal conditions of our communities… Those unions fill the gaps we pointed to and fix the defects that our spiritual, lay, political and other parties and leaders have. And therefore, the existence of compatriotic unions in the [diasporic] communities should be considered a desirable and useful phenomenon. Participation in their [activities], strengthening and organizing them is required of every true Armenian.

The reasons of why Compatriotic Unions should not be encouraged and promoted in Armenia, as explained by Ruben Ter-Minasian in 1926, were becoming increasingly relevant in Lebanon and to a lesser extent elsewhere in the following years.

The "duty of every true Armenian" to strengthen and organize the compatriotic unions in Armenian communities abroad proved detrimental to the dissemination of the political ideals of the Dashnaktsutyun, to the recruitment of new followers and members in Lebanon and elsewhere. The emerging compatriotic neighborhoods in Lebanon, which tended to build their own churches, their own schools, organize separate and exclusive educational initiatives, were certainly detrimental to the establishment of "one language, an integral power and authority" in these communities as well. Under such conditions in Lebanon, the question of whether the Dashnaktsutyun should be concerned for creating one language, an integral power and authority in the diaspora, became paramount. If the answer of the Dashnak leadership was yes, according to Ter-Minasian's advice, it should entail certain actions towards "uprooting" compatriotic unions and the planting of "patriotism of the entire Armenianness."

In response to these new challenges, Shavarsh Missakian, the Bureau colleague of Ruben Ter-Minasian, came to realize that even in the diaspora, compatriotic unions did not render much service to Armenianness. In his editorial on September 3, 1928 entitled "'Compatriotic' Wastes", Missakian argued that the "narrow patriotism" of compatriotic unions wasted the moral and material resources of the Armenians. Missakian concluded the passage with a call to abandon narrow compatriotic identities and to think more broadly:

> If the Kharberdts'is, Malatiats'is or Tigranakertts'is, being very numerous in America, have wealthy unions, it does not mean they should not be benevolent, for example, towards the Chenkilerts'is or Karnets'is, who are fewer in America, who were prosperous yesterday, but today are in need of brotherly support.
> Broader, much broader horizons, compatriots!
> We have arrived at a point, where, instead of turning our backs to each other, we should look for each other…

Instead of developing a common sense of Armenianness, compatriotic unions had contributed to the developing of "narrow patriotism," the Dashnak leadership argued. Armenian refugees and immigrants were still bound to their local, traditional, compatriotic affiliations. As Schahgaldian (1979, 81) noted: "Armenian national consciousness … was the least likely area in which diaspora locality groups found their identity or sense of belonging."

The local leaderships of the Dashnaktsutyun, operating in Marseille and Beirut, came to the realization that in order to gain followers they first of all had to "uproot" compatriotic identifications, to get rid of these "useless weeds"[181] and turn the heterogeneous masses into a homogeneous Armenophone community. Local and regional party leaderships realized that newspapers, public meetings, lectures and "oral propaganda" were not as effective tools among the linguistically diverse groups of refugees with low literacy rates. Contrary to what Ter-

[181] In the 1920s, the around 30 compatriotic unions in Beirut were branded by the Dashnaktsutyun as "useless weeds which divided the Armenians in themselves" (Schahgaldian 1979, 79).

Minassian envisioned as the policy towards compatriotic unions in colonies, the mid-level party leadership and the agents operating on the ground had to adopt different policies against compatriotic societies in order to overcome local differences and make the Dashnak envisioned pan-Armenian causes appealing to larger masses of Armenian refugees. Through the control of church councils, through the establishment of various party affiliated cultural associations, through youth oriented programs, through mass media and propaganda, and most importantly through taking control of schools and establishing new schools the Dashnaktsutyun and other parties embarked on what Panossian (2006: 294) called "diaspora-style nation-building" in Lebanon.

"Diaspora-Style" Nation-Building in Lebanon

The political distancing of the Dashnak and anti-Dashnak factions and the establishment of party sponsored educational, cultural, youth and other institutions and organizations determined the particularities of the "diaspora-style nation-building" in Lebanon. The social-political conditions in Lebanon (and the Middle East in general) proved more favorable for Armenians' organizing *like* a nation-state. Yet in the absence of *a centralized national Armenian* government in Lebanon (and in the dispersion) the design and implementation of the educational programs remained highly factional, confessional and partisan. By 1926, the Apostolic Armenians community in Lebanon had established 15, Catholic Armenians 8 and Evangelical Armenians 6 kindergartens and primary schools for the orphans and the children of refugees (Varzhabedian 1981a, 391). In some cases, the initiators of kindergarten and schools were the reorganized

compatriotic neighborhoods and societies, but gradually schools affiliated with the Apostolic Armenian community fell under the control of political party chapters.

In *Le Grand Camp,* for example, the political polarization in the 1920s increased the influence of the non-Dashnak faction. The activities of the Sahakian school were supported by various compatriotic unions operating at the camp, including those of Adana, Everek, Hachn, Malatia, Ayntab, Karin, Marash, Mush and others (Varzhabedian 1981a, 200), but the curriculum was mostly influenced by the pro-Soviet orientation of the Hnchakyans. Various Hnchakyan and AGBU/Ramkavar affiliated youth, athletic and cultural organizations and projects provided certain coloring to the extra-curricular activities. For example, the Hnchakyan-affiliated sports organization, Homenmen (Armenian Athletic Union), was founded in Damascus in 1921, and by 1923 it had established athletic clubs at *Le Grand Camp* (cf. Sarafian 2007, 19-22; Varzhabedian 1981a, 200; 1981b, 95). The premises of the Sahakian school at the Camp were made available not only to Homenmen, but also to other organizations, including the AGBU chapters, to various theatrical performances, youth and student organizations (Varzhabedian 1981a, 200-201). The school and various organizations on the one hand bridged the differences between Armenians originating from diverse linguistic-cultural backgrounds and developed a strong leaning and affinity towards the homeland – Soviet Armenia.

The orientation of the Dashnaktsutyun towards the dispersion put a greater emphasis on the schooling and ideological preparation of the younger generations in the party's programs. In 1929, Karo Sasuni, a former MP and governor in the Republic of Armenia and the long-term chairman of the Dashnak Central Committee in Lebanon wrote in *Droshak* (June-July 1929):

> … The essential feature of the previous generation [in Armenia] was its ideological preparedness and its excellent comprehension of the revolutionary faith and chastity, whereas today, almost all purity has been wiped out of the hearts of Armenian youth. … Our responsible bodies must realize that it is their urgent duty to inflame the youth with revolutionary fire, to inject traits of sacrifice, boldness and firmness in them. … The revolutionary education of the wandering youth of this wandering people is a most urgent task. Therefore, it is necessary to prepare them spiritually and mentally, for they must symbolize that revolutionary character which is the party's heritage, for they must always be ever-ready soldiers of the ARF willing to work everywhere and under all circumstances. … Comrades, without this uneasy task, in five to ten years, we shall have a mediocre leadership many in numbers, yet different in education, different in character, and most of all, different in party psychology, who shall not be the genuine successors to the many self-sacrificing generations of the last forty years (quoted in Schahgaldian 1979, 165-166).

Sasuni considered the ideological preparation of the young generation ("revolutionary education") as important as the instruction of the youth in Armenian language, history and culture. To prepare future leaders, first the party needed to homogenize the heterogeneous Armenian communities, to make them similar in "education," and in "character," but secondly and in parallel, the party also needed to inflame the youth with "revolutionary faith and chastity," to forge a common "party psychology." In their literary works in the 1920s two other former leaders of the Republic of Armenia, Levon Shant'[182] and Nikol Aghbalian, supported the cause of nations and nationalism against internationalism and socialism, thereby contributing to the institutionalization of the anti-Bolshevik stand of the party.

Besides producing an alternative discourse to Bolshevism and the pro-Soviet orientation, the Dashnak leaders also actively embarked on establishing schools. In 1924 Levon Shant', started the Armenian National College in Marseille, but because of the lack of support and unfavorable conditions in France he left Marseille and settled in Cairo, Egypt.[183] In Egypt, Shant' founded the *Hamazkayin Cultural Association* in 1928 (cf. Boghossian 2005, 217-18; Dasnabedian 1990,

[182] Levon Shant''s *Azgut'iwnĕ himk' mardkayin ĕnkerut'ean* [Nationality as a Basis for Human Societies] appeared in several volumes of *Hairenik monthly* in 1922, in which the author attempts to define historically and politically the ideas of nation and state, and justify the cause of nationalism vis-à-vis socialism. In the creation of nations, Shant' emphasizes the role of families, social environment and schools (Shant' [1922] 1979, 103-105)

[183] *Haratch* published a lengthy interview about the College with Levon Shant' on September 23, 1925. As the correspondent noted, by this time Levon Shant' had already left Marseille.

206). *Hamazkayin* aimed at promoting the Armenian language and culture in the diaspora, providing Armenian education through schools, vocational classes and various publications, preparing future public leaders, teachers, activists. The first major contribution of the Association was the founding of the Armenian Lyceum (Hay Chemaran) in Beirut with the efforts of Levon Shant' and Nikol Aghbalian in 1930[184] (Sanjian 2003, 304). Mostly known by its Armenian name as *Chemaran* [academy, college] the college was meant to prepare future leadership for Armenians of the diaspora. Along with the *Chemaran*, most schools affiliated with the Armenian Apostolic community gradually came under the direct control of the Dashnaktsutyun as the party secured absolute dominance over the Apostolic Armenian communal structures from the 1930s. Quite naturally the ideology and the beliefs of Karo Sasuni, those of the founders of the *Chemaran,* and other Dashnak leaders were reflected in the curriculum, in the selection of teaching materials, the appointment of teachers, and overall in the strategic course of Dashnak-controlled educational institutions. Rather than focusing on Soviet Armenia, the *Chemaran* and the schools affiliated with the Prelacy of Armenian Church of Lebanon (the Apostolic Armenian community), aimed at forging a nation around the idea of more abstract Armenia and around the symbolism of the 1918-1920 Republic of Armenia.[185]

In parallel with establishing schools, the Dashnak educational activities expanded to target various categories of Armenian refugees. In order to educate the masses or involve and mobilize the elderly, women and the youth around more communal, pan-Armenian goals, the

[184] Varzhabedian (1981b, 67) suggests winter of 1929 as the year of the foundation of the *Chemaran*, but 1930 was confirmed by Dikran Djinbashian (Tigran Jinbashian), the principal of the *Chemaran*, in the interview with the author on June 27, 2012.
[185] The Dashnaks and the AGBU often clashed over the issues of curriculum and teacher selection, as the Dashnaks controlled the Diocesan Council, while the AGBU provided most of the funding for schools (author's correspondence with Ara Sanjian, March 21, 2015).

Dashnaktsutyun also established many other local organizations. In the 1930s *Hamazkayin* established semi-professional theatrical groups, published a literary quarterly, organized discussions and lectures (Schahgaldian 1979, 168). Along with party chapters, the Dashnaktsutyun founded a local chapter of the Armenian Relief Society [the former Armenian Red Cross of New York] in Lebanon in 1930 to provide social services to the refugees. The organization grew in the 1930s and 40s, eventually becoming a women's organization and focused on charitable activities (Schahgaldian 1979, 168; Varzhabedian 1981b, 48-9). For youth oriented programs, the Dashnaktsutyun gradually took under its control the Armenian General Athletic Union (*Hay marmnakrt'akan ěndhanur miut'iwn*), better known by the acronym *Homenetmen.*[186]

The bitter rivalries influenced the ways in which the political parties envisioned and imagined the Armenian "nation" in Lebanon and in the diaspora. Conflicting orientations towards Soviet Armenia meant not only profound differences in the perceptions of the Armenian homeland, but also entailed contrasting sets of values, symbols and loyalties. The varying and often incompatible perspectives of the Armenian political factions on patriotism, the homeland, priorities of Armenians, national symbolism, national holidays and many other issues were reflected in school curricula and the extra-curricular activities at schools, in youth and athletic organizations, thereby shaping the mindset of the younger generations.

[186] The Union was founded in Constantinople in 1918 and after the dissolution of its chapters in the early 1920s the members of the Union dispersed in Europe, Middle East and reached as far as the Americas, both South and North. Several members of *Homenetmen* ended up in Beirut and established a local chapter of *Homenetmen* in 1924. Although the Union had not been affiliated with the Dashnak party in any formal way, in Lebanon it became widely associated with the Dashnaktsutyun (Varzhabedian 1981b, 89-2). The program-constitution adopted in 1921 declared the mission of *Homenetmen* "to promote the nation's moral and cognitive development by providing healthy physical training to the adolescents…" (*Tsragir* 1921, 1).

Five factors, according to Varzhabedian (1981a, 74-8), defined the major disagreements of political factions:

- Whether or not May 28 should be celebrated in the community as the independence day;
- Whether or not the Tricolor should be used at various community events;
- Whether or not Soviet Armenia should be recognized and the anniversary of the Sovietization of Armenian should be celebrated;
- Who should dominate in national (*azgayin*) bodies (Parish, Civic, Diocesan Councils);
- Who should be the representative of the Armenian people at Lebanese government.

Public celebrations of May 28 or November 29, Diocesan Council elections or other intra-communal events served as occasions for often violent bursts of tensions, adding to the hostilities and tearing the factions further apart from each other. The official endorsement of the Armenian Apostolic community by the Lebanese government and the integration of Armenians into the Lebanese political system added new elements for more aggressive competition for attracting sympathizers and potential votes.

Political Rivalries and Representation in Lebanese Chamber of Deputies

Daily competition for gaining followers among the diverse group of Armenians, more than the pro- and anti-Soviet orientations, defined everyday relations of the Armenian political factions in Lebanon. After all, in order to dominate the national (*azgayin*) bodies or to represent Armenians in the Lebanese political system, various political factions needed votes. In France and the

Untied States, Armenians not interested or disappointed in Armenian affairs or the Armenian political parties could withdraw and live without having to be involved. In Lebanon, regardless of personal interests and motivations, Armenians affiliated with the Armenian Apostolic (Orthodox Armenian) community, had to remain connected to a church and occasionally get involved in Armenian affairs and politics in one way or another.

The census of 1932 confirmed that the Orthodox (Apostolic) Armenians constituted a significant number in Lebanon. Following the meeting of Catholicos Sahak II of Cilicia (now established in Antelias since 1930) and his coadjutor Catholicos Papken I with the French High Commissioner in December 1933, with a special decree issued in January 1934, the Orthodox Armenians were finally granted a seat at the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies[187] (Messerlian 1963, 61-65). The upcoming parliamentary elections of 1934 invited the Armenian political parties to actively embark on election campaigns. If in the Untied States and France, the Dashnaktsutyun generally discouraged participation in local politics and public affairs in the 1920s and 30s, the formal representation of Orthodox Armenians provided by the Lebanese political structure was appealing especially to the Dashnaktsutyun who sought to represent the Armenians everywhere. In the heated atmosphere, following the recent assassination of Mihran Aghazarian in October 1933, and Archbishop Tourian in December 1933, the electoral campaign was very tense between the Dashnak and anti-Dashnak factions. The election of a neutral Vahram Leilekian was received with triumph by the Hnchakyans and Ramkavars, who supported Leilekian. Reflecting on the elections, the pro-Hnchakyan *Libanan*[188] published an article titled "the Fascist

[187] An earlier attempt of the Prelacy to get a seat in the Chamber of Deputies in 1929 remained unaddressed (author's correspondence with Ara Sanjian, March 21, 2015).
[188] *Libanan* was a weekly, then biweekly, published in 1924-35. Initially it was in Armeno-Turkish. The paper was not formally affiliated with any party, but was more pro-Hnchakyan (Sanjian 2003: 323)

Tashnagtsutiun crushingly defeated, the glorious victory of the anti-Tashnag current" (quoted in Messerlian 1963, 78).

The solidifying identities of anti-Dashnak and pro-Dashnak groupings, the name-callings and labeling each other as *fascists* and *communists*, were institutionalizing the factions, yet the anti-Dashnak or even the Dashnak groupings did not always constitute internally coherent political entities in the 1930s. If the Hnchakyans and Ramkavars supported Leilikian in 1934, four years later, the parties supported different candidates in the parliamentary elections. In 1937 both parties established their organs, *Ararad* (Hnchakyan) and *Zartonk* (Ramkavar), and launched separate propaganda and campaigns in the upcoming elections of 1937. The Dashnaktsutyun, in the meantime, experienced an internal discord between the Central Committee and several Dashnaks gathered around *Aztag* daily.[189] While the Dashnak Central Committee supported the chairman of the Central Committee Khosrov T'ut'unjian, *Aztag* initially was against his candidacy and supported Hrach'ia Shamlian, the non-partisan candidate, supported also by the Ramkavars (Messrlian 1963, 83; Schahgaldian 1979, 185). To clarify its standing and position, the Central Committee even issued a statement on October 16, 1937, which partly read: "…the Lebanon Central Committee of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation [the Dashnaktsutyun] declares to Armenians that the newspaper Aztag [underline original], its editor and his opinions have no relation whatsoever with the Armenian Revolutionary Federation" (quoted in Messerlian 1963, 89). The tension, however, was short lived, and changing political alliances made the *Aztag* group eventually switch their support to Khosrov T'ut'unjian.

[189] *Aztag* (Factor) was founded in 1927, privately owned, but served as the unofficial organ of the Dashnaktsutyun. It became the official organ of the Dashnaktsutyun in 1965 and continues until present days (cf. Babloyan 1986, 158, 163; Sanjian 2003, 318).

The peculiarities of the Lebanese political system offered certain possibilities for the local chapters of Armenian political parties to grow stronger not only by soliciting supporters, but also, and more importantly, by making political alliances with the Lebanese political factions and parties. The Treaty of Friendship and Alliance of 1936 between the French mandatory and Lebanese authorities[190] created new grounds for intensifying independence movements in the country. As citizens of Lebanon, Armenians and their political factions were also expected to participate in the process and position themselves within the changing political spectrum. Towards the 1937 parliamentary elections, the Hnchakyans, along with the Armenian Communists, had to ally with the *United Front*, the pro-independent and anti-imperialist Arab opposition. The Dashnaks allied with the pro-government bloc (Migliorino 2008, 61; Schahgaldian 1979, 183-84). The non-Armenian political parties were interested in forming alliances with the Armenian political parties as well for the latter's votes. The Dashnak Central Committee, claiming to possess 3000 votes, eventually was able to replace Hrach'ia Shamlian[191] by Khosrov T'ut'unjian on the governmental coalition list and have him elected in 1937[192] (Messerlian 1963, 92, 96-97). Dashnak representation in the Lebanese Parliament and its dominating presence in the Armenian communal structures significantly reinforced the Dashnaktsutyun's political position in Lebanon.

[190] See the previous chapter.
[191] Shamlian was a well-known lawyer, had many French colleagues, and his name was included in the government list with the intervention of his French colleagues (Messerlian 1963, 88).
[192] By this time, Armenian Orthodox community had been granted the second seat at the Lebanese Parliament as an appointed position. Vahram Leilekian was appointed at this position and Khosrov Tutundjian was elected to the other. Thereby, both the Dashnaks and non-Dashnaks were represented in the Chamber of Deputies (Messerlian 1963, 96-8).

Conclusion

Dynamic processes in the relations of Soviet Armenian authorities and the Armenian diasporic political parties led to the formation of pro- and anti-Soviet orientations outside Armenia, which found different expressions in different countries. As argued in the first chapter, since the consolidation of power in the Republic of Armenia, especially from 1919 to 1920, the Dashnaktsutyun had developed a self-perception of being the only legitimate party to represent (the United) Armenia. After the expulsion of the Dashnak leadership from Armenia following the Sovietization of the country, the party leadership began promoting the Dashnaktsutyun as the Armenian government in exile. With the adoption of a fiercely anti-Soviet orientation, amid internal conflicts, the party leadership embarked on a struggle against Soviet Armenia and all other Armenian organizations in the diaspora, who supported Soviet Armenia. Meanwhile, the Hnchakyans and Ramkavars developed a more pro-Soviet stand. Although the Democratic Liberal Ramkavar party's ideology was incompatible with the Bolsheviks' socialism, the Ramkavar formula of accepting Soviet Armenia but not its regime in practice was not translated into any opposition to the Soviet government in Armenia. To the contrary, supporting Soviet Armenia in every respect meant supporting the government of Soviet Armenia, even if indirectly. Therefore, in practice, they were considered to represent the pro-Soviet faction, and their leaders did not put much effort to repudiate the pro-Soviet label.

The pro-Soviet orientation of the Hnchakyans and Ramkavars and the anti-Soviet stand of the Dashnaktsutyun shaped different perceptions of the homeland. The pro-Soviet factions accepted Soviet Armenia as the homeland and channeled their organizational, human and financial resources to the support of Soviet Armenia and the repatriation campaign in the 1920s. In contrast, the Dashnaktsutyun's anti-Soviet orientation often translated into the rejection of Soviet Armenia as the homeland, which was especially expressed by their loyalty to the symbolism of the Republic of Armenia. Such an orientation and the ambition to become the government of Armenians in exile determined the exclusive focus of the party on reorganizing in the diaspora. This also made the Dashnaktsutyun more influential in many communities, despite the party's internal crises. Depending on the specific contexts in the United States, France and Lebanon, the Dashnaktsutyun had to accomplish two goals in order to achieve dominance over the Armenian communities and truly claim the leadership in the Armenian diaspora. First of all, the party had to struggle against fragmented compatriotic affiliations and identities, forge a more homogeneous Armenian identity wherever possible, and produce a second generation sympathetic to its cause; secondly, the party had to find ways of controlling the Armenian (Apostolic) Church, especially in countries, where it was established as an important community center (as in the United States) or had become incorporated into the political structure and received certain privileges (as in Lebanon).

On the eve of WWII, the leaderships of the Armenian political parties could not find local conditions in France favorable for remaining as active; the struggle between the pro- and anti-Soviet political factions led to a schism in the Armenian Apostolic Church and community in the United States; and in Lebanon the Dashnaktsutyun had assumed a dominant position, heavily

represented in all Armenian community structures, as well as in the Lebanese chamber of deputies. Although all the parties expressed a concern for assimilation, compared to the United States and France, the preservation of Armenian identity became possible only under the more favorable social-political conditions in Lebanon. Armenian institutions in Lebanon were able to forge a more homogeneous Armenophone second generation, with an Armenian national consciousness, albeit divided in political orientations, in the perceptions of the homeland and of their own diasporic status. WWII and especially the Cold War, as the following chapter will discuss, escalated the conflicts between Armenian political parties, which led to a transnational schism within the Armenian Church and in the Armenian diaspora.

Chapter 4

From Exclusions and Violent Schism to Joint Commemorations of the Genocide

Introduction

The institutionalization of tense relations between the reorganizing Armenian diasporic political factions in the interwar period found further impetus during WWII and the early years of the Cold War. This chapter analyzes how rapidly changing international conditions affected the relations among Armenian political factions during WWII and the Cold War, as well as the factors which determined the transition from antagonism and violence to tolerance and cooperation in the Armenian diaspora in the 1960s. The major argument here is that the radical shift in the relations of the Soviet Union and the West from the WWII alliance to the Cold War enmity had a direct impact on the escalation of conflicts between the pro- and anti-Soviet Armenian political factions in the diaspora, making them transnationally more coherent against their "Armenian others." If in between the wars, as the previous chapter demonstrated, tense relations between Armenian political parties did not translate into mutually exclusive identity politics transnationally, the years of WWII and the Cold War provided the contexts, in which Armenian factions grew transnationally more coherent and began actively forging exclusive

diasporic identities. Drawing on primary accounts of the Armenian elites,[193] the second part of the chapter particularly examines how the conflicting perceptions of Soviet Armenia promoted by the pro-Soviet groupings and the anti-Soviet Dashnaktsutyun forged mutually exclusive self-identifications of the *'patriots'* and the *'true Armenians*', respectively, during WWII and the Cold War. If the *'patriots'* defined their patriotism by their unconditional acceptance of Soviet Armenia as the homeland, the *'true Armenians*' constructed their identification on the juxtaposition of Armenianness and Communism as two incompatible identities, struggled against the Soviet regime in Armenia and refrained from promoting Soviet Armenia as the homeland.

The transnational institutionalization of mutually exclusive identities, in turn, determined further escalation of hostilities and eventually led to a transnational schism in the Armenian diaspora. In addition to other primary and secondary sources, the third part of the chapter extensively uses the CIA archival documents to examine how the Dashnaktsutyun benefitted from the Cold War conditions and how it grew into one of the most dominant transnational Armenian organizations by gaining control over the Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia in Lebanon and by helping to extend its jurisdiction transnationally. The chapter concludes with the analysis of the factors, including the adoption of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948), the Soviet relaxation under Khrushchev, the resumption of active politics pursued by Soviet Armenia in the diaspora, which made the hostile Armenian factions to rethink their priorities, put aside hostilities and join efforts in many countries for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Armenian Genocide in 1965.

[193] This chapter also consulted a number of accounts authored by the eyewitnesses and participants of the events. These include Carlson (1943; 1949-1950), Vrats'ian (1943, 1955-56), Reuben Darbinian (1948, 1953, 1956, 1968), Kersam Aharonian (Gersam Aharonian) ([1964] 1986), Antranig Dzarugian (Andranik Tsarukian) (1980, 1992) and others. This chapter also relies on the diplomatic documents on Soviet-Turkish relations in 1945-46, published by Arman Kirakosyan in 2010.

The Call of Homeland: World War II, Soviet Armenia and the Revival of the Armenian Question

WWII and the Political Turn in Soviet Union

On June 22, 1941, the Nazi troops invaded the Soviet Union opening an era of significant revisions and turns from the previous suppressive policies in the country. The Stalinist purges between 1936 and 1939 had significantly repressed any manifestations of national or anti-Soviet sentiments in literature, public speeches or activities, causing large scale persecution and executions of political, literary and public activists. The exile, arrests and executions of many Armenian prominent literary figures, incumbent and former "Old Bolsheviks," leaders of Soviet Armenia, including Aghasi Khanjian, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Armenia in 1930-1936, spread terror in Armenia and forestalled briefly the production of anything even remotely associated with national content. Armenian clergy were not spared persecution either. The death of Catholicos Khoren Muradbekian in 1938 was largely believed to be an NKVD[194] operation (Matossian 1962, 160-61; Suny 1997b, 364-65). The Nazi invasion and the beginning of the "Great Patriotic War," as Joseph Stalin described it, forced the autocratic architect of the Soviet policies to abandon political extremes, refocus on the war effort and even turn a blind eye on some manifestations of national sentiments in literature, arts, and politics (cf. Bardakjian 2000, 205). Concerns for the possible penetration and expansion of nationalist-bourgeois

[194] Narodniĭ kommisariat vnutrennykh del (NKVD) [People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs).

sentiments in the country paled next to the Nazi threat. The Soviets even made an alliance with their "imperialist" rivals, Britain and the Untied States, to fight against the Nazis.

By November 1942, the Nazi Wehrmacht had devastated and absorbed most of the European part of the Soviet Union, besieged Leningrad, almost reached Moscow and occupied North Caucasus. Under the devastating conditions of war anything that could potentially prevent the break up of the Union, inspire and enflame patriotic feelings among the peoples of the Soviet Union and support the war effort was encouraged. In 1942 the Russian Orthodox Church was revived for the purpose of generating patriotic feelings, as well as soliciting support for the war effort. Shortly afterwards, the Catholicosate of Ējmiatsin also became proactive in its support of the "Great Patriotic War." In a petition to Joseph Stalin on January 20, 1943, Archbishop Gevorg Ch'orekch'yan, then the *locum tenens,* requested permission to open a special account at the State Bank for the establishment of "Sasunts'i Davit'"[195] tank regiment. In the same letter Archbishop Ch'orekch'yan notified Stalin that Ējmiatsin donated more than 800,000 Soviet rubles worth of jewelry, 1,000 English pounds and 50,000 rubles to the foundation, and that he was going to start a pan-Armenian fund raising campaign in support of the cause (Melk'onyan 2005, 333-34). Stalin's approval arrived six days later, and on February 2, 1943, Archbishop Ch'orekch'yan made a public appeal to all Armenians abroad. The call was especially addressed to Armenians in America because they stayed "free of the catastrophes of the dreadful war" (Melk'onyan 2005, 334).

[195] Sasunts'i Davit' (David of Sasun) is the central protagonist in the Armenian national epic poem Daredevils of Sasun (Sasna Tsṙer).

The call reached the Armenian Americans a month later. In response to it, Bp. Karekin Hovsepian, the Primate of the Armenian Church in New York, initiated the "Sasunts'i Davit'" fund raising campaign. Armenians in the Untied States and the Primate had made earlier efforts to collect aid for Soviet Armenia. The project of Armenian War Relief, which lasted for only one year, was now replaced by the new project, "Sasunts'i Davit'" (Melk'onyan 2005, 332-34). In the summer of 1944, the "Sasunts'i Davit'" tank regiment joined the Red Army and some of its units even reached Berlin in 1945 (Arzumanian 1997, 198-200; Dallak'yan 2007, 94-5; cf. Kitur 1963, 105). The efforts of Archbishop Ch'orekch'yan were truly appreciated by Stalin, who received him at his Kremlin office on April 19, 1945,[196] endorsed the elections of a new Catholicos in Ējmiatsin according to the constitution of the Catholicosate, and restored other privileges to the Catholicosate.

In 1945, Armenian church parishes throughout the world were permitted to send delegates to Ējmiatsin to participate in the election of the Catholicos. On June 22, 1945, the Ecclesiastical Assembly convened in Ējmiatsin and elected Archbishop Ch'orekch'yan as the Catholicos of all Armenians (Arzumanian 1997, 209-13). By meeting with Archbishop Ch'orekch'yan and by permitting the elections, the Soviet leader made a good will gesture towards Armenians worldwide. Besides learning about the Soviet achievements in Armenia, the delegates arriving for the elections of the Catholicos were also to learn soon that the Soviet authorities had certain intentions to raise the Armenian question internationally and launch a repatriation campaign.

[196] According to Stalin's appointments journal, the meeting lasted only 20 minutes form 7.30 to 7.50pm (Na Priëme u Stalina…2014). *Pravda,* the leading daily of the time, printed a brief coverage of the meeting the next day, on April 20, 1945: "On April 19th the Secretary of the Council of Peoples Commissars of the USSR, com. I.V. Stalin had a conversation with the deputy Catholicos of all Armenians, archbishop Georg Cheorekchyan on the affairs of the Armenian Church. Secretary of the Council on Religious Cults under the SovNarKom, Polyanski I.V. was present at the meeting."

By the summer of 1945, as the world rejoiced over the victory against the Nazis, the Soviet authorities spoke at the highest diplomatic levels of territorial claims against Turkey. The issue was first raised in confidential diplomatic circles and secret communications. In late May and early June of 1945, the matter was communicated to the Ambassador of Turkey by the People's Commissar (Minister) of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Vyacheslav Molotov[197] (Kirakosyan 2010, 31-2). Several weeks later, at the Seventh Session of the Heads of Governments of the victorious Allied Powers at Potsdam, convened on July 23, 1945, Stalin expressed his interest in redrawing the Soviet-Turkish border in Transcaucasia so that the regions of Ardahan and Kars would be incorporated into Soviet Georgia and Soviet Armenia respectively. In negotiations with Winston Churchill and Harry Truman, Joseph Stalin expressed the need for the "reinstatement of the borders," which existed before WWI with Turkey and clarified:

> … I mean the region of Kars, which before the war was part of Armenia, and the region of Ardahan, which before the war was part of Georgia. … we think that the border in the regions of Kars and Ardahan is incorrect, and we declared to Turkey, that, if she [Turkey] wants to make an alliance with us [Soviet Union - V.S.], the border must be corrected; if she [Turkey] does not want to correct the border, then there cannot be a question of alliance. (Excerpt from the Seventh Session of the Head of the Governments, Potsdam, 23 July, 1945. Translated from Kirakosyan 2010, 262).

While the actual motives behind Stalin's decision of claiming Kars and Ardahan remain unknown, the Soviets, it seems, used the aspirations of Armenians to return to the 1914 boundaries with Turkey. Towards the end of WWII, many Armenian organizations in the diaspora actively pursued this possibility. The Soviet consulates and intelligence reported such activities among Armenians to the People's Commissariat (Ministry) for Foreign Affairs of the USSR. In a letter addressed to the People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the Armenian SSR, dated on April 17, 1945, the deputy People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, wrote:

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[197] *"Zapis' shestogo zasedaniia glav pravitel'stv* [Record of the Sixth Session of the Heads of Governments]. June 22, 1945" (in Kirakosyan 2010, 259-262).

> Recently, in a number of countries a movement among Armenians abroad has been gathering momentum demanding first of all the unification with Soviet Armenia of the former Armenian territories, lost to Turkey, and secondly, providing the possibility to all Armenians, residing abroad, to return to the homeland, i.e. Soviet Armenia.
> Here, for example, in October 1944, the American Armenians raised this issue in the periodical press, and in March 1945 they formally appealed to Roosevelt, the President of the Untied States of America, with the same two demands.
> On April 7, 1945 the American-Armenian National Committee appealed to Comrade Stalin through a telegram signed by the president of the committee, Doctor Armenak Alikhanian, requesting to review and positively resolve the issues of the incorporation of Turkish Armenia to Armenian SSR and providing the possibility to all Armenians, residing abroad, to return to the homeland.
> Following the example of the American-Armenians, the representatives of various Armenian spiritual and public (obshchestvennykh) organizations in Iran have been appealing to our consular officers with similar requests. Besides, they intend to instruct their delegates to the Ējmiatsin Council to present these questions to the republican organs of Soviet Armenia…[198]

The letter ended with a request for a detailed report on the "ethnographic, historical political and other aspects of the issue." The detailed report of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs of Soviet Armenia, submitted on May 3, 1945,[199] concluded with three possible options for further resolution and action:

1. The restoration of the Russo-Turkish borders of 1914, which would include the regions of Kars, Ardahan and the Surmalu county;
2. The restoration of the Russo-Turkish borders according to the Treaty of San-Stefano of 1878, which would return to the Soviet Union the region of Kars, the Alashkert valley with the town of Bayazet;
3. In addition to the region of Kars, the Surmalu county and the Alashkert valley, the USSR also demands the return of three of the six Armenian vilayets of the former Ottoman

[198] "Pis'mo zamestitel'ia Ministra Inostrannykh del SSSR S.I Kavtaradze Ministru Inostrannykh del Armianskoĭ SSR S.K. Karapetyanu o predstavlenii obstoyatel'noĭ dokladnoĭ o byvshikh Armianskikh territoriiakh, otoshedshikh k Turtsii i o vozmozhnostiakh vozvrashcheniia na rodinu Armian, prozhivaiushchikh za rubezhom." [Letter of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR S.I. Kavtaradze to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Armenian SSR S.K. Karapetyan on the provision of a thorough report on the former Armenian territories, conceded to Turkey, and on the possibilities of the return of Armenians residing abroad to the homeland], translated from Kirakosyan (2010, 61)

[199] The text of the report is available in Russian in Kirakosyan (2010, 63-90)

Empire - Erzrum, Van and Bitlis (or 5 vilayets according to the administrative division in 1945)[200] (Kirakosyan 2010, 75).

The document did not explicitly mention whether the territories would be incorporated into Soviet Armenia or Soviet Georgia, but it recorded that "the seizure of Kars and Ardahan in favor of Turkey had made a grim impression on the workers of Armenia and Georgia" (quoted in Kirakosyan 2010, 71).

The Armenian land issue was made public in an article published in *Sovetakan Hayastan* (Soviet Armenia), the official organ of the Communist Party of Armenia on June 13, 1945. The article reproduced the Declaration of the Armenian National Council in America, under the same heading. The Declaration announced that the Armenian National Council of America, which represented all Armenian factions except the Dashnaktsutyun, petitioned the First Session of the UN General Assembly for returning the Armenian lands occupied by Turkey to Soviet Armenia (Dallak'yan 2004, 42). In the extremely centralized political structure, an article published in the organ of the Armenian Communist party indicated that the Soviet authorities publicly encouraged and fully supported the activism of Armenian organizations and unions abroad. Stalin raised the issue of the border adjustment at the Seventh Session of the Heads of Governments in Potsdam one month after this article and he was certainly aware of the earlier Armenian activism in the diaspora (cf. Melk'onyan 2009, 26). The Armenian territorial demands

[200] "Doklodnaia zapiska Ministra Inostrannykh del Armianskoĭ SSR S.K. Karapetyana zamestitel'iu Ministra Inostrannykh del SSSR S.I. Kavtaradze "O byvshikh Armianskikh territoriiakh, otoshedshikh k Turtsii i o vozmozhnostiakh vozvrashcheniia na rodiny armyan, prozhivaiushchikh za rubezhom" [Report of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Armenian SSR to the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR "On former Armenian territories, conceded to Turkey and the possibilities of the return of Armenians residing abroad to the homeland], in Kirakosyan (2010, 63-90).

perfectly fit the interests of Soviet Union against Turkey; since the beginning of the War, rather than joining the Allies, Turkey had signed a non-aggression pact with the Nazis in 1941, and the Soviets feared Turkey would have opened a second front against Soviet Union were the Germans to succeed at Stalingrad in the late 1942. Besides, Turkey declared war on Germany only reluctantly in February 1945 after the defeat of the Nazis had become inevitable (cf. Dallak'yan 2007, 117; Melk'onyan 2009, 23).

The matter of border adjustment was not resolved at the Seventh Session in Potsdam. For President Truman, it concerned only to Soviet Union and Turkey, and it was left to be dealt between the two countries. The leaders of Great Britain and the Untied States avoided confronting Stalin openly, but they continued sympathizing with Turkey against possible Soviet expansion. The nuclear attack on Japan in August 1945 held Stalin back from military intervention in Turkey, but the Soviet authorities continued to pursue the matter through diplomatic channels.[201]

On November 21, 1945, the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR issued a decree on the repatriation of Armenians to Soviet Armenia (Melik'set'yan 1985, 177). Several days later, on November 27, 1945, the Catholicos of All Armenians, Gevorg VI Ch'orekch'yan, was allowed to address an appeal to the three Heads of Governments, Stalin, Churchill and Truman, requesting a discussion of the issue of Armenian lands in Turkey (Arzumanian 1997, 226; Kirakosyan 2010, 41). Delegates arriving for the election of the Catholicos in June had returned

[201] Stalin had certain territorial demands against Iran as well. The Soviet troops had occupied northern Iran in 1941. The nuclear attack on Japan was a sort of warning sign for Stalin. If the Soviet army continued the occupation of Iran and if it invaded Turkey, President Truman might consider using a nuclear bomb against the Soviet Union as well. The situation deescalated in March 1946 with the Soviet withdrawal from Iran (Melk'onyan 2009, 28; Rahe 1999, 59)

from Armenia to their respective communities with the news of Soviets supporting the return of Armenian territories. This sparked many petitions, letters, discussions, and even demonstrations in various communities. In the meantime, the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs of Soviet Armenia intensively collected and translated memoranda, letters and petitions by various Armenian organizations to the United Nations, to the leaders of the United States and the UK, as well as just circulars in order to generate public support among Armenians. One such file produced by the Commissariat on May 14, 1946, contained in Russian translation about four dozen petitions, letters and memoranda, all relating to the incorporation of Armenian lands in Turkey to Soviet Armenia.[202] The petitions and letters collected in the file varied from individual short letters, telegrams, to more elaborate memoranda and appeals by various Armenian organizations. Encouraged by the petitions of Armenian diasporic organizations, the Soviets hoped to gain the support of Western powers for their expansion against Turkey. Yet, the gap between the Soviet and Western interests was increasing at the time and relations were deteriorating.

Concerned with the Soviet expansion in Eastern Europe, on March 5, 1946 Winston Churchill gave a speech at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, which became known as the "Iron Curtain" speech. The wartime ally of the Soviet Union was warning that "…an iron curtain [had] descended across the Continent," behind which lay "all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe: Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia…" Under "the Soviet sphere," behind the curtain, all were subject "in one form or

[202] "Spravka MID Armianskoĭ SSR "Obrasheniia zarubezhnykh Armianskikh organizatsiĭ k rukovoditel'iam velikikh derzhav i konferentsiiam ob"edinënnykh natsiĭ po voprosu prisoedineniia Armianskikh zemel' v Turtsii k Sovetskoĭ Armenii" [Reference of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs "Petitions of Armenian organizations abroad to the heads of great powers and conferences of the United Nations on the issue of the incorporation of Armenian lands in Turkey into Soviet Armenia] (in Kirakosyan 2010, 174-210).

another, not only to Soviet influence but to a very high and, in some cases, increasing measure of control from Moscow" (quoted in Rahe 1999, 66). In the following year, as the Communist expansion in Europe continued, and the British could no longer provide military or material assistance to the governments fighting against the expansion of Communism, President Truman thought the US should intervene. In his speech on March 12, 1947 at the US Congress, in response to the continuing civil war in Greece between the Communists and the Greek government, and to the potential Soviet threat against Turkey, the President called on Congress to vote for United States military and material assistance to nations fighting "totalitarian regimes forced upon them against their will."[203] The Truman Doctrine, as the ensuing policy of the United States became known, represented the United State's aspiration as a growing super-power to provide material and military support to countries fighting against Communism. The chilling of relations between the wartime allies was growing into antagonism and enmity, thus opening the era of Cold War.

The "Iron Curtain," which descended in Europe after 1945, had a significant effect on the revitalized relations between Soviet Armenia and Armenians abroad. The deteriorating relations between the former Allies in the course of 1945-48, combined with the inability of the Soviet Armenian economy to cope with the growing numbers of Armenian repatriates, had a direct impact on the repatriation program. If in 1946, the number of the repatriates was about 50,000, in 1947 it dropped to about 35,500, and in 1948 only around 3100 Armenians arrived to Soviet Armenia. Officially, repatriation was terminated in September 1948, but the last group of Armenians, consisting only of 162 individuals, arrived from the United States in January 1949

[203] "Truman Doctrine. President Harry S. Truman's Address Before a Joint Session of Congress, March 12, 1947," *The Avalon Project*. Yale Law School: Lilian Goldman Law Library. http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/trudoc.asp. Accessed August 11, 2014.

(Melik‘set‘yan 1985, 241). During the Cold War years, many repatriates ended up in Russian exile charged as “Armenian nationalists” and “enemies of the nation” (cf. Kirakosyan 2010, 45). The pursuit of territorial claims against Turkey formally remained in the Soviet foreign policy agenda until the death of Stalin in 1953 without turning into any policy action. References to it in print were gradually abandoned and the Soviet Union officially dropped territorial claims against Turkey in May 30, 1953 (Kirakosyan 2010, 46). Armenian hopes to have these territories back from Turkey once again remained unfulfilled. The common interests of territorial annexation, which had mobilized almost all the Armenian diasporic organizations, was short-lived and was soon destroyed by the approaching Cold War. They did not bring any reconciliation between the Dashnak and pro-Soviet Armenian factions. Instead, the Cold War and the developing global bipolarism tremendously exacerbated the existing antagonisms and conflicts. All these events happening during WWII and its immediate aftermath, however, had different impact on Armenian communities and institutions in various countries.

Armenians in France: From WWII to the Cold War

Having served as the most important hub of the Armenian diasporic political activism in the 1920s and early 1930s, Armenian organizational activity in France significantly declined during the war. In 1939, at the outset of the war, the French government adopted certain laws, severely restricting affiliation with foreign associations. During the French preparations for war, the general mobilization decree issued in September 1939 targeted among others all *étrangers sans nationalité* of ages between 20 and 48 as well. These were to serve in the French army, along

with French citizens (Le Tallec 2001, 156-8, 160). While many Armenians joined the French army, the restricting regulations and laws began affecting the activities of Armenian compatriotic unions, *associations culturelles,* as well as other political and charitable organizations. The Bureau of the Dashnaktsutyun had already moved from Paris to Egypt prior to the war, and following the Nazi occupation of France in May-June 1940, the Dashnaktsutyun chapters became practically inactive throughout the country. The Vichy regime[204] outlawed all Communist-leaning organizations, including the Hnchakyans (Le Tallec 2001, 174; Mandel 2003, 180). By the outbreak of the war, the AGBU had established its headquarters and many chapters in France, had invested in many projects, constructed a dorm for Armenian students at *Cité universitaire* in Paris, and established *Bibliotheque Nubar*. In 1940, several days after the Nazi invasion, the AGBU headquarters were moved to New York (Melk'onyan 2005, 316-17).

Life in Paris and elsewhere under the Occupation was paralyzed, as was Armenian activism. With few exceptions, Armenian-language periodicals ceased publication. *Haratch,* the most prominent Dashnak-leaning newspaper, and *Anahit,* the celebrated literary-political monthly edited by Arshag Chobanian, a Ramkavar, also ceased publication in 1940 (Le Tallec 2001, 148; Mouradyan 1991, 46; Ter-Minassian 1994, 216). France could no longer serve as the center from where Armenian organizations outside France would expect to receive guidance on future strategies, policies and organizational matters.

[204] Following the German occupation in 1940, France was divided into two parts. The Occupied Zone in the north and northwest was directly controlled by the Nazis. It contained the most important industrial centers of France, including Paris. The Unoccupied Zone, or the Zone Libre, included the rural areas of Central and Southern France and nominally remained under French control until 1942. The government in *Zone Libre* was established in the town of Vichy and became known as the Vichy regime. The French Occupation ended the Third Republic, as the constitution was suspended and replaced by totalitarian slogans "work, family and country" in 1940 (Haine 2000, 160-4)

Armenian communists, some former Hnchakyan and HOK activists joined the French *Résistance.* Most Armenians, however, as *apatride* foreigners, tried to keep a low profile in order to escape the fate that befell the Jews under Nazi Occupation. Under the Vichy regime, the Armenians, along with Russians and Jews, were classified as "inassimilable" refugees.[205] Witnessing the persecution of the Jews, the *apatride* Armenians had every reason to fear for their fate. While many Armenians in the French army ended up in German Stalags,[206] quite a few joined the underground *Résistance* in Marseille, Paris and elsewhere. But those who did not join the *Résistance* had to negotiate their rights and racial status in order to continue residing in France either by cooperating with the Nazis or by staying neutral (cf. Le Tallec 2001, 163, 186-87; Mandel 2003, 185). Under such circumstances, certain Armenian circles embraced racial theories to substantiate Armenians' belonging to the Aryan race, and certain Armenian organizations provided documents to certify this[207] (cf. Le Tallec 2001, 186; Mandel 2003, 182).

Following the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941, Germany initiated the creation of an Armenian battalion as part of the foreign legions recruited mostly from among the POWs. By the summer of 1942, several Armenian battalions had already been put in action, commanded by Dro (Drastamat Kanayan), the last Minister of Defense of the Republic of Armenia in 1920. The Armenian regiments were distinguished by the shield symbols sewn to

[205] Georges Mauco, the best expert on immigration since the 1920s, had the following to say with regards to refugees in 1941: "While the Russians are far from the French people in many respects, they generally have a cultural level that allows contact. With the Armenians, even this contact is difficult … They have been living for generations in a situation of enforced inferiority, and they have been chronically terrorized. With the exception of some isolated individuals, this has shaped a soul adapted to constraint in which character gives way to shifty obsequiousness" (quoted in Weil 2008, 132). Mauco went on to portray the Jews as having "souls shaped by the long humiliations of a servile state," like Armenians, whose "repressed hatred was masked by obsequiousness" (quoted in Weil 2008, 132).

[206] Prisoner of War (POW) camps.

[207] The *Office des Réfugiés Arméniens*, (the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia), continued providing certificates to refugees *d'origine arménienne* to confirm their belonging to the Armenian race (Mouradian and Kunth 2010, 40; Le Tallec 2001, 185).

their sleeves in the colors of the Armenian tricolor flag (Le Tallec 2001, 177-78; Ch‘ormisian 1975, 189; Thomassian 2012, 62-3). In the same year the Nazi military administration initiated the creation of the *Armenischen Nationalen Gremiums* (Armenian National Council/Committee) in Berlin, headed by Artashes Abeghian, a professor at Berlin University. Abeghian invited Garegin Nzhdeh[208] and Vahan P‘ap‘azian, two well-known Dashnak leaders, to serve on the council. The Council established a weekly named *Armenien* and broadcast an Armenian language program on Radio Berlin.[209] In their support of the anti-Soviet mission of the Nazis, these Dashnak activists sought, first of all, to establish the racial purity of the Armenians and, secondly, hoped to liberate Armenia after the Soviet defeat (cf. Atamian 1955, 398-99; Ch‘ormisian 1975, 198; Khurshudyan 1964, 63; Le Tallec 2001, 176; Thomassian 2012, 32; Walker 1990, 357-58). One of the effects of the cooperation with the Nazis was the saving of Armenian prisoners from concentration and POW camps. These soldiers preferred joining the *Armenische Legion* over suffering and dying at camps (cf. Ch‘ormisian 1975, 203). In order to prove the Armenians' racial purity several "scholarly" works appeared in German and French in this period, including R. Kherumian's *Les Arméniens: race, origines ethno-raciales* (Paris, Vigot, 1941), H.H. Sandel's *Die armenische Nation im Laufe der Jahrtausende* (1943) and a number of articles published in French- and German-language newspapers of the time (Le Tallec 2001, 186-87). Apparently, these works were written in response to Alfred Rosenberg's perception of the Armenians as "the people of the wastes," next to the Jews, and Hitler's insistence on a racial legislation, which would protect "the German blood from contamination, not only of the Jewish but also of the Armenian blood" (quoted in Bardakjian 1985, 30).

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[208] Garegin Nzhdeh was expelled from the Dashnaktsutyun at the end of the 1930s. His cooperation with the Nazis led to his arrest in 1944 by the Soviet counterintelligence in Bulgaria. Nzhdeh was sentenced to 25 years' imprisonment and died in prison in the Soviet Union in 1955 (Ovsepian 2007, 3-4; 10)

[209] Ch‘ormisian (1975, 189) recalls how an Armenian female voice announced everyday "Ushadrut‘yun, ushadrut‘yun" in Armenian ("Attention, attention"), which opened the Armenian program of Radio Berlin.

Despite the fact that some prominent Dashnaks cooperated with the Nazis, many others did not. The decentralized nature of the party allowed the local chapters and committees to be flexible. Shavarsh Missakian, the former Bureau member and the editor of *Haratch* refused to cooperate with the Nazis in the Occupied Zone and terminated *Haratch* in 1940. According to an eyewitness account of Lewon Ch'ormisian[210] (1975, 190), there were no Dashnak Armenian regiments in France.[211] The French Dashnaks felt a certain loyalty to France, which had hosted Armenians for decades and had fallen under the occupation of the enemy, but, on the other hand, they were hesitant to join their ideological enemies, the Communists and Communist Armenians, who joined the *Résistance.* Consequently, most Dashnaks preserved neutrality and preferred to keep low profile in France during the war.

The Armenian Communists, former affiliates of HOK and the *Union populaire franco-arménienne*[212] decidedly joined the French *Résistance* against the Nazis. The *Résistance* was organized and led by General Charles De Gaulle, who represented the government of Free France in London. In the initial years of the Occupation in 1940-41, the *Résistance* could not achieve much success. But from 1943 onwards the movement gained many followers from among the Communists and became increasingly influential, especially in the Occupied Zone (cf. Haine 2000, 165; Howarth and Varouxakis 2003, 111). The Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union mobilized the members of Comintern against Hitler. The anti-Nazi mobilization of the

[210] Ch'ormisian was a member of the Dashnak party in the 1930s, but he was later expelled and gradually turned into a fierce anti-Dashnak (Ch'ormisian 1975: 100; 199; 211; 225).
[211] Similarly, the Dashnak chapter in Cairo affirmed its loyalty to the Allies. *The Times* in London also published an article in 1941 denying any Armenian pro-Nazi affiliations in Britain (Walker 1990, 356-7).
[212] The *Union* was created in 1937, after the dissolution of HOK. It emerged from the merger of several former HOK chapters (see Chapter 3.2).

Communists became especially efficient in France from 1943, when the Communist Party chapters reorganized themselves into underground paramilitary units. Many Armenians and other immigrant Communists were affiliated with the French Communist Party through its chapters called *Main-d'oeuvre Immigrée* (MOI).

In 1942, Missak Manouchian, the former leader of the *Union populaire franco-arménienne,* became one of the leaders of *Francs-tireurs et partisans de la MOI* (FTP-MOI)[213] in Paris and assumed the leadership of several of its paramilitary guerrilla detachments. One of its detachments, called "Stalingrad," comprised mostly Armenian and Polish immigrants. Under the leadership of Manouchian, the regiments of FTP-MOI instigated several attacks on the Nazi Occupiers in Paris and assassinated some high-ranking officials. The group was eventually arrested in 1944 and all 23 members of the Manouchian Group, as they were referred to, were executed in February 1944 (cf. Le Tallec 2001, 167; Mandel 2003, 182). Following the execution, the Nazi military administration printed and spread 15,000 copies of a poster, which depicted the executed members of the Manouchian Group on a red background and described them as criminals. The *Affiche Rouge*, as the poster became widely known, portrayed pictures of five Polish Jews, two Hungarian Jews, an Italian, a Spanish and Missak Manouchian, the Armenian *chef de bande* (Fig. 4.1). The poster was widely disseminated in France with a note denouncing the *Résistance* fighters as having been inspired by "foreigners," "Jews," and labeling them as "*l'armée du crime contre la France.*"[214] Following the liberation of France in 1944, the *Affiche Rouge* became one of the symbols of the Liberation. The members of the Manouchian

[213] "Free-shooters" and Partisans of the MOI.
[214] "The army of crime against France." Quoted from the webpage of the *Musée de l'Histoire de l'Immigration* of France (http://www.histoire-immigration.fr/des-dossiers-thematiques-sur-l-histoire-de-l-immigration/l-affiche-rouge. Accessed August 7, 2014)

Group were honored as martyrs and became symbols of the *Résistance* and Liberation (cf. Le Tallec 2001, 170; Mandel 2003, 188).

Figure 4-1. Affiche Rouge.
(Source: Musée de l'Histoire de l'Immigration,
http://www.histoire-immigration.fr. Accessed September 2, 2014)

The extent of Armenian participation in the French *Résistance* still needs further research. However, based on some secondary evidence, Armenian participation acquired multiple forms, ranging from locally oriented individual and small group activities to organizationed efforts (cf. Le Tallec 2001, 178-84; Mandel 2003, 184). At the outset of the war, the Armenian members of the French Communist party initiated the creation of *Front National Arménien* (FNA) [Armenian National Front] and *l'Association des Jeunes Patriots Arméniens* [Association of Young Armenian Patriots]. Despite functioning informally and mostly underground during the years of occupation, the activities of the FNA became more manifest in the final months of the

Occupation. On August 22, 1944 the FNA issued a call to all Armenians in Paris and the Parisian region:

> Armenians, the victorious Allied armies are not far from Paris. The French people continue the fight for Liberty. The French combatants are experiencing heroic hours and Paris stands proudly with its barricades against the German [soldiers]. Victory is near, but the struggle is not over. You, who during four years, have suffered with this people under the German boot, you, who have thousands of prisoners in the German concentration camps; you, who even under the most ferocious Hitlerian repressions have been able to give a courageous generation like the martyrs MANOUCHIAN, MANOUKIAN and others, who have struggled with weapons in hand side by side with the French combatants for our Homeland and for this country, which has welcomed us, rise! Put all your strength in the service of French people, who have stood up in rebellion, whose liberation is yours and whose victory is that of your homeland!
> Young Armenians, join the ranks of F.F.I[215] and fight with the Armenian patriotic militia groups and the Armenian National Front, side by side with the French brothers.
> Participate in the construction of barricades.
> Death to the Hitlerians!
> Long live the friendship of the Armenian and French people!
> Long live heroic Paris! Long live Free France! (Quoted and translated from Le Tallec 2001, 170-171)

The statement calling on Armenians to fight side by side with the French people, reveals several notable points. First of all, it suggests that by the end of WWII even the most integrated Communist Armenians still felt foreigners in France, despite their presence in the country for almost two decades. They call on Armenians to fight both for their "Homeland" [Soviet Armenia] and for the "country, which welcomed" them, implying that Armenians are still foreigners in France. Secondly, the call to fight "side by side with the French brothers" for liberation of France, the hailing of the friendship of the Armenians and French, represents a certain pledge of loyalty to the French people and France as the country which "welcomed Armenians." The FNA leadership refrained from calling France the Homeland, but it hailed Liberated France and affirmed Armenian participation in the liberation struggle. In the context of the Allied victories against the common enemy, the Axis powers, presenting Soviet Armenia or even Soviet Union as the Homeland[216] became completely compatible with the calls to fight for

[215] *Forces françaises de l'intérieur* (FFI), was the army of French *Résistance* under the command of General De Gaulle (Le Tallec 2001, 162)
[216] The Armenian communists often referred to Soviet Union as the Homeland. Missak Manouchian also often referred to the Soviet Union as the "homeland of the working class" (Ter-Minassian 1997, 40). Along similar lines,

France. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the statement manifests a significant change in the language of Armenian Communists. Rather than calling for class struggle against the imperialists, they were calling on Armenians *regardless of class* to join the struggle against the Germans, side by side with their "brothers," the French people *regardless of class,* much in accordance with the policies of the USSR during the War. During the same period, between May and August 1944, the Association of Young Armenians disseminated secret circulars among the Armenians in France, which expressed patriotic feelings towards Soviet Armenia, compared the economic, demographic and agricultural developments in Turkey to those in Soviet Armenia to demonstrate the advantages of the Soviet regime and called on the Armenians to fight the Germans, the WWI allies of Turkey.[217] The activation of ethnopolitical organizations in the post-WWII political context in France, such as the Armenian FNA, Mandel (2003, 191) attributes to the Vichy years, which "sparked a more public and vocal ethnopolitical consciousness among various local minority groups." The heavy emphasis the Nazis placed on ethnicity and race certainly influenced prevailing ideologies and identifications in the Nazi occupied regions. As a reflection of that, the Vichy regime and their collaborators stressed race and ethnicity in their publications, radio broadcasts and newspapers,[218] which in turn enhanced the racial and ethnic identifications of the population groups under their control. The treatment of different population groups according to their race and ethnicity under the Occupation and the Vichy regime, and the responses generated by these groups, including the Armenians, made a significant impact on the reinforcement of ethno-racial consciousness and identities in France.

Levon Ch'ormisian, who was pro-Soviet, but not Communist, and had chaired the first congress of the FNA in 1945, wrote in retrospect: "Soviet Union in its entirety provided the most favorable conditions for the development and security of the Armenian people. Therefore, [it] became sort of a homeland not only for the Russians, but also for all the nationalities constituting it, [including] … the Armenians" (Ch'ormisian 1975, 187).

[217] Four circulars ended up in the archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenian SSR and were translated from French into Russian in June 1946 (Kirakosyan 2010, 105-122).

[218] For example, *L'Ethnie française* was a periodical, founded in 1940 by George Montandon, an anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic professor of ethnology at the School of Anthropology in Paris (Weil 2008, 116).

In the immediate aftermath of the war, the Communists emerged largely favored by the French nation for their participation in the *Résistance.* The rightists, in contrast, were discredited because of their association with the Vichy administration. The post-war euphoria of the victorious Communists in France and the persecutions of the extreme right had their parallels among the Armenians: condemnations and suppression of the Dashnak party and its rank and file continued in the immediate aftermath of the war. Moreover, the Dashnaks were often referred to as Fascists. In 1944-1946 the Dashnaktsutyun was practically absent from Armenian communal affairs in France, which was dominated by the FNA (Boghossian 2009, 180). The FNA actively hailed the Liberation of France and spent much effort to propagate Armenian participation in the *Résistance* (cf. Mandel 2003, 188-89). It sought to bring together all Armenian organizations and create an Armenian representation in France demonstrating yet another turn from *class* to *ethnic* affairs. In January 1945, the FNA initiated the unification of Armenian youth organizations under the umbrella organization called *Jeunesse Arménienne de France* (JAF). The Dashnak leadership in France, however, was reluctant of encouraging its youth to join. The same year, the party initiated the creation of its youth organization, *Nor Seround* (La nouvelle génération).[219]

The first General congress of the FNA, convened in March 1945, brought together representatives from all Armenian political factions and various charitable and benevolent organizations (Ch‘ormisian 1975, 202, 205). Still hesitant about the future and without clear instructions from the Bureau and the leadership, some Dashnak representatives also participated

[219] *Nor Seround* youth organization should not be confused with the homonymous *Nor Serount Cultural Association*, founded by the Hnchakyan party in Beirut in 1955 (see Chapter 4.4).

in the Congress and were reluctantly involved in the Communist dominated Central Board[220] (Ch'ormisian 1975, 204). The Armenian National Union, as the new organization became known after the Congress, even became interested in the affairs of the Armenian Church. The Board could no longer tolerate that the only Armenian Church in Paris was controlled by some individuals. They registered 5000 parish members and conducted an election for a new Board of Trustees (Ch'ormisian 1975, 207).

The Armenian National Union in France became actively involved in Armenian territorial claims. On August 30, 1945, the Union sent a petition, a memorandum and a resolution to the London Conference of Foreign Ministers of the victorious Allied Powers justifying the need to consider the return of Armenian territories from Turkey. Based on the signatures, the Armenian National Union comprised the following Armenian organizations: FNA, AGBU, National Union of Ancient Combatants of France, Armenian Catholic mission in Paris, Armenian Benevolent Society in Paris, Armenian Protestant Community in France, the JAF, the Armenian Church in Paris and Association of Armenian Women *Tebrotzassère* (Dprotsaser).[221] It seems that officially at least, the Dashnaktsutyun was not represented at the National Union, although the Executive Board, according to Ch'ormisian, had a few Dashnak members. But the Dashnak leaders in France, as elsewhere, also supported the Armenian land claims by sending various petitions and memoranda independently or in cooperation with other Armenian organizations. The petition sent on behalf of the "Armenian community" of France to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Soviet Armenia in September 1945 along with the signatures of the member organizations of the Armenian National Union, also included the signature of Shavarsh Missakian as the

[220] The Central Board, elected at the Congress, comprised 21 members, of which 2 were Dashnaks, 2 Ramkavars, 8-10 Communists and the rest were non-partisan (Ch'ormisian 1975, 204).
[221] The document is available in Kirakosyan 2010 (122-144).

representative of *Haratch* (Kirakosyan 2010, 55-60). Hrant Samuelian, the president of the *Office des Réfugiés Arméniens*, sent a petition to the Soviet Embassy in Paris and also to the representatives of the United States, France and Great Britain with the same request. In a joint accord, Hrant Samuelian and Arshag Chobanian sent a petition on behalf of the *Office des Réfugiés Arméniens* (Delegation of the Republic of Armenia)[222] and *Comité Central des Réfugies Arméniens* (former Armenian National Delegation)[223] to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Vyacheslav Molotov. On September 7, 1945, Shavarsh Missakian handed another memorandum to Molotov and to the representatives of the United States and Great Britain, on behalf of the "Armenian Socialist party" (the Dashnaktsutyun), demanding that the territories allocated to Armenia by president Wilson were annexed to Soviet Armenia (Kirakosyan 2010, 93-4; 205-207).

In the immediate aftermath of WWII, the FNA and the Armenian National Union were also involved in local French politics and explicitly advocated for the rights of Armenians (Mandel 2003, 190-91). One of the first acts of the provisional government of France under General De Gaulle was the revision of the Naturalization Act of 1927. Amid the debates on the criteria for providing naturalization, De Gaulle insisted that the participants of the *Résistance* be given certain priority (Weil 2008, 135). The Act of 1945 significantly eased the process and accelerated the naturalization of foreigners in France (Weil 2008, 146). The new act provided a basis for the Armenian National Union to advocate for granting French citizenship to the Armenians. For the first time, after twenty years, Armenians along with many other *étrangers*,

[222] The *Office des Réfugiés Arméniens* was on 71 Avenue Kléber in Paris, the same address, from where the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia provided identity cards to Armenians in the 1920s and 1930s. The Delegation of the Republic of Armenia had not formally ended and in internal correspondence, Hrant Samuelian was often referred to as the head of the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia (cf. Mouradian and Kunth 2010, 40)
[223] According to Le Tallec (2001: 185) these two organizations merged in 1945.

were finally considered eligible for acquiring naturalization in 1947. While many Armenians applied for naturalization, some were reluctant to receive French citizenship. The repatriation of Armenian refugees, launched by the Soviet authorities immediately following the war in 1945, had made the perspective of moving to Soviet Armenia more appealing to many.

The repatriation to Soviet Armenia provided another ground for a brief unification of the Armenian efforts in France. The Hnchakyans with the Ramkavars supported and participated in organizing the repatriation. The AGBU provided financial assistance, while the Dashnaktsutyun also spoke in favor of repatriation and supported the program. But, similar to earlier incidents during the interwar period, the process of organization largely alienated and marginalized the Dashnak sympathizers and members. With the initiative of the Soviet Embassy in France and the active participation of some Armenian organizations, a Committee of Repatriation was formed, which excluded the Dashnaks, as elsewhere in the diaspora. The Dashnak rank and file or sympathizers were excluded form the list of eligible repatriates as well (Le Tallec 2001, 194-95). Two ships with altogether about 5,000 - 7,000 Armenians aboard[224] departed from Marseille in August and December of 1947 (Arnoux 2007, 145-6). While the Dashnaktsutyun was once again excluded from participating both in the Committee and in repatriation, the party leadership in France remained active in the pursuit of the territorial claims initiated by the Soviet government and advocated for the return of Armenian lands to Soviet Armenia.

Petitions, memoranda and universal support for the repatriation continued until 1947. The popular enthusiasm among Armenians was quelled after the Deputy Foreign Minister of the

[224] According to Melik‘set‘yan (185, 241), the number of Armenians arriving from France was 5260, while Ch‘ormisian (1975, 211), Ter Minassian (1997, 78) suggest 7,000 and Le Tallec (2001, 197) puts around 7,300.

USSR Andrei Vyshinsky mentioned at the UN session of October 24, 1947 that Kars and Ardahan had been Georgian territories. Vyshinsky's speech was published in *Pravda* on October 28, 1947. In his speech, referring to a work recently submitted by two Georgian academics, Vyshinsky concluded that "…therefore, the authors of this letter peacefully … express their wish based on historical, ethnographic, political and all other grounds for the return of those lands to the Georgian republic, [the] Georgian people. This is just, because those lands belong to Georgia" (*Pravda* October 28, 1947). Vyshinsky's statement sparked heated discussions in especially Dashnak affiliated newspapers abroad. The chilling relations between the Soviet Union and the West facilitated the Dashnaktsutyun's regaining of self-confidence and its resumption of anti-Soviet policies. On January 9, 1948, *Haratch* resumed the criticism of the opponents of the Dashnak party with an added self-confidence. The paper condemned the Bolshevik-Hnchak-Ramkavar "parrots," who still hoped that the "Father of Nations" (Stalin) would realize the Armenian demands. After the defeat of the Nazis and the discrediting of the rightist ideologies, *Haratch* and the Dashnaktsutyun in France began accentuating the party's socialist aspect, moving towards the left, closer to the French Socialist party in the political spectrum.[225] For the Dashnak leaders in France, the move was justified in the arriving Cold War context, because it allowed the party to resume the anti-Soviet propaganda without fear of being associated with the Nazis.

France was involved in the Cold War by subscribing to the US Marshall Plan in 1947. The Marshall Plan, announced by the US Secretary of State George Marshall in June 1947, proclaimed the readiness of the United States to provide grants and loans to the European

[225] See Shavarsh Missakian's petition on behalf of the "Armenian Socialist party" (the Dashnaktsutyun), mentioned above.

countries in order to help them rebuild their economies. France benefitted greatly from the financial assistance coming from the Untied States. The economic boom of the French society was so tremendous that the years of 1945-1975 were later labeled as *Les Trente Glorieuses* [The Glorious Thirty] (cf. Haine 2000, 173; 194). As Haine (2000, 175) notes, "once France accepted the Marshall Plan" it became clear "that the country would not declare its neutrality between the Soviet and American camps." As an expression of the Cold War alliances in France, the Communist Party was expelled from the government in 1947 for its opposition to the economic and social policy proposed by the government (Haine 2000, 175).

The anti-Communist course that the government of the Fourth Republic pursued, eventually led to the legal dissolution of all "foreign" organizations affiliated with the *Résistance* and the Communist Party. The Armenian National Front also dissolved in 1948 (Boghossian 2009, 191-92; Ch'ormisian 1975, 210; Le Tallec 2001, 200). The dissolution of the FNA scattered the pro-Soviet faction in the Armenian National Union, although some of the former FNA members regrouped and founded *l'Union culturelle française des Arméniens de France* (UCFAF) (French Cultural Union of Armenians of France). The UCFAF was registered according to the 1901 law on June 18, 1949. It mostly comprised former Hnchakyans, former members of the FNA and some active members of the French Communist Party. The UCFAF aimed at a) reaffirming the existing secular ties between the French and Armenian people; b) introducing the cultures of both peoples to one another; c) introducing Armenia, its culture, history and progress to both the Armenian community in France and the French people. The JAF and the UCFAF became closely affiliated, and the JAF served as the youth organization of the UCFAF.

Having almost identical goals and activities, the JAF and *Nor Seround* began representing the Cold War youth factions among Armenians. The JAF and the UCFAF remained pro-Soviet, celebrated November 29, the day of Sovietization of Armenia, while *Nor Seround* and the Dashnaktsutyun, celebrated May 28, the Independence Day of the Republic of Armenia (Ch'ormisian 1975, 217; 226; Le Tallec 2001, 200-201). The strength of the Communist Party during the war and until 1948 and the ensuing strength of the Armenian Communists led to the actual dissolution of most Hnchakyan chapters[226] and the emergence of local organizations, congenial to the French social-political context, such as the JAF and the UCFAF. Although ostensibly apolitical, through their cultural, artistic programs, camps, and friendly relations with Soviet Armenia, these organizations provided an alternative to the Dashnaktsutyun's reclaimed anti-Soviet orientation and growing influence in France.

The Cold War provided the Dashnaktsutyun with a favorable climate. *Haratch* resumed in 1945 and from 1947 it returned to its anti-Soviet orientation. The party, often referring to itself as the *Parti Socialiste Arménien,* gradually allied with the French Socialist party (SFIO) and became very active and visible. In 1953, the Dashnaktsutyun supported the election of the Socialist Gaston Defferre as the Mayor of Marseille, who remained in that position for 33 years. The cooperation reinforced the party's political position in Marseille and affirmed its leading role within the Armenian community. In parallel to the founding of the JAF and the UCFAF chapters in various Armenian populated regions, the Dashnaktsutyun regrouped the anti-Soviet camp by founding chapters of *Nor Seround* and *Croix Bleue* in many regions and towns in France. The party became so visible that Ch'ormisian (1975, 220), a former member of the UCFAF, reluctantly concluded: "It is a fact that as a political organization in the French Armenian

[226] Ch'ormisian (1975, 223) notes that only a handful of Hnchakyans remained faithful to the party.

community, the Dashnaktsutyun preserved its existence and continues to exist in contrast to the dissolved and lamentable conditions of other political parties."

Armenians in the United States: From WWII to the Cold War

The US entered WWII in the wake of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. The unprecedented US-Soviet alliance in the war after two decades of nearly non-existent political relations had most significant repercussions for the Armenian-American communities. In the context of the prevailing anti-Nazi and pro-Soviet atmosphere in the early to the mid-1940s, the polarization inside the community after the church schism of 1933 intensified and divided it into two distinct camps.

By the outbreak of WWII, the Dashnaktsutyun had been largely marginalized in the United States due to the events of 1933. In the 1930s, many Dashnak sympathizers and members had been left out of the churches loyal to the Diocese of North America. The radicalization and growing hostilities had severely altered interactions and interrelations between families and relatives, and had even broken many families. In the years following the assassination of Abp. Tourian, Dashnaks were labeled as "assassins," "priest killers" and "people with knives in their pockets" (Phillips 1989, 132-33). Regardless of how Dashnak-affiliated people actually interpreted the incident, they were no longer welcome to churches affiliated with the Diocese.

The congregation in these churches in most cases indirectly, but in some cases directly, made them feel unwelcome.[227]

Wherever Dashnaks constituted majority on the church boards or among parishioners, the sympathizers of Ramkavars were similarly excluded from churches. Such incidents were recorded in Philadelphia, New York, Fresno and elsewhere (cf. Atamian 1955, 373). In the Holy Trinity church in Fresno, for example, where the majority of the parishioners were Dashnak sympathizers, the general membership voted in a meeting in December 1934 in favor of terminating its affiliation with the Ējmiatsin affiliated Diocese. The non-Dashnaks and their sympathizers were left out of the church and had no church to attend until 1939, when they founded the St. Paul Armenian Apostolic Church (Bulbulian 2000, 94). The voluntary and forced exclusion of the political adversaries and their sympathizers from churches separated the Armenian communities everywhere in the Untied States, confining the spaces of interaction only to their respective community circles. The polarization of pro- and anti-Dashnak communities had been going on for several years, when the United States declared War on the Axis Powers in December 1941.

The US-Soviet Alliance against the Nazis was first of all detrimental to the Dashnaktsutyun, whose anti-Soviet stand for the past two decades proved untenable during the war. The American Central Committee of the Party was quick to respond to the new international balance of power following the US alliance with the Soviet Union in WWII. The December 24, 1941 issue of

[227] One of Jenny Phillips' respondents from Watertown recalled the following story: "I was married in St. James and my child was christened there. I was in the choir there for fifteen years. I always felt St. James was my church. I was attending church one day and this guy approached me from behind. I had known him for years. He said, "What are you doing here?" I said, "What do you mean? This is my church." He said, "The Tashnaks have their own church now. I figured you'd be over there." This was it. I never went back to St. James" (Phillips 1989, 133-34).

Hairenik Daily published the proclamation of the Dashnaktsutyun, which confirmed the unconditional support of the party to the Allies. The anti-Dashnak faction vociferously cast doubt on the honesty of Dashnak intentions (cf. Atamian 1955, 387-88). They took full advantage of the American-Soviet Alliance to improve their position in the Untied States.

In November 1941, Abp. Karekin Hovsepian, the Primate of the Diocese, initiated the Armenian War Relief campaign in support of the Soviet army and Armenian refugees in the Soviet Union and the diaspora (Melk‘onyan 2005, 332-3). The Armenian-American community, socially and structurally divided into pro- and anti-Dashnak factions, could no longer respond in unison to the calls of the Catholicos of Ējmiatsin or the Primate of the Armenian Church in New York for the creation of the "Sasunts‘i Davit‘" committee.[228] The call was answered only by organizations with certain pro-Soviet leanings. The "Sasunts‘i Davit‘" committee was formed of the representatives from the Hnchakyan and Ramkavar parties, Armenian Apostolic and Evangelical churches, as well as the AGBU. The committee succeeded in raising a substantial amount of funds, more than $100,000 for the cause (Kitur 1963, 105; cf. Melk‘onyan 2005, 334-35). The opportunity and common cause of openly supporting the Soviet Union and Soviet Armenia brought together all the pro-Communist, pro-Soviet and politically neutral Armenian organizations in the Armenian National Council in March 1944. The Armenian Apostolic and Evangelical churches and the AGBU supported the activities of the Council, which comprised the Ramkavars, the Armenian Progressive League (Communists), the Hnchakyans and representatives of some compatriotic societies (cf. Aharonian [1964] 1986, 195). The Council particularly set four objectives:

[228] The committee was the initiative of the Primate in order to raise funds for the creation of the previously mentioned "Sasunts‘i Davit‘" tank regiment for the Red Army.

1. Assisting the war effort of the Allies;
2. Organizing the means to help the Soviet Union and Soviet Armenia;
3. Defending the rights of diaspora Armenians by all means and working for their resettlement on Armenian lands;
4. Taking the necessary measures in assisting the emigration movement[229] (quoted in Schahgaldian 1979, 97)

One of the major acts of the Council was a memorandum addressed to the UN Founding Conference in San Francisco on June 8, 1945. The lengthy memorandum provided a brief outline of the events in the last decades of the Ottoman Empire, described in much detail the suffering and massacres of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, and pled the conference for the return of the historical Armenian lands to Soviet Armenia, which would facilitate the return of more than a million Armenian refugees to their historical homeland (Kirakosyan 2010, 154-55). The Council addressed several other petitions to the leaders of the Great powers and other officials, expressing the same concern and request (Kirakosyan 2010, 91; 154; 177).

By this time, the Dashnaktsutyun and its newspapers in the Untied States had significantly toned down their anti-Soviet rhetoric and propaganda. During the war and the years of Cold War, the Dashnak ideologists spent much effort to revise their previous priorities. One of the first expressions of such revision and retreat was the renaming of the Dashnak *Tseghakron* youth movement to the *Armenian Youth Federation,* an ideologically neutral designation. The founder of the *Tseghakron* movement in America, Garegin Nzhdeh, was in many ways inspired by the dominant racial theories and ideologies of the 1930s, and the word *Tseghakron* was interpreted especially by the Dashnak opponents as "race worshippers."[230]

[229] The AGBU refrained from joining the Union, but pledged to continue supporting projects for Soviet Armenia. The organization found some of the articles in the program politically loaded, which could be detrimental to the tax-exempt status the organization had been recently granted by the US Government (Melk'onyan 2005, 336-37).
[230] Many scholars believe that the expulsion of Nzhdeh from the Dashnaktsutyun was because of his "extreme and racist views" (Ovsepian 2007, 23; Panossian 2006, 301)

In 1943, the *Hairenik* Association in Boston published a pamphlet by Simon Vrats'yan in English, entitled *Armenia and the Armenian Question*. Addressing the American audience, the author provided some background on the Armenian Question, stressed the scarcity of lands in Soviet Armenia and advocated for the need to expand its boundaries:

> Today the Armenian Question is primarily a question of territory, - specifically, the question of expanding the boundaries of Armenia to an extent which will meet the demands of the natural growth of population and the necessity of providing adequate room for those expatriated who want to return to the fatherland (Vrats'ian 1943, 105)

While the author still remained critical of the Bolshevik regime in Armenia, the anti-Soviet rhetoric in the pamphlet was significantly toned down, and Vrats'ian even referred to Soviet Armenia as the "fatherland." The annual convention of the Dashnaktsutyun in July 1944, in Boston, finally, resolved for the reversal of its anti-Soviet orientation.[231] In 1945, as everywhere else, the Dashnaktsutyun in the Untied States began actively participating in the raising of territorial demands from Turkey, and advocating for their annexation to Soviet Armenia. The party revived the Armenian Committee for Independence of Armenia (ACIA),[232] renamed it to the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) and resumed its lobbying activism. Acting independently from the Armenian National Council of America, the Armenian National Committee also sent several petitions to Joseph Stalin, the leaders of the great powers and the representatives to the UN Founding Conference in San Francisco. In April 1945, a Dashnak delegation headed by Simon Vrats'ian handed a memorandum to the delegates of the UN Conference in San Francisco on behalf of the Armenian National Committee in New York

[231] "The Tashnags turn to Soviet Russia." Office of Strategic Services (OSS) Special Report. July 31, 1944. DOC:0001485030. p. 1.

[232] The ACIA was an Armenian lobbyist organization, founded by Vahan Cardashian in 1918 "to push the Armenian cause in the US" and to support the newly founded Republic of Armenia (Aftandilian 1981, 26-8). The active period of the ACIA was 1918-1927 but despite the Committee attracted the sympathies and support of many high ranked Armenian political and social activists it "was not powerful enough … to achieve any concrete results for the Armenians" (Aftandilian 1981, 65).

(Kirakosyan 2010, 201). The memorandum stressed the contribution of Armenians serving in the Red Army, the French and American armies in the fight against Nazi Germany and advocated for the annexation of the Armenian lands to Soviet Armenia, according to the map suggested by Woodrow Wilson in 1920. The same report contained a telegram by the ANC addressed to Joseph Stalin on April 7, 1945, which read:

> When the government of the USSR under Your leadership decided to sign a new pact with Turkey, Armenians, forcibly deported from Turkish Armenia, and currently being in destitute all over the world, are appealing to You hoping in their hearts, that You will remember their just cause. Armenians did not forget Your historical declaration on the rights of Turkish Armenia and strongly believe You are still considering these rights in the same spirit and sympathy.
> They believe that under Your leadership and help, the Armenians will be able to realize their national yearning for the Soviet Republic, as a result of which Armenians would be able to return to their homeland and devote themselves to peaceful work and happiness (quoted and translated in Kirakosyan 2010, 201).

The ANC addressed several other pleas and petitions to the leaders of the great powers, the UN Conference in San Francisco, and the UN General Assembly in January 1946 with similar requests. In all petitions and pleas, even when addressing the conditions of the fall of the Republic of Armenia, the ANC and the Dashnaktsutyun carefully refrained from making any anti-Bolshevik or anti-Soviet comments. Such caution was explained by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Soviet Armenia as another "tactical maneuver" by the Dashnaks, who preferred the "lesser evil" of the annexation of the Armenian provinces in Turkey to Soviet Armenia over "leaving them in the hands of Turkey" (quoted in Kirakosyan 2010, 161).

Regardless of whether it was a tactical move or an honest attempt to adjust and redefine Dashnak policies in a changing world, the Soviet authorities and the anti-Dashnak faction in America could not believe that the Dashnaktsutyun could revise its anti-Soviet orientation and act in accordance with what they defined as the all-Armenian national interest. The text of the

Armenian National Council's memorandum addressed to the UN Conference in San Francisco published in the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* in June 1945, communicated this concern explicitly:

> The Armenian National Council of America which is comprised of and supported by all the Armenian civic, social, cultural, and religious organizations in the United States except a small Fascist faction known as the Dashnags … presents the case of the Armenian people to the delegation of the United Nations Conference on International Organization organized in San Francisco (quoted in Phillips 1989, 135).

The escalating hostilities since the assassination of Archbishop Tourian and the mutual denouncements and calumniations had eliminated all possibilities for reconciliation between anti-Dashnaks and the Dashnaktsutyun, even when, for the first time since the 1920s, both groups pursued identical goals. The response of the Dashnaktsutyun to the Memorandum appeared shortly in *Hairenik*, on June 21, 1945. The article first of all questioned the legitimacy of the title "Armenian National Council of America," claimed by the "Communist-Ramkavar-Hnchak" bloc, and went on to criticize the memorandum:

> The memorandum, which murders the King's English - there are no less than thirty-five grammatical and dictional errors, demands nothing more nor in a better way than what the far more ably edited and dignified memorandum of the Armenian National Committee had already demanded (quoted in Phillips 1989, 136).

In France, the adversarial parties refrained from discrediting each other. In the case of Lebanon, Hnchakyans and the Dashnaktsutyun even managed to forge an alliance in the parliamentary elections of 1943, and the same year the Dashnaktsutyun took part in the celebrations of November 29, the day of Sovietization of Armenia[233] (Schahgaldian 1979, 197). No such compromise and flexibility could be shown on the part of the anti-Dashnak factions in the United States. The Dashnaks, on the other hand, could not bring themselves to cooperating with the "Communist-Ramkavar-Hnchak" bloc either, whom they had accused as agents of the Soviets and with whom relations had been almost non-existent since the assassination of Archbishop Tourian.

[233] See next section.

The repatriation campaign in America acquired mostly a form of financial and moral assistance to the restoration of Soviet Armenia. In terms of the actual repatriates, the total number of Armenians, who moved from the United States to Soviet Armenia from 1946 to 1949, was very low, around 300 (cf. Melik‘set‘yan 1985, 241). The project, instead, mostly targeted the return of Armenians from the Middle East and Europe. The AGBU in America launched a Million Dollar Repatriation campaign in April 1946, which continued until June 1947. The campaign indeed raised more than a million dollars in America alone and close to another half a million in the other communities (Melk‘onyan 2005, 364). The Dashnaktsutyun also contributed to the repatriation and relief efforts independently. An article published in *Hairenik* on July 11, 1946 reported that the Armenian Relief Society raised and sent to Armenia $45,000 for medications, clothes and necessities (Zadoian 2012, 18).

The popular enthusiasm among the non-Dashnak factions for the Soviet support to the Armenian Cause was further highlighted in their decision to organize a world congress so that the voice of Armenians would be heard at the UN General Assembly and by the Allied powers. The Armenian World Congress convened in New York from April 30 through May 4, 1947, with more than 700 delegates from many different countries (Aharonian [1964] 1986, 197). The Dashnaktsutyun and the AGBU did not formally participate in the convention. The Dashnaktsutyun was not invited, while the AGBU refrained from officially participating in a “political activity,” even if several AGBU members and high-ranking leaders did so unofficially in their personal capacity (Melk‘onyan 2005, 366-68). The Congress succeeded to arrange a meeting with the US Secretary of State Dean Acheson in May 1947, hoping to bring the issue of

Armenian lands to the attention of the US Government once again. Much to their deep disappointment, a few months after the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine, the Armenian territorial demands were even more at odds with US foreign policy interests, as Acheson confirmed (cf. Aharonian [1964] 1986, 199; Melk‘onyan 2005, 266; Walker 1990, 362). The wartime American-Soviet cooperation had by now come to an end, clearing the way for the resumption of anti-Soviet propaganda throughout the country. The Dashnaktsutyun was quick to respond to the new state of affairs. One of the first expressions of their renewed anti-Soviet policies was the active involvement of the Dashnaktsutyun in transferring former Soviet POWs and displaced persons of Armenian nationality from European camps to America.

In the course of 1946, when the Soviet Union launched a repatriation campaign of all former Soviet POWs and displaced persons (DP), the US officials recorded several incidents of executions, exile and mistreatment of the returning POWs in the Soviet Union. This process discouraged thousands of refugees from voluntarily returning to Soviet Union (cf. Marrus 1985, 313-17; Zadoian 2012, 12). Amid the congressional debates on whether the US should admit the former POWs and the DPs, in July 1947 the Dashnaktsutyun and the Armenian Relief Society also began looking into possibilities of bringing the Armenian DPs to the United States. The initiator of the idea was George Mardikian,[234] a famous restaurateur from San Francisco, who had encountered many Armenian displaced persons during his extended trip to Europe in 1947 as a food inspector appointed by the US government in American-occupied former POW camps in

[234] Atamian stresses that neither Mardikian nor his companions were members of the Dashnak party, but they were Dashnak sympathizers. According to him, the Ramkavars, Hnchaks and Bolsheviks refused to help Mardikian and his compatriots as they thought of them as “Fascists” and “betrayers of the Soviet” (Atamian 1955, 404). John Calrson (also known as Avedis Derounian or Arthur Derounian), a prominent anti-Dashnak Armenian-American journalist, also suggested that even before the founding of ANCHA, Mardikian had supported the Dashnaktsutyun by speaking at various meetings and contributing to the party financially (Carlson 1949-1950, 28)

Germany, Austria and Italy. Mardikian proposed the creation of an American National Committee to Aid Homeless Armenians (ANCHA) "in order to work toward the transportation effort of the 3,500 Displaced Armenians" from POW camps in Europe (Zadoian 2012, 19-20). Mardikian was hoping to get some support from the AGBU, but the idea of transporting Armenian DPs from Europe to anywhere else than Soviet Armenia was inconsistent with the repatriation projects the AGBU had supported. Mardikian and his companion and attorney, Suren Saroyan, found support in the Dashnak camp. They addressed the Dashnak leaders and rank and file at the conventions of the Dashnaktsutyun and the Armenian Relief Society, as well as at a special meeting with the representatives of the AYF at Camp Hayastan (cf. Carlson 1949-1950, 32-3; Zadoian 2012, 19-21). The ANCHA project was eventually realized as a joint effort of Mardikian and the Armenian Relief Society, fully supported and encouraged by the Dashnak party. Under the existing immigration restrictions, the transferring of the Displaced Persons to the Untied States proved to be an unattainable task until 1948. With the passing of the *Displaced Persons Act* in 1948 the transportation of the DPs commenced. Between 1948 and 1960 more than 700,000 men and women were admitted under the DP act, of whom an estimated 5,500 were Armenians, supported by ANCHA (Schneider 2011, 236; Zadoian 2012, 54).

The active involvement of the United States in the struggle against the Soviet expansion in Europe and elsewhere - through the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan and the hosting of the Displaced Persons - left the Armenian National Council in disarray and led to its eventual disintegration. The Communists in general, the Armenian Progressive League and all Communist-affiliated organizations were outright persecuted, suppressed and silenced throughout the country. As Phillips noted, even the clergy affiliated with the Eastern Orthodox

churches significantly suffered from the consequences of the tense anti-Communist policy in the United States (Phillips 1989, 138-41). The Hnchakyans, who had significantly declined even before the war, went on publishing *Eritasard Hayastan* without much public activism. The Ramkavars also recorded a decline in the United States and elsewhere in the 1950s due to self-censorship and their attempts to keep low profile (cf. Dallak'yan 2007, 181-82). The official newspapers of the pro-Soviet groupings, *Eritasard Hayastan* of the Hnchakyans, *Baikar*, *The Armenian-Mirror Spectator* and *Nor Or* (Fresno, California) of the Ramkavars and *Lraper* of the Progressive Armenians, ended up in the so-called "subversive list" of the US government (cf. *Crisis* 1958, 116; Phillips 1989, 141). Under heavy charges for pro-Soviet activism made by the Dashnaks, the Ramkavars became very cautious, significantly reducing their propagandistic campaign on repatriation and limiting the news coverage of Soviet Armenia to only economic and cultural developments (cf. Dallak'yan 2007, 187-88). Facing similar charges, the AGBU leaders had to meet with some high ranking officials at the State Department to prove that funds raised for repatriation had been entirely used for that purpose and had not been transferred to Soviet officials (cf. Melk'onyan 2005, 371-72). Formal and informal persecution significantly reduced the number of youth organizations affiliated with these organizations as well.[235]

The Dashnaktsutyun, in contrast, benefitted from the anti-Soviet attitudes in the internal and external policies of the United States. Many Dashnak leaders resumed political and ideological activism. Dashnak affiliated organizations, media and newspapers flourished, and pervasive anti-Soviet propaganda intensified. Now holding a distinctly advantageous position, the Dashnaktsutyun actively embarked on publicly exposing the pro-Soviet identities of its

[235] One witness of the events interviewed by Phillips (1989, 140) recalled how hard it was explaining to the children that Soviet Armenia was the homeland, when the same children were being taught in American schools that the Soviet Union was the enemy of the United States.

Armenian political opponents. Numerous articles and propaganda works by prominent Dashnak leaders and editors of the time reappeared in various Dashnak journals. If during the War years and up to 1947, the *Hairenik monthly* had become a bimonthly, having significantly reduced its size, scope and themes, and political essays by Reuben Darbinian and others had almost disappeared, as had anti-Soviet articles, it resumed as a monthly from 1948, covering far more topics than just literary-historical accounts and memoirs, and resumed its anti-Soviet propaganda produced by Reuben Darbinian and others. In the same year, the *Hairenik* association started the English language *The Armenian Review*, which was intended for a non-Armenian audience. In the inaugural editorial of the *Review,* the editor-in-chief, Reuben Darbinian, announced the two basic aims of the *Review*:

> …by acquainting the English speaking world with the cultural heritage of the Armenian people, to help enrich America's culture; and by chronicling the story of Armenia's emancipatory struggle, to support the present American effort for the extension and safeguarding of world democracy (Darbinian 1948, 5).

The implicit reference to the fight against Soviet expansion as the second objective outlined the immediate course of the *Review* and its important role in introducing to the American public and government "Armenia's emancipatory struggle," as it was understood and interpreted by the Dashnaktsutyun. The resumption of the Dashnak anti-Soviet course in America were to have significant consequences in the Middle East, and especially in Lebanon, where the pro- and anti-Soviet orientations had not been previously institutionalized in the political culture of Lebanon as a whole. The international effects of the Cold War made the pro- and anti-Soviet discourse relevant in most corners of the world, and it was against this background that affairs in Lebanon acquired far more importance and urgency for the Armenian political factions than before.

Armenians in Lebanon: From WWII to the Cold War

The Nazi occupation of France in 1940 and the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941 had many repercussions in Lebanon and elsewhere in the Middle East. The territories under French mandate, which came under the control of the Vichy government in 1940, were fought back by the allied British and the Free France forces in the summer of 1941. While the war was quickly spreading in Europe, the local political parties in Syria and Lebanon found the war conditions quite conducive for mobilizing against the French mandatory power. On November 26, 1941, George Cartoux, the general delegate of Free France in Syria and Lebanon, declared Syria and Lebanon independent (Schahgaldian 1979, 189; Traboulsi 2007, 104). Yet Caroux and the Free French government were reluctant to grant full independence to Lebanon, refusing to withdraw the French troops and to amend the Constitution, until a new treaty was signed instead of the 1936 treaty. Under pressure from local factions, the French agreed to organize national parliamentary elections in 1943. The National Pact or the "unwritten compromise" between the Christians and Muslims reached around this time reconfirmed the consociational nature of the Lebanese political system. The Pact confirmed the distribution of the three major posts of the Lebanese political system, reserving the seat of the president for the Maronites, the seat of the speaker of parliament for the Shi'ites, and the seat of the prime minister for the Sunnis, and established the 6/5 ratio of Christian-Muslim sectarian quotas in parliament[236] (Messerlian 1963, 100-101; Traboulsi 2007, 106; 109-10). The new Chamber of Deputies was elected in August 1943. On November 8 1943, the Chamber of Deputies voted for several constitutional revisions to eliminate articles referring to the French mandate. The French mandatory authorities

[236] The 6/5 ratio was believed to be roughly proportional to the size of various Christian and Muslim communities in Lebanon. The first parliament of the country comprised 55 seats, of which 30 were allocated to Christians and 25 to Muslims, according to the 6/5 ratio (Traboulsi 2007, 106).

responded harshly, arresting the President, several ministers and one member of the parliament. Under pressure from local movements and the British, the French had to release the detainees on November 22 and reluctantly declared the end of the French Mandate (Traboulsi 2007, 107-108). In the midst of WWII, while the Allied powers had been engaged in the fight against the Nazis in Europe, the Lebanese independence became *fait accompli* on November 22, 1943.[237]

The external conditions of war and the internal movements for independence posed certain challenges to Armenian political organizations as well. As an expression of loyalty to the Comintern, the communists in the countries of the Middle East were among the first to join the anti-Nazi efforts. Armenian Communists in Syria and Lebanon initiated the Armenian Defense League of Syria and Lebanon in the fall of 1941. The League was soon renamed to the *Hayastani barekamneru ĕnkerut'iwn* (Association of the Friends of Soviet Armenia), which aimed at uniting all Armenian and Arab factions across the country against the Nazis. Following the establishment of diplomatic relations between Lebanon and the USSR in 1944, the Association engaged and maintained direct correspondence with Soviet Armenia and became instrumental in the repatriation of 1946 (Top'uzyan 1986, 250). On March 2, 1942, the Communist Party's Armenian language organ *Zhoghovurdi Dzayn* (The People's Voice) declared that fighting against the Nazis and "the traitors, who will try to promote [the Nazi] influence among Armenians" was the ultimate and most sacred national duty of all Armenians (quoted in Top'uzyan 1986, 248). By traitors the newspaper probably meant the Dashnaktsutyun, which remained anti-Bolshevik and, as its opponents believed, was quite sympathetic towards the Axis powers (cf. Messerlian 1963, 101; Schahgaldian 1979, 106; Top'uzyan 1986, 249).

[237] The French agreed to withdraw their troops only 1945 after the United States and the USSR recognized the independence of Lebanon (Traboulsi 2007, 112).

The Dashnaktsutyun, however, toned down the anti-Soviet rhetoric in Lebanon as well. The upcoming elections of the Catholicos of the Cilician See in Antelias, which had been vacant since 1940, served as an excellent occasion for the Dashnaktsutyun to demonstrate a new attitude in the communal matters and an unprecedented willingness to cooperate with its Armenian rival adversaries. Even though the party controlled the majority of votes in the Electoral Conclave gathered on May 19, 1943, the Dashnaktsutyun agreed to the candidacy of Archbishop Karekin Hovsepian, the Primate of the Armenian Church in North America, proposed by their opponents (Messerlian 1963, 101; Schahgaldian 1979, 192). The Dashnaktsutyun's move was unexpected against the background of the party's refusal to recognize the jurisdiction of the Diocese of Armenian Church in North America and the legitimacy of Karekin Hovsepian as the Primate. Such willingness could be least expected from a party, which had consolidated a considerable amount of power within the Armenian communal structures in Lebanon. It seems some of the party leaders in Lebanon came to the realization that continued opposition to the pro-Soviet factions would undermine the Dashnaktsutyun in the eyes of the Allied powers, the French, the British, as well as among some influential Lebanese circles. The cooperation with its Armenian political opponents expressed a tactical move on the part of the Lebanese chapter of the Dashnaktsutyun, by which the leaders sought to retain the party's credibility. In the following months, the Dashnaktsutyun made an unprecedented alliance with the Hnchakyans in the Lebanese parliamentary elections of 1943. They made a similar alliance in the elections in Syria with the Ramkavars. To demonstrate their commitment to the anti-Nazi campaign, the same year the Dashnak central committee in Lebanon went as far as participating in the public celebrations

of the 23rd anniversary of the Sovietization of Armenia on November 29, 1943 (Khurshudyan 1964, 68; Schahgaldian 1979, 197). On December 22, 1943, *Aztag* wrote:

> …Dashnak newspapers …[and] Dashnak ranks in all parts of the world have one major desire, one major wish - not to see the defeat of Russia, which would mean the defeat and destruction of our beloved homeland. … There is no need to refer to facts in order to know from what sort of terrible danger the victory of the Russian armies had saved the world as well as our homeland… The Dashnaktsutyun is the supporter and the servant of that power, with all its strength and soul … Long live the glorious Red Army, long live Soviet Armenia (quoted in Top‘uzyan 1986, 333, endnote 12; cf. Khurshudyan 1964, 67-8).

In the very same spirit the Dashnaktsutyun participated in the fund raising campaign for the "Sasunts‘i Davit‘" tank regiment, which continued through 1944. The establishment of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Lebanon in 1944 further enhanced the spirit of cooperation among the Armenian organizations. Responding to the call of the Catholicos, several Lebanese Armenian organizations began independent fund raising campaigns, which were partly coordinated by the Catholicosate of Cilicia. The campaign brought together the Communists, Dashnaks, Hnchakyans, Ramkavars, and independents in their support for Soviet Armenia (Dallak‘yan 2007, 100-2; Eghiayan 1975, 549-50).

Following the victory of the Allied powers in 1945 and the Soviet territorial demands against Turkey, the Armenian organizations, except the Dashnaks, came together to form the Armenian National Council of Syria and Lebanon in the summer of 1945. The Syrian and Lebanese Armenian delegates returning from the elections of Catholics in Ējmiatsin reported to public of the good conditions in Soviet Armenia, and of the favorable intentions of the Soviet government. Upon their return, the delegates addressed a petition to Joseph Stalin on behalf of "more than twenty-thousand Armenians" gathered at a public rally in Beirut in August 1945. Another petition followed a month later, sent by the Armenian National Council of Lebanon and Syria on behalf of "tens of thousands of Armenians" rallied in mass demonstrations in various towns of

Syria and Lebanon. Both petitions asked the leader of the USSR for a "fair resolution of the Armenian-Turkish conflict" and the return of the Armenian territories to Soviet Armenia (Kirakosyan 2010, 193; 195). On January 1946, the National Council addressed a petition to the first UN General Assembly session in London on behalf of the 200,000 Armenians of Syria and Lebanon, demanding the return of the Armenian territories to Soviet Armenia (cf. Kirakosyan 2010, 93; Messerlian 1963, 136-37).

In the course of 1946, with the launch of the repatriation program, the Dashnaktsutyun became very marginalized in Lebanon. The official note from Ējmiatsin regarding the Soviet Union's approval of repatriation arrived in Lebanon in the spring of 1946 and, several months later, another note arrived demanding the creation of local Committees according to the instructions of the Repatriation Committee organized in Soviet Armenia. The enclosed instructions undermined the local Armenian communal structures and appointed Hrant Devedjian, the chairman of the *Association of the Friends of Soviet Armenia* in charge of forming the repatriation committee in Lebanon and Syria (cf. Eghiayan 1975, 607-8; Schahgaldian 1979, 201; Varzhabedian 1983, 152). The Repatriation Committee of Soviet Armenia, in particular, favored to see certain kinds of Armenian "progressive" organizations represented in the committees:

> It is suitable that the leadership of the local committee be composed of persons who head the progressive organizations of the community and who have proven their dedication to Soviet Fatherland during the struggle against Fascism (quoted in Schahgaldian 1979, 201)

The formation of the repatriation committees excluded the Dashnaks in spite of the significant efforts some Dashnaks had made to prove the party's loyalty and dedication to the "Soviet Fatherland" since 1943. The repatriation campaign also revealed the internal discord within the Dashnaktsutyun in Lebanon between factions favoring and opposing the repatriation. As

Schahgaldian observed (1979, 203), while the Armenian-speaking party members favored the repatriation, a few Turkophone and Catholic party regulars opposed the repatriation or remained largely indifferent. The second group within the party, which opposed the repatriation, constituted the new generation of younger Dashnak activists, who were predominantly Armenophone, but coming from Turkophone Armenian families (*ibid.,* 107). The party did not take any official stance toward the repatriation until the Fourteenth World Congress in Cairo, Egypt in September-October 1947.

The repatriation campaign generated popular enthusiasm in Lebanon with huge numbers of people signing up to move permanently to Soviet Armenia. The first ship departed from Lebanon in June 1946 taking thousands of sympathizers of Soviet Armenia to the homeland. Six other ships followed it in 1946 carrying around 17,000 Armenians from Syria and Lebanon to Soviet Armenia (Varzhabedian 1983, 158). Referring to the popular enthusiasm and support for the *azgahavak'* (literally the assembling or reuniting the Armenian nation), Catholicos Karekin I of Cilicia compared the feeling of patriotism to a flood, which "overflows its banks and is difficult to control" (Eghiayan 1975, 610).

The poor organization of the repatriation and the limited capabilities of Soviet Armenia prevented many potential repatriates from settling in Soviet Armenia. Attracted by the Soviet promises for Soviet citizenship and significant financial assistance upon arriving in Armenia, many had rashly sold their properties and quit their jobs; and yet many were not able to move to Soviet Armenia. The actual number of those who eventually repatriated was much lower than anticipated (Eghiayan 1975, 608-10; Messerlian 1963, 137; Saghatelyan 2008, 89). The longing

for Soviet Armenia deemed as patriotism and love for Armenia marginalized those unwilling to cooperate labeling them as "anti-Armenia" and "anti-homeland" (cf. Schahgaldian 1979, 201-2) Amid the popular enthusiasm for repatriation, the 'patriots', comprising the Communists, Hnchakyans and Ramkavars, seem to have overlooked the fact that close to 33,000 Armenians moving to Soviet Armenia from Syria and Lebanon potentially represented their sympathizers and electorate.

In the new global political context, after the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine in March 1947 on the eve of the Lebanese parliamentary elections, the internal hard-liner anti-Communist faction within the Dashnaktsutyun became vocal again, reasserting the party's anti-Soviet stand (Messerlian 1963, 137; Schahgaldian 1979, 204). The United Front with the Hnchakyans could not be repeated because of the (re)turn of the Dashnaktsutyun to anti-Soviet propaganda. On May 1, 1947 the Hnchakyans, Ramkavars, Communists, and a number of compatriotic and other pro-Soviet organizations formed the Lebanese Armenian Democratic Front to run against the Dashnaktsutyun in the Parliamentary elections of 1947 (Messerlian 1963, 140-1; Migliorino 2008, 95). The Dashnaktsutyun's ability to demonstrate greater influence among Armenians had won a place for their candidate on the Government supported list, while the Democratic Front joined the opposition list (Messerlian 1963, 139-41). Mutual accusations and recrimination intensified during the campaign. While the Dashnaks were labeled as "pro-Fascists," *Aztag* wrote, "… the Front is led by Armenian Bolsheviks who are continuing their conspiracies to divide the Lebanese Armenians" (quoted in Schahgaldian 1979, 198). Tensions and violence intensified through the electoral campaign, as well as during and after the elections, which the opposition characterized as "the most notorious" in the history of Lebanon. A few violent

incidents of beating and injuries and even killings were reported on both sides (Messerlian 1963, 147-53, 164-65; Schahgaldian 1979, 199-200).

The Cold War marked a new phase for Armenian diasporic organizations and communities both in Lebanon and worldwide. If prior to WWII, compared to France and the United States, Armenian community matters in Lebanon had developed relatively independently of the ideological battles between the pro-Soviet factions clustered around HOKs and anti-Soviet Dashnak factions, the rise of the Cold War did away with the geographical, ideological and political distances separating the Lebanese and Armenian Americans. Almost overnight, they became interrelated and complementary. The political instability in Lebanon during the Cold War exacerbated the effects of the transnational polarization of Armenian diasporic factions on the Armenian community in Lebanon, as the following sections will demonstrate.

'*Patriots*' vs. '*True Armenians*':
Cold War and the Triumphant Resurgence of the Dashnaktsutyun

The alliance of the United States with the Soviet Union during WWII and the worldwide mobilization of Communist-led national fronts to fight the spread of Fascism had created the most favorable conditions for the pro-Soviet Armenian factions in various countries for explicitly pursuing pro-Soviet policies and serving the war effort against the Nazis. In the immediate aftermath of the war, the Soviet territorial demands from Turkey and the repatriation to Soviet Armenia had initially mobilized all Armenian diasporic organizations regardless of their former stance towards Soviet Armenia. Yet, as the previous chapter argued, the efforts aiming at achieving the same ends of the annexation of Armenian lands in Turkey to Soviet Armenia remained largely uncoordinated among the Armenian organizations. While the pro-Soviet factions represented by the Communists (the Armenian Progressives in the USA), Hnchakyans, Ramkavars and others thrived, many formerly active Dashnak leaders assumed a passive and neutral stand in an international context where the Dashnaktsutyun's anti-Soviet stance could have threatened the party's viability. The antagonism of the pro-and anti-Soviet Armenian factions during WWII and the Cold War produced two sharply opposing narratives and shaped two major self-identification groups of the '*patriots*' and '*true Armenians'*. Although not mutually exclusive, these self-labels, self-perceptions and identification groups, as this section will argue, became incompatible due to the institutionalized rivalry evolved around varying orientations towards Soviet Armenia and the concept of homeland.

The pro-Soviet Armenia factions supportive of the war effort, benefitting from the overall pro-Soviet and anti-Nazi international atmosphere, developed a self-perception of the [Armenian] '*patriots'*. In France, the pro-Soviet Armenian factions organized an association, called *l'Association des Jeunes Patriots Arméniens*. The *Front National Arménien,* on the other hand, called on the Armenians to fight with the "Armenian patriotic militia groups" against the Nazis (cf. Le Tallec 2001, 170-71). In the French context during the war, the word *patriotic* acquired dual meaning expressing both the love for Soviet Armenia as the homeland,[238] and loyalty to France as the new *patrie.* In Lebanon, Catholicos Karekin I characterized the orientation towards Soviet Armenia and repatriation as patriotism, and compared the feeling of such patriotism (longing for Soviet Armenia) to an uncontrollable flood (cf. Eghiayan 1975, 610, see the previous section). According to their definition, the '*patriots'* included the Armenian Communists, Hnchakyans, Ramkavars, the AGBU, various compatriotic unions, as well as the Armenian Church.

The establishment of Soviet Armenian Repatriation Committees in various countries, following the instructions coming from Soviet authorities in the immediate aftermath of WWII, manifested the attitudes of the '*patriots'* against the Dashnaktsutyun. They began actively excluding the Dashnaktsutyun, its affiliate organizations and sympathizers, labeling them as "anti-Armenia" and "anti-homeland" (cf. Schahgaldian 1979, 201-202). Responding to such exclusions, in the height of the Repatriation campaign, on February 19, 1946 *Haratch* wrote: "…to be a patriot it is important that everybody talk about the repatriation, regardless of whether the speaker or the writer has an actual intention of returning to the homeland." The exclusion of the Dashnaktsutyun from the repatriation campaigns was accompanied by continuous criticism,

[238] The word for *patriot* in Armenian is *hayrenaser*, which literally translates as "a person who loves the homeland."

denouncement of the party for its anti-Soviet and allegedly pro-Fascist stand. This continued even after the party had abandoned the anti-Soviet rhetoric during the war and some of its members had cooperated or expressed a willingness to cooperate with the pro-Soviet factions in France and Lebanon.

The exclusion of the Dashnaktsutyun in the Untied States from the pro-Soviet camp and the churches loyal to Ējmiatsin had been going on since the assassination of Archbishop Tourian. The WWII conditions provided added confidence to the opponents of the Dashnaks. The struggle between the Armenian factions in the Untied States acquired more ideological character given that the community had already been divided and possibilities for reconciliation had been exhausted. Each of the parties sought the support of the US government and public, in hope of defeating their Armenian opponents and thus ending the division in the church and community. In order to justify the legitimacy of the orientation they had adopted, both factions started elaborating their points in English language publications, periodicals and journals.

The first major public charge against the Dashnaktsutyun in English came in a controversial book by John Roy Carlson, titled *Under Cover,* published in 1943. The author, originally Avedis Derounian, also known as Arthur Derounian, was a journalist, and the former editor of *The Spectator,*[239] an anti-Dashnak English-language Armenian periodical in New York. Since the assassination of Archbishop Tourian he had grown into a rabid anti-Dashnak activist. In *Under Cover,* Carlson wrote:

> It is difficult to express in words the effect the brutal murder of Archbishop Tourian by Dashnag henchmen had on me. For a long time I was bewildered and then gradually I began to learn that the Dashnags, while

[239] In 1939 *The Spectator* and *the Armenian Mirror* joined to become the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator*, which continues until now.

> they represented a vicious political clique of terrorists, were not the only fascistic organization then engaged in violating the principles of our Democracy (Carlson 1943, 20-1).

While *Under Cover* aimed at exposing many "fifth column" pro-Nazi organizations in the United States and had not intended to focus exclusively on the Dashnaktsutyun, Carlson charged the Dashnaktsutyun for contributing to the spread of fascism and the destruction of American democracy. By pointing to the Dashnaktsutyun's occasional relations to other pro-Nazi secret organizations operating in America, Carlson hoped the charges would entail similar consequences for the Dashnaks, as they would have on other organizations.

Under Cover received coverage in *The New York Times* in an article entitled "Fifth Column - with American Labels" on July 18, 1943 and became an "instant best-seller."[240] The subheading of the book, very mysterious and provocatively, read: "My Four Years in the Nazi Underworld of America - The Amazing Revelation of How Axis Agents and Our Enemies Within Are Now Plotting to Destroy the United States." The first chapter, entitled "A Black Christmas," opened with the description of the assassination of Archbishop Tourian in December 1933 and the condemnation of the Dashnaktsutyun as a "sinister fascistic clique" (Carlson 1943, 17). In the subsequent parts of the book, in which Carlson exposed the pro-Nazi activism of several American organizations as an undercover member of many of them, he recalled to have met with two Dashnaks in one such organization, of whom he wrote: "These two Dashnags were the only Armenians I met in the subversive world in my four years as an investigator" (*ibid.*, 81). He learned from these Dashnaks about the youth division of the party, known as *Tseghakron,* which,

[240] According to an article published in the New York Times on April 25, 1991 (Fowler, Glenn. "Arthur Derounian, 82, an Author of Books on Fascists and Bigots." *The New York Times*, April 25, 1991. http://www.nytimes.com/1991/04/25/obituaries/arthur-derounian-82-an-author-of-books-on-fascists-and-bigots.html. Accessed August 26, 2014).

as he explained, was "coined from the Armenian words *tzegh* (race) and *gron* [kron] (religion)." He went on to comment that "the program and philosophy of these fascistic "race worshipping" nationalists were similar to the Hitler Youth" (*ibid.,* 82). Despite some occasional allusions to the Dashnaktsutyun's pro-Fascist affiliations, in Carlson's exposition of the "American Nazi or the American Fascists," the Dashnak party was not pictured in any leading role, even if its members were occasionally spotted by Carlson in various events of other similar organizations. The *exposé* made by Carlson led to several court cases against many of the pro-Nazi organizations and individuals, [241] but the Dashnaktsutyun was spared prosecution (cf. Atamian 1955, 388).

Carlson continued his anti-Dashnak mission during the war and its aftermath. His article published in the first issue of *Armenian Affairs,* the official journal of the Armenian National Council of America, provided a more comprehensive criticism of the Dashnaktsutyun. The article, entitled "The Armenian Displaced Persons: A First-Hand Report on Conditions in Europe," analyzed the Dashnaktsutyun's support for ANCHA and the transferring of the DPs to the United States. The narrow scope of the title did not prevent the author from providing a comprehensive synthesis of charges against the Dashnaktsutyun made by the pro-Soviet opponents of the Dashnaks. In the early 1950s, the anti-Dashnak factions or the '*patriots',* as they occasionally referred to themselves, charged the Dashnaktsutyun of fascism, political opportunism, terrorism, called them "priest killers," agents of foreign powers, and Turkophiles.

a) *Charges of fascism*. By the 1950s, it had become widely known that several former and active members of the Dashnaktsutyun in Europe had cooperated with the Nazis. This was an excellent

[241] Glenn Fowler "Arthur Derounian, 82, an Author of Books on Fascists and Bigots." *The New York Times,* April 25, 1991.

tool in the hands of the anti-Soviet faction to reinforce these charges against the Dashnaktsutyun. Carlson's article, in many ways expressing the shared view of the Armenian National Council of America, provided a detailed report on the formation of the *Armenischen Nationalen Gremiums* in Berlin,[242] of its ranks, filled mostly with Dashnaks and their affiliates, of its program and activities during the War (Carlson 1949-1950, 17-21). His account was drawn from several articles published in the *Mirror-Spectator* and other newspapers on Dro Kanayan's involvement with the Nazis, as well as from the *Congressional Record* of November 1, 1945, which charged Dro "with organizing a band of his own and following close on the heels of Nazi armies" (*ibid.,* 20). The author refrained from directly charging the American branch of the Dashnak party with fascism, but cast certain doubts that the American Dashnaks were also involved:

> When Dro Ganayan visited the Untied States early in 1949, he was sponsored by American Dashnags in a series of meetings from coast to coast on behalf of ANCHA. At these meetings this former follower of the Nazi armies, and a co-signer of the infamous agreement of the Armenian National Council of Berlin, helped raise funds for ANCHA. … It's a fair inference that Ganayan was coming to the rescue of some of those with whom he collaborated while following the Nazi armies. Is ANCHA, an American organization financed by American capital, ignorant of Ganayan's former role? (*ibid.*, 28)

Despite being cautiously reserved, Carlson called on the US government to launch an investigation in order to reveal whether the ANCHA immigrants were "desirable" or "undesirable" from an American point of view (*ibid.*, 34).

b) *Charges of political opportunism.* The opponents of the Dashnaktsutyun, namely the Ramkavars and their affiliate organizations in the United States, found the party to be opportunistic and treacherous on account of its changing loyalties, starting as a socialist revolutionary party, then retreating into an anti-Socialist and anti-Bolshevik position from the 1920s, and then making another switch to the pro-Soviet camp (Carlson 1949-1950, 24-5; Atamian 1955, 322-23;). The opponents of the Dashnaks charged the latter of political

[242] See in previous section.

opportunism, for changing colors between right and left, between socialism and nationalism, between the anti-Soviet and pro-Soviet camps. To support the charge, these critics referred to the articles reprinted by *Hairenik* and *The Armenian Weekly* during the War from *Lraber,* the organ of the Progressive Armenians, *Sovetakan Hayastan,* the official organ of Soviet Armenia, and other leftist publications (Carlson, 1949-1950, 23). Carlson even referred to the editorial published in *The Armenian Weekly* on May 19, 1944, to remind the Dashnaks of the ANC's appeal to the UN Conference in San Francisco and their acceptance of Soviet Armenia as "the rightful political trustee of the Armenian Cause" (*ibid.,* 24). The anti-Soviet propaganda of the Dashnaks, which resumed after 1948, added to their opponents' conviction of the Dashnak's political opportunism.

c) *Charges of terrorism: "the priest-killers."* The exclusion of the Dashnak party members and sympathizers from Ējmiatsin-affiliated churches, as shown in the previous chapter, was accompanied by dubbing them as "priest-killers" and "assassins." As in *Under Cover*, so in the article on Displaced Persons, Carlson also placed a special emphasis on the Dashnak's complicity in the assassination of Archbishop Tourian. He argued that "…Dashnaks abroad regularly used terror to silence opposition" (Carlson 1949-1950, 29).

d) *Charges of being affiliated with foreign intelligence.* With the intensifying Cold War, the Dashnaks were increasingly charged by their opponents with serving foreign intelligence. In 1950, Carlson (1949-1950, 26) speculated:

> It may be that certain American, English and Arab governmental agencies are exploiting Dashnags to further their own particular cause. In view of the fact that such dictatorships as Turkey and Spain, many Nazis in Germany and Fascists in Italy are now in the "friendly camp" … to say nothing of numbers ex-fascists, ex-communists, spies and international gangsters now being used for the same cause, it's possible that certain individuals within the ARF abroad have been recruited by certain American, English and Arab departments toward the same end (Carlson 1949-1950, 26).

The primary suspects of Carlson's speculation were Dro Kanayan and Artashes Abeghian, as both had "already run the gamut of political collaboration" with the Nazis (*ibid.* 26).

The declining political future of the Dashnak opponents after the Truman Doctrine in March 1947 was paralleled by the Dashnaktsutyun's increasing self-confidence for resuming and intensifying its anti-Soviet rhetoric. The changing international conditions provided more favorable conditions for the Dashnaktsutyun to refute the charges made by its opponents and exact revenge for the marginalization of the party in recent years. Former Dashnak leaders of the Republic of 1918-1920 came back to action and the newer generations became more involved in the anti-Soviet struggle.

A few months after the promulgation of the Truman Doctrine, the Dashnaktsutyun convened the party's World Congress in 1947. With the Dashnaktsutyun archives remaining closed to researchers, it remains to future historians to find out such details as the agenda, participants, decisions taken at the Congress and the full line-up of the new Bureau. However, following the 1947 World Congress, Dro Kanayan became very active in Lebanon; Simon Vrats'ian assumed the directorship of *Nshan P'alanjian Chemaran* in 1951, the most important Dashnak college in Lebanon; Vahan Navasardian remained the party's primary figure in Egypt; and Reuben Darbinian resumed his fiery anti-Soviet editorials in the United States as the editor-in-chief of almost all Dashnak periodicals in Boston - *Hairenik daily, Hairenik monthly* and the newly established English language *The Armenian Review*.

Reuben Darbianian was among the first in the United States to take on the task of addressing the charges against the Dashnaktsutyun in a series of articles published in *The Armenian Review* from 1948 to 1955, justifying the Dashnaktsutyun in the eyes of Americans and revealing the future course of the party. By that time, the younger generation born and raised in the diaspora was coming of age and following the path set by the 'old school' leadership. One such bright Dashnak individual was Sarkis Atamian, born in Providence, Rhode Island in 1923, one of the earliest young Armenians to join *Tseghakron* under Garegin Njdeh in 1933.[243] A graduate of Brown University and the University of Utah, a participant of WWII and a very active member of the Dashnak party, Atamian published a lengthy analysis in 1955 entitled *The Armenian Community, The Historical Development of a Social and Ideological Conflict.*[244] Drawing on broad sociological and psychological literature, certainly valuable in many respects, the book ended up providing "scholarly" vindication for the Dashnaktsutyun and its anti-Soviet political course. In many respects, Sarkis Atamian was influenced by Reuben Darbinian during the years he worked as a contributing editor to *The Armenian Review* (*Asbarez* January 6, 2007) and certainly by his long years of affiliation with the AYF. In justifying the Dashnaktsutyun's past activities, both Darbinian and Atamian resorted to counter-charges, in the process revealing also Dashnak self-perceptions and the future course of the party as it had been outlined at the World Congresses in 1947 and 1951.

The revenge of the Dashnaktsutyun on its opponents, following the change in the balance in world politics, aimed to destroy all kinds of legitimacies its opponents could claim. "An

[243] "Long Time Activist Sarkis Atamian Passes Away." *Asbarez*, January 6, 2007, http://asbarez.com/54408/long-time-activist-sarkis-atamian-passes-away/. Accessed August 27, 2014.
[244] The manuscript was probably ready by 1953, as in the last chapter of the book, in reference to the death of Catholicos Karekin I on June 21, 1952, Atamian (1955, 442) writes "…although a year has almost passed" since the death, no Catholicos had been elected.

Introduction" by Reuben Darbinian in the first issue of *The Armenian Review* declared "A Free United and Independent Armenia" as "the supreme political ideal of the Armenians," thereby inferring that the Dashnaktsutyun was the only legitimate representative of *the* Armenians:

> In the present ideological conflict which has divided the world into two hostile camps, one striving to impose its totalitarian tyranny, while the other is striving to save the world for democracy, the Armenians are convinced that they can best insure their complete independence only in so far as they contribute their modest share to the latter's victory. As long as Soviet tyranny is firmly implanted in Mother Armenia, the Armenians can never hope to enjoy a free life. A Free, United, and Independent Armenia - the supreme political ideal of the Armenians - can only exist and thrive in a world which is completely rid of totalitarian scourge, unified under the aegis of international law and order (Darbinian 1948, 5).

It is with reference to such claims that Carlson warned the "American, English and Arab officials" that the Dashnaktsutyun spoke for and represented only itself; that "[t]hey do not reflect those of the overwhelming majority of the Armenian community" in America or elsewhere; "[w]hen Dashnaks anywhere parade themselves as spokesmen for all "Armenians" they resort to nothing short of willful, deliberate misrepresentation" (Carlson 1949-1950, 25). Yet the Dashnak leaders strongly believed that the party was the only legitimate representative of the Armenians around the world since the time of the Republic of Armenia and even earlier, and they had no intention of abandoning their claims especially now that international political conditions favored them. Responses to charges made against the Dashnaks, appearing soon in the works of Darbinian, Atamian and other Dashnaks, were premised on the absolute conviction that the Dashnaktsutyun expressed the true voice of the Armenian people.

a) Responding to the *charges of fascism*. Having survived the peal of anti-fascism in the United States during the years of WWII and its immediate aftermath, responding to charges of fascism in the intensifying Cold War conditions became a relatively easy task for the Dashnak leaders. In an article entitled "In Retrospect, A Glance at the Past Thirty Years" published in 1953 in *The Armenian Review*, Darbinian addressed the charges by analyzing the broader background of the

Soviet involvement in the affairs of the Armenian communities abroad. He defined three phases: 1922 to 1933, when the number of Armenian Communists in the US and elsewhere was negligible; 1933-1947, "the period of Communist Heyday," and 1947 to his time (1953), the decline of Armenian pro-Soviet factions. Labeling the anti-Dashnak opponents as "Armenian Communists and their confederates" Darbinian framed the charges of fascism as an attempt made by this faction to "organize a *united front* against the Dashnaks, to discredit, wreck, and destroy them, and to declare their [the Dashnak - V.S.] organization outside the pale of the law." "To this end," he continued, " working openly and in the dark, they tried to represent the Dashnaks and their affiliated organizations, the Armenian Relief Society and the Armenian Youth Federation as Nazis and Hitler's agents" (Darbinian 1953, 53). In Cold War conditions, however, as Darbinian (1953, 62) sharply noticed, the "Communist and his fellow traveller" could no longer discredit the Dashnaks as Nazi or fascists because the whole world came to realize that "to the Communist and his fellow traveler all those who fight against them are fascists." As to the charges of collaboration with the Nazis in Germany, Darbinian simply dismissed them as irrelevant.

Sarkis Atamian (1955, 377-96) in his book summarized the accusations he collected from various anti-Dashnak articles, memoranda and reports since the assassination of Archbishop Tourian. In response to the charges, Atamian portrayed the Dashnaktsutyun as a victim of the pro-Soviet attacks during the years of WWII, rejecting any possibility that the Dashnaktsutyun could have thought to benefit from the Nazi victory:

> The United States-Russia alliance of the war could only mean a preservation of the minority status quo in the Soviet Union, while a German victory would mean the substitution of one ruling power for another. In this situation, Dashnak policy could have only one logical orientation, regardless of what individuals may have desired out of emotional considerations, the official policy of the organization was with the Allies - especially the United States (Atamian 1955, 387).

He quoted the decision of the Dashnaktsutyun's Central Executive Committee of America published in the *Hairenik Daily* on December 24, 1941 to prove that the party had not taken a pro-Fascist stand during the war. He referred to the efforts of the anti-Dashnaks to outlaw the party in the United States during the War, as a result of which "[n]ot one Dashnak group was placed on a subversive list, none were disbanded, and the Dashnak community continued to prosper" (*ibid.,* 388). Regarding Garegin Nzhdeh and the *Tseghakron* movement, Atamian first of all argued that Nzhdeh had been expelled from the party because of his racist views, and, secondly, that *Tseghakron* had nothing to do with racism (*ibid.,* 390-1). Although not a linguist, Atamian delved into an etymological discussion of the word *Tseghakron,* to argue that the word did not mean "race worshippers" but rather "devotees of the race," "followers of the race" or "believers of the race." In terms of activities, as Atamian explained, "despite the label used," the movement inculcated the youth with values "which sought to preserve the language, literature, and other cultural items and values;" it provided athletic, recreational and educational programs to the youth "which worked directly for [Americanism in the general connotation of the word] by stressing good citizenship and loyalty to the adopted country of the immigrant parent generation" (*ibid.,* 392-3). The change of the name from *Tseghakron* to Armenian Youth Federation (AYF), in 1941 Atamian explained by two reasons: first because the name was a "tongue-twister" for the second generation Armenians, and secondly because the Dashnak opponents interpreted it as "race worshippers," "…which had a particularly sour connotation about the time that the Soviet became the friend of democracy and the Nazi became its enemy" (*ibid.,* 394). Concluding the passage on *Tseghakron/AYF*, Atamian described the contributions of the AYF to the American war effort and expressed the AYF's ultimate loyalty to America and American values (*ibid.,* 394-5).

Turning to the most grounded and gravest charges of the collaboration of the Dashnak leaders with the Nazis in Germany, Atamian (1955, 399) justified the actions of the *Armenischen Nationalen Gremiums* in Berlin by pointing to its affiliation with the anti-Stalinist liberation movement: an initiative mostly of former Soviet POWs fighting against Stalinism. Nzhdeh and Dro, in this context, were presented as the leaders of the *Azadamardagan* [Battle for Freedom] movement, who fought alongside the "anti-Stalinist liberation movement" (*ibid.*, 401). The *Azadamardagans*, of which "there [was] nothing in print, to the best knowledge of the writer," as stated by Atamian (1955, 399), "were a separate movement with their own organization, orientation, and leadership" completely independent of the Dashnaktsutyun. Among the leaders of the movement, only Dro was still a Dashnak, according to Atamian, whose role was to win "…Nazi leniency toward the Armenians in the Caucasus" (*ibid.,* 401). Carefully bypassing the other names of the Dashnaks involved in the *Armenischen Nationalen Gremiums*, exposed by Carlson in *Armenian Displaced Persons* (1949-1950, 19) - Artashes Abeghian, Abraham Gulkhandanian, Harutyun Baghdasarian, Vahan P'ap'azian, David Davidkhanian - Atamian dissociated the *Azadamardagan* movement from the Dashnaktsutyun, claiming that the former mostly comprised "ex-Soviet Armenians" (Atamian 1955, 402). As for Dro, Atamian claimed that Dro's efforts had saved the lives of 3,600 DPs, who lived "through the Nazi nightmare where others perished." He argued further of Dro's innocence since, even after his arrest by the American army, the case against Dro was dropped "after the facts became known" (*ibid.* 402).

b) Responding to the *charges of political opportunism.* In a lengthy discussion of the social and ideological conflict among Armenians, Atamian portrayed the Dashnaktsutyun as always pursuing the same goal since the Act of May 28, 1919 - the creation of "United, Free and

Independent Armenia" (*ibid.,* 216-218). It is due to the ultimate importance of this goal that the Dashnaktsutyun assumed a strong anti-Bolshevik stand following the Sovietization of Armenia, and out of the same reason, that the Dashnaktsutyun "lent its support … to the major powers (including Soviet Russia)," hoping to get the Armenian lands in Turkey reunited with Soviet Armenia in 1945. "The Dashnak rationale was obvious," explained Atamian (1955, 406), "It was better to have Armenia united, partially at least, under any power, rather than allow it to remain dismembered where it was of no benefit to the people." But this by no means meant that "aspirations for national independence were forgotten." Regarding the Dashnaktsutyun's support for the repatriation drive in 1946-1947, Atamian brought several motives for the change in Dashnak policies, explaining it as a result of the changes of policy towards the Soviets in America and the West:

> After twenty-five years of active propagandistic opposition to the Soviet, [the Dashnak leadership] saw the Untied States and the West, traditional enemies of the Soviet, working in what seemed to be close harmony with Moscow's policy, despite Dashnak dogma of the incompatible coexistence of the two. This, more than anything else, may have led the Dashnak leadership to think that any further opposition to the Soviet was futile and Communism had finally become "acceptable" to the West (Atamian 1955, 408).

Whether such, or any other explanation, could satisfy the anti-Dashnak Armenian opponents was not a big concern for Atamian and other Dashnak intellectuals and leaders of the time. Their major concern was justifying the policies of the Dashnaktsutyun in the eyes of Americans and expressing the loyalty of the party to America. To this end, the author made occasional references to articles published in *The New York Times* and other American periodicals in order to demonstrate that the Dashnak change of policy from anti-Soviet to pro-Soviet and back to anti-Soviet in the 1940s reflected the broader changes in policy towards the Soviet Union in America.

c) Responding to the *charges of terrorism - "the priest killers."* Responses provided by Darbinian and Atamian to the charges of Dashnak terrorism in reference to the assassination of Archbishop Tourian were summed up in portraying Abp. Tourian as the victim of Soviet penetration into the Armenian Church (cf. Atamian 1955, 357; Darbinian 1953, 52). Leaving aside the issue of Dashnak complicity in the assassination of the Primate, Darbinian expressed a regret that "the Soviet agents" took advantage of the assassination "to further deepen the division and to further prejudice an important part of non-partisans against the Armenian Revolutionary Federation" (Darbinian 1953, 52). Atamian, instead, discussed the incident in detail suggesting a theory that none of the convicted Dashnaks were guilty and the real assassin "planted by the Bolsheviks" was never captured[245] (Atamian 1955, 369).

The charges of the Dashnak affiliation with the British or American intelligence were never addressed by Darbinian, Atamian or other leaders of the party in the 1950s. Responding to the charges was not an end in itself. In the context of the Cold War, either disclosing or rejecting any cooperation with the intelligence services of the anti-Soviet powers could hardly render any service to the party. Instead, justifications provided by Darbinian, Atamian and other Dashnaks in the first half of the 1950s served the outlining of the current and future politics of the party for the rank and file, and for broader American audience.

[245] Atamian portrayed the Dashnaktsutyun and the nine Dashnaks arrested at the church as victims, rather than as perpetrators. As he noted, "nine Dashnak party members were present in church," all of whom were arrested (Atamian 1955, 367). Following the incident the Dashnaktsutyun became defined as a "small terrorist clique," and Dashnak notables and rank and file were persecuted and "terrorized" during the "turbulent days" (*ibid.*, 367-8). The author entertained the idea that the incident could have been arranged by the Bolsheviks and the real assassin, Mr. X, should have escaped, "without being identified," "to throw guilt on the Dashnaktzoutyoun" (*ibid.*, 369). Under the Cold War circumstances, Atamian (1955) even questioned the legitimacy of the court decision and a possibility of reviewing the case of the two Dashnaks, who were sentenced to life imprisonment. By questioning the complicity of the convicted Dashnak members in the assassination of Archbishop Tourian, Atamian simultaneously denied any possibility of the party's involvement in the planning and execution of the crime. "Had such a conviction been made," he argued, "the possibility of outlawing the Dashnaktzoutyoun as a "secret, terrorist, or subversive" organization may have been great" (*ibid.*, 371-2).

In Atamian's book, the justification of the Dashnaktsutyun was part of the author's broader intention, which, it seems, had been the defining of the essential role of the Dashnaktsutyun in modern Armenian history in comparison with and in contrast to the rival Armenian political parties. Referring to the revolutionary activities of the Hnchakyans and the Dashnaks in the Ottoman Empire, in the first chapters of the book Atamian concluded:

> The Hunchaks placed class interest above national interests, while the Dashnaks placed the interests of the nation above all classes. The distinction was crucial; it not only allowed the Dashnaks to enjoy undisputed leadership of the Armenian masses, it virtually made the concepts of ***Dashnatkzoutyoun and Armenian Nation synonymous***… [emphasis added] (Atamian 1955, 99).

He portrayed the Dashnaks as heroes who "fought and died like men" (265) during the genocide of Armenians, while their opponents were the "cowards who fled or died without a struggle" and were thus "unworthy of being Armenian." "We fought and bled like men, what did you do?" (270), wondered rhetorically Atamian in response to the anti-Dashnak charges of Turkophilia and lack of patriotism. Summarizing the Dashnak values, attitudes and definitions, Atamian concluded:

> …the Dashnakzoutyoun and its adherents have an identity. They identify with a historical past in which there emerged the modern concept of the Armenian as a distinct national and cultural entity. Adherence to the Dashnakzoutyoun is not only an association with a political party. It is an identification with the symbol of a national entity. It is belonging to a people with a historical past, a culture, language and art which is different than those of Armenians who existed for six centuries without a fatherland in alien cultures and regimes as servile *rayah* without status and identity. In short, ***being a Dashnak is being an Armenian. Dashnaktzoutyoun is Armenian national consciousness*** [emphasis added] (1955, 272).

If "being an Dashnak" meant "being an Armenian" and the Dashnaktsutyun was the "Armenian national consciousness," the Ramkavars were labeled as "cowards" and "betrayers." Their anti-Dashnak stand was "a sub-conscious reaction against the guilt of betrayal imputed to Ramkavar identity" (*ibid.*, 280). By associating Ramkavar identity with Armenian "traitors" or "betrayers," Atamian used the occasion to justify the punitive actions of the Dashnaks, which the anti-

Dashnaks labeled as "terrorism" (*ibid.*, 278-1). "This is not to say," wrote Atamian (1955, 281), "that genuine moral objections to Dashnak terrorism do not exist. It is to say that in given social situations, with concomitant conditions [refers to the conditions in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Ottoman Empire - V.S.], the Dashnak-terrorist stereotype plays a vital function in anti-Dashnak behavior which cannot be answered on moral and rational grounds only."

Even though Atamian's generalizations were made in a certain context and must be addressed within that specific context, his beliefs more importantly reflected the prevailing self-perceptions of the Dashnaktsutyun and how the next generations were indoctrinated in the Dashnak circles. Sarkis Atamian's perceptions of the Armenian political parties were entirely shaped by his experience in the AYF and his interactions with the Dashnak leadership and rank and file. If an American born Armenian, in his early thirties with an advanced scholarly mind, believed that "being a Dashnak *is* being an Armenian" and that the "the Dashnaktsutyun *is* the Armenian national consciousness," many of lesser educated Dashnak comrades, both in the United States and elsewhere expressed similar convictions in everyday interactions with non-Dashnaks. For a long time during and after the Cold War, many non-Dashnaks remembered how the Dashnaks boasted "He who is not Dashnaktsakan, is not an Armenian."[246]

The antagonism of Armenian political factions in the United States after the assassination of Abp. Tourian in 1933 was exacerbated during WWII and the Cold War. The polarization of the Armenian community reinforced the mutually exclusive self-identifications of the '*patriots'* and *'true Armenians'*. In essence, both identifications were constructed on the rejection of their

[246] Many people from among the non-Dashnak circles recalled such statements in informal conversations with the author in Lebanon and United States.

Armenian rivals. The pro-Soviet factions constructed their identity of the '*patriots'* not only on the premise of their unconditional support for Soviet Armenia, but also on the rejection of the Dashnaks as traitors, who struggled against the homeland. The Dashnaks, on the other hand, developed a self-perception of '*true Armenians',* denouncing the Ramkavars and others as traitors and Communist agents, refusing to recognize the Soviet authorities in Armenia or any of their supporters as Armenians. If the orientation towards Soviet Armenia as the homeland was key in the identifications of the '*patriots'*, the existing homeland was not the defining attribute of the *'true Armenian'* identity. The most important attribute of a *'true Armenian',* as defined by its proponents, was belonging to the Dashnak party. The homeland - the independent Armenia in their perceptions, was imaginary, embodied in its symbolism, and to be achieved in some distant future. The clash of these mutually exclusive identification groups, which crystallized in the United States, took a transnational turn with the internationalization of the Cold War after 1947.

The Dashnak Anti-Communist Offensive and the Transnational Schism in the Armenian Diaspora

The Dashnak Anti-Communist Offensive and the Community Conflict in Lebanon

The Cold War polarized the world into the Soviet and Western camps. In the aftermath of WWII, most of the European countries fell within more or less demarcated Soviet or Western zones. Moreover, in their attempts to bring countries outside Europe under their respective spheres of influence, the Soviet and Western intelligence services became actively involved in the local politics of these countries, by supporting local sympathetic factions against the ideological enemy. While the Soviets could rely on their natural former Comintern allies in many countries - the Communist parties, whether operating legally or illegally,[247] the newly shaping Anglo-American intelligence networks in the immediate aftermath of WWII sought the cooperation of local anti-Soviet factions in many countries. The latter included significant number of anti-Soviet expatriates, many of whom had been freed from the Nazi camps by the Anglo-American troops in Europe.

The Cold War made a direct impact on the relations of Armenian political parties and factions transnationally. The anti-Soviet rhetoric, reaffirmed by the Dashnaktsutyun shortly after the Truman Doctrine, was in perfect harmony with the policies of the Western bloc. While the party leaders in the United States, such as Reuben Darbinian, sought to get American support against

[247] The Communist Party was outlawed in Syria in December 1947 and in Lebanon in January 1948 (Communism in the Free World... 1953, 1).

their opponents, Dro Kanayan, another fierce enemy of the Soviets, became directly involved with the American intelligence service. Secret intelligence reports reaching headquarters in Washington revealed that along with other expatriates, Dro also agreed to cooperate with the British and American intelligence services in Europe as long as that cooperation would be beneficial for the liberation of Soviet Armenia.[248] If Dro's hope for the immediate liberation of Soviet Armenia vanished after the Nazi defeat, the growing hostility against the Soviet Union in the West inspired him with new hope for achieving this mission with the help of Americans. A CIA document prepared in August 1949 reported that in the fall of 1947 "Kanayan left Germany and went to Cairo to a [*sic*] Armenian conference from which he never returned to Germany," and later "moved to Lebanon."[249] The same report ends by providing General Dro's present address in Lebanon:

> D. Kanayan Morses Dar Kaloustian [sic]
> Rue Kantari, Beyruth, Liban (Lebanon)

Dro visited Cairo to participate in the Fourteenth World Congress of the Dashnaktsutyun in September-October 1947. The Congress must have exonerated Dro and approved his further involvement in anti-Soviet operations in the Middle East, since following the congress, Dro moved to Lebanon and assumed a very active role in regional anti-Soviet initiatives. Movses Der Kaloustian (1895-1984) (Movses Ter Galustian), whose name was misspelled in the CIA report and at whose place Dro resided in 1949, was the incumbent Dashnak deputy at the Lebanese Parliament, elected for the second consecutive term in May 1947. At the same time, Der Kaloustian was probably a member of the Dashnaktsutyun's Lebanon Central Committee since

[248] Recently declassified CIA archives contain many documents from the 1940s and 1950s on the activities of the American Intelligence agency in Europe and elsewhere. Some of the documents are available online at http://www.foia.cia.gov/.
[249] "Armenians." August 1949. CIA, Doc No/ESDN: 51966ec9993294098d50a76f.

1943.[250] In his first hand account, Antranig Dzarugian (Andranik Tsarukian),[251] who was an active member of the Dashnaktsutyun at that time, personally encountered Dro on many occasions in Aleppo and Beirut. He later recalled that Der Kaloustian was the "number one advisor" of Dro (Dzarugian 1992, 195-6). Formal documentation on Dro's activities in Lebanon are not available, but Dzarugian's account suggests that following the World Congresses of the Dashnaktsutyun in 1947 and 1951, Dro became one of the most influential leaders of the party.[252] Many people in Lebanon still remember how Dro quickly became powerful in the 1950s with the group of his recruits, whom the opponents labeled as "Droyi balikner" (Dro's lads).[253]

In cooperating with the American intelligence service, Dro advocated war against the Soviet Union, hoping to get (Soviet) Armenia liberated with the help of the United States.[254] The CIA

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[250] Zaven Messerlian interviewed Der Kaloustian for his master's thesis, and believes that Der Kaloustian was a member of the Lebanese Central Committee and was later elected to the Bureau (Messerlian 1963, 329)

[251] Antranig Dzarugian was a well-known Armenian writer, journalist and publicist. Born in 1913 in Gürün, Turkey, he spent his childhood in orphanages in Aleppo and Beirut after his family fell victim to the genocide. He received primary education in Aleppo and later in *Chemaran* in Beirut. He was the student of Levon Shant' and Nikol Aghbalian (Bardakjian 2000, 553; Dzarugian 1980, viii). Dzarugian left the party in the 1950s and became a vocal critic of the Dashnaktsutyun.

[252] Schahgaldian attributes the resumption of anti-Soviet policies in Lebanon to the "neo-Dashnak" group of leadership, who came to power in 1947 following the Truman Doctrine. He does not mention any names of the "neo-Dashnaks," except Movses Der Kaloustian, the leader of this group (Schahgaldian 1979, 107-108; 198; 221). It seems, however, Dro became more influential in Lebanon in the late 1940s and early 1950s thanks to the CIA backing. Dzarugian's account suggests that Dro was quite influential among the Dashnak circles at the time. According to him, Dro had always kept distance from the 'center', the Bureau, but he became very involved in the 1947 World Congress of the Dashnaktsutyun and could have an enormous impact on the elections of the new Bureau (Dzarugian 1980, 89-90). The same account suggests that Dro successfully received the approval of the World Congress for organizing paramilitary groups in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Iran (*ibid.*, 94-104, Dzarugian 1992, 181-82, cf. Chelebian 2003, 336; Khurshudyan 1964, 83-4).

[253] Dzarugian also mentions about Dro's lads in his novel *Verchin anmeghĕ* [The Last Innocent] (Dzarugian 1980, 107). Referring to an article published in *Ararad* on May 31, 1957, Khurshudyan states that some of Dro's lads were even secretly sent to the United States for special training (Khurshudyan 1964, 84).

[254] A secret CIA document prepared on October 28, 1949 mentioned that Dro "was captured by US troops in Germany, but was later released; in 1946 visited US to consult with Tashnak leaders; June '46 was approached in Stuttgart by SHADOV, representative of Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations, in an effort to gain his support for ABN [Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations]; at that time subject was reportedly working for British IS; in November 1947 subject was reportedly head of the Tashnaks in Munich; however at that time he was also supposedly attending a World Tashnak Converence [*sic*] in Egypt, and from that time on lived in the Middle East, first in Cairo and then in Beirut; now a citizen of Lebanon; came to US November 1948 on Lebanese passport; visited Washington, New York and other cities; returned to Lebanon spring of 1949; opposes cooperation with Britain and claims British

was also interested in cooperating with Dro and his "intelligence group," as the report on October 23, 1951, confirmed.[255] It valued Dro's ability to provide information on Communist activities in Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Syria and Iran, and thought that his organization was "best qualified to run operations into the Iron Curtain countries and the Soviet Union."[256] Yet, American intelligence realized that Dro's cooperation was limited to his own interests: "Subject would be of value as long as his attention is kept focused on the Communist Party and the Soviet Union. Other than those targets, little else would interest him," concluded the report. As long as Dro found cooperation with the Americans beneficial for the prospect of liberating Armenia from the Soviet Union, he remained interested in cooperating with the CIA. In his correspondence with CIA agents, Dro made clear on many occasions that he (and the Armenians) would not demand lands from Turkey until the common enemy, Communism, had been defeated.[257] By 1954 Dro controlled a group of 160 men in Iran, some with paramilitary training from the CIA, and was willing to join his efforts with the other "anti-Bolshevik groups in order to overthrow the present regime in the USSR." Expectations for another world war were very high at the time, and Dro wanted to make sure that following the defeat of Communism, the United States would support "a free Armenia" at "the post World War III peace conference."[258] Meanwhile, Dro occasionally reminded of the necessity of "US intercession with the Turks to

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interest in the Middle East are not in harmony with those of the Tashnaks; disclaimed any knowledge of British I.S. operations; advocates war with USSR during which time he thinks that the Tashnak organization can be of service to the US…" ("From an FDR Armenian Study; MGL-A-303, prepared 28 October, 1949." CIA, Doc No/ESDN: 51966ec9993294098d50a776).

[255] Apart from acknowledging the fact that Dro had "his own intelligence service," the report did not mention any names associated with Dro's group.

[256] Chief, NEA/SO. "Subject: Pelops." October 23, 1951. CIA, Doc No/ESDN: 51966ec9993294098d50a781. p. 8.

[257] According to the report, "AIN had no demands on Turkey while the problem of the common enemy, Communism, remains. AIN wished to participate with the other anti-Bolshevik groups in order to overthrow the present regime in the USSR." (Chief, NEA. "Meeting with Pelops, 16 January 1954." January 18, 1954. Doc No/ESDN: 51966ec9993294098d50a75f). AIN, as the "Research Aid" on Cryptonyms and Terms in Declassified CIA files explains, was the term used for "Activities associated with the Armenians during 1952-1954. Drostamat [*sic*] Kanayan associated with Project."

[258] "Recommendations for Meeting with Pelops" November 1953. CIA, Doc No/ESDN: 51966ec9993294098d50a770. p. 4.

restrain them from wiping out the Armenians in an attack against Armenia."[259] He wanted to make sure that the Turks were not permitted to constitute "the sole element of an army" which would invade Soviet Armenia.[260]

The Fifteenth World Congress of the Dashnaktsutyun convened in October-November 1951 in Cairo. It established the Dashnaktsutyun's close cooperation and alliance "with all anti-communist and anti-Soviet forces," because the party viewed Communism as "the sworn enemy of the freedom, independence, and equality of all nations" (quoted in Schahgaldian 1979, 208). The congress also called for friendly relations between the Dashnaktsutyun and the "ruling forces" of those countries, who were viewed as "the best and the natural defenders of Armenian national interests" (*ibid.*, 209). In compliance with the new course, the party joined the "Paris Bloc,"[261] a union comprising Ukrainians, Belarusians, Georgians, Azerbaijani and other expatriate anti-Communists to fight against the Soviet regime (Abramtchik 1958, 5-6; cf. Walker 1990, 365-66). It seems that the World Congress of 1951 had made a decision on this matter as well, as Armenians at the Paris Bloc were represented by the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia.[262] Moreover, in the early 1950s Atamian defined the affiliation of the Dashnaktsutyun with the Paris Bloc as the party's "only official international commitment" (Atamian 1955, 457). The Paris Bloc, and all other anti-Soviet initiatives in Europe and, later, in the Middle East came under the control of the CIA.

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[259] *ibid*., p. 3.
[260] "Memorandum for the Record. Subject: Meeting with Pelops, 18 January, 1954." January 19, 1954. CIA. Doc No/ESDN: 51966ec9993294098d50a76b.
[261] The League for the Liberation of the Peoples of the USSR, better known as the 'Paris Bloc', was founded in Paris in 1953. It launched the review *Problems of the Peoples of the U.S.S.R* in 1958. Mikola Abramtchik was the chairman of the League (Abramtchik 1958, 5-7; Doval 1958, 7-8).
[262] Among the member organizations of the Paris Bloc, Mikola Abramtchik, the leader of the Paris Bloc and another CIA recruit, mentions the Delegation of the Armenian Republic (Abramtchik 1958, 6).

Encouraged by the American foreign interests in the Middle East, the two consecutive congresses of the Dashnaktsutyun in 1951 and 1955 in Cairo resolved that "all traces of Communism and/or pro-Sovietism must be erased from the churches, schools, cultural and ethnic organizations" (quoted in Schahgaldian 1979, 209). The erasing of "all trances of Communism" translated into a fierce struggle against all Armenian pro-Soviet factions from the United States to the Middle East. The Dashnaktsutyun began labeling the others as "Communists and their fellow travelers" or as "tools in the hands of the Communists" (Messerlian 1963, 179, 210; Schahgaldian 1979, 212). Under the conditions of the Cold War, all Armenians and Armenian organizations were challenged to take a position. Even the church and charitable and compatriotic organizations were called on to affiliate with a certain political faction. Neutrality was no longer an option. "No nation, no political party can remain truly neutral toward the present world civil war which has wrongly been called the cold war. Any nation or any political faction which is not with the free world is actually on the other side of the enemy and aids the Soviet tyranny, directly or indirectly," declared Reuben Darbinian (1953, 55) in *The Armenian Review.* Following this reasoning, he denounced the "Communists and their fellow travelers," who "…infiltrated the Ramgavar and Hunchak Parties, their friendly Armenian General Benevolent Union, the Knights of Vardan,[263] and a large part of Armenian Compatriotic Societies and … succeeded in bringing these organizations under their control" (*ibid.*, 53). In practice, Darbinian defined all major Armenian organizations not affiliated with the Dashnaktsutyun as "Communists and their fellow travelers."

[263] The Nights of Vartan was founded in Philadelphia in 1916 as a fraternal organization. Its purpose was to provide moral and material support to the Armenian Church and Armenian cultural, athletic, educational and charitable organizations (Peroomian and Avagyan, 2003, 58).

Darbinian apparently realized that the struggle between the diverse pro-Soviet factions and the anti-Soviet Dashnaktsutyun in the United States had effectively ended with the division of the Armenian Church since 1933. After all, apart from the discursive space, there was no physical Armenian space left where the representatives of the conflicting factions could possibly encounter. Benefitting from the internationalization of the Cold War, therefore, Darbinian envisioned a transnational struggle against Soviet influence in Armenian institutions. He defined "the most pressing problem of the Armenian Dispersion at the present time" to be the "freeing of Armenian churches of abroad from the clutches of a servile clergy" (Darbinian 1953, 59). In this respect, the death of Catholicos Karekin I Hovsepian of Cilicia in 1952 was a timely occasion: at the time, when the Dashnaktsutyun could benefit the most from the favorable conditions shaped by the Cold War, the seat of the Cilician Catholicosate was vacant. Darbinian realized that the right time for action in Lebanon was now:

> It is plain as daylight that, to win the fight against the Armenian Communists, the Armenian churches must be rescued from Soviet agents, and this is possible only if and when the throne of the Cilician Catholicosate is occupied by a man who is capable and courageous, independent-minded and completely free of Soviet influence, to assume the spiritual leadership of the Armenian people (Darbinian 1953, 62).

In case the political opponents or the general public might wonder why a political organization would want to interfere in church affairs, Darbinian clarified:

> …the moment the Soviet government, which by nature is an enemy to both the nation and the church, started to infiltrate the church, to use it as a weapon for the enslavement of mankind, the church became a political factor. Therefore, from then on, for a political organization like the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, active participation in church affairs has become an essential part of the political fight (*ibid*.).

Darbinian's article in *The Armenian Review,* published in 1953, indirectly invited the American government and secret services to support the Dashnak mission of rescuing the Armenian Church "from Soviet agents."

Judging from the CIA secret correspondence and the *Intelligence Digest*[264] published in Britain, the Dashnaktsutyun's transnational intentions in the Middle East were in harmony with the Anglo-American interests. In March 1955, the *Intelligence Digest* reported on the Middle East and the Soviet's policy there to encourage "communist or near-Communist parties and extremist movements like the Moslem Brotherhood." The report continued to comment on the Armenians, according to which "no less than half the Armenian population in Syria and the Lebanon, have been won to Russia's policy" (De Coursy 1955, 12-13). In this context, the Dashnaktsutyun's anti-Communist initiatives in the Middle East were not only welcomed, but also encouraged and supported by Western intelligence services.

In Lebanese politics the Dashnaktsutyun allied with the government, which in the 1950s grew more and more anti-Soviet (cf. Sanjian 2008a; 2012a). In the early 1950s, Camille Chamoun, the president of Lebanon since 1952, gradually adopted, in Traboulsi's (2007, 109-28) words, a "pro-Western authoritarianism." The alliance of the Dashnaktsutyun with the government was mutually beneficial. Despite the fact that Dro's cooperation with the CIA had not been yielding any tangible results towards the realization of his hopes, American backing helped Dro and by extension the Dashnaktsutyun to significantly improve their position in Lebanon in the 1950s.[265] By the parliamentary elections of 1953 the Dashnaktsutyun had been able to demonstrate that it could effectively control the Armenian votes, and managed to place its candidates on the government list (cf. Messerlian 1963, 210-12; Schahgaldian 1979, 211-13). Movses Der

[264] *Intelligence Digest* was a monthly journal published by a British diplomat Kenneth De Coursy. It was quite popular among legislators both in Britain and the United States in the 1950s (Turchetti 2007, 140).
[265] A secret CIA report on November 1953 confirms that the CIA was ready to provide Dro's intelligence group in Lebanon, Syria and Iran with "arms and ammo in small quantities" ("Recommendations for Meeting with Pelops." November 1953. CIA, Doc No/ESDN: 51966ec9993294098d50a770).

Kaloustian, Dro's "adviser," was elected to the Lebanese parliament for a fourth consecutive term.

According to the by-laws of the Cilician See, the elections of a new Catholicos in Lebanon after the death of Catholicos Karekin Hovsepian in 1952 were to be held within six months. But the seat remained vacant until 1956. The *locum tenens* made several attempts to gather an Ecclesiastical Assembly, but he had to postpone it every time, due to the tensions in the various Cilician dioceses (Eghiayan 1975, 650-55). While the pro-Soviet faction and the *locum tenens* wanted to preserve cordial relations with Ējmiatsin, the Dashnaktsutyun with the sympathizing clergy viewed Cilicia as an independent See and advocated for the organizing of elections without the approval of Ējmiatsin.

The seat of Catholicosate in Ējmiatsin also became vacant in May 1954, following the death of Catholicos Gevorg VI. In September 1955, a new Catholicos was elected in Ējmiatsin. Archbishop Vazgen Baljian became very active in consolidating the influence of the Holy See of Ējmiatsin abroad. In February 1956, Catholicos Vazgen I visited Beirut hoping to bring the parties in Lebanon together and organize peaceful elections in the See of Cilicia (Eghiayan 1975, 670). On this occasion, *Intelligence Digest* reported in January 1956:

> Further evidence of primary interest in the Middle East is provided by events in the Armenian Orthodox Church. This is probably the most important single channel of Soviet penetration in the Middle East.
> As a counter to Cardinal Agagianian's (Head of the Armenian Catholics) anti-Communist leanings, the Soviet authorities brought about the appointment of a new Catholicos of the Armenian Orthodox Church. This Prelate - Vazgen Baldjian - is a well-trained Soviet agent who was formerly suspected of links with the Nazis.
> His Church is receiving financial help from the Soviet Union. A Seminary for the training of clergy has been opened in Erivan, which is, in fact, a political training centre for turning Armenian Orthodox clergy into effective Soviet propagandists (De Coursy 1956, 8).

The authorization of the trip by Soviet government at the height of the Cold War was interpreted as the indication of Soviet meddling in the matters of the Armenian Church in the Middle East (cf. Migliorino 2008, 101).[266] Certainly, both the supporters of Ējmiatsin and the opponents in the diaspora expressed similar concerns for the well-being and unity of the Armenian Church, but the matter by then had been extremely politicized. The Dashnaktsutyun's anti-Communist offensive, which increasingly defined allegiances in black-and-white terms, would not tolerate any candidate other than its own for the Catholicosate of Cilicia, considering that the party had the votes. The mission of Catholicos Vazgen I was therefore a failure. Despite his attempts to bring together the opposing parties, he could not exert any influence on the fiercely anti-Soviet Dashnak majority of the electoral conclave gathered in February 1956. Enjoying the support of the Lebanese government, with most of the anti-Dashnaks withdrawn, the Dashnak controlled Assembly elected Archbishop Zareh Payaslian the Catholicos of Cilicia on February 20 (Eghiayan 1975, 674-83 Sanjian 2008a; 2012a).

The controversial elections of the Catholicos in Cilicia sparked a new wave of denunciations, tensions and hostilities between the Dashnaktsutyun and its opponents in Lebanon. The anti-Dashnak faction refused to recognize the new Catholicos of the Cilician See, and following the consecration of Zareh Payaslian, they sent a petition to the Lebanese government asking to

[266] Several scholars addressed the relations of the Soviet authorities and the Armenian Church. While the Soviet influence on the Armenian Church is commonly acknowledged, the visit of Catholicos Vazgen I to the Middle East and Western Europe in 1956, his meetings with the highest ranking political figures and clergy in the Middle East and Western Europe cannot be solely explained by a mission to extend the Soviet influence abroad. As Felix Corley concludes, "Vazgen played the politics of the trip well, offering mild praise of the Soviet authorities in public, opening up both public and private direct channels of communication, gleaning useful information that he would not otherwise have learnt, establishing himself as an independent religious figure, positioning the Armenian Church in the Soviet Union as a Church outside the Soviet construct of denominations, … reinforcing … the place of primacy of Echmiadzin in the wider Armenian Church, and showing the diaspora Armenian Church that Echmiadzin was breaking free of the constraints of the past and was again able to play an active part directing church life" (Corley 2010, 195). Moreover, Vazgen later acknowledged that he made a deal with the Soviet authorities that they would not interfere in his relations with the church matters in the diaspora in exchange for his loyalty to the Soviet state (*ibid.,* 194, cf. Dallak'yan 1998, 91-5, 113-14. 118-19).

recognize the creation of a rival "Independent community of the Catholicosate of Cilicia." The Lebanese government refused to recognize another Armenian Orthodox community and resolved the issue in favor of the Dashnaktsutyun and the Catholicos-elect (Messerlian 1963, 219-20). The controversial elections in Cilicia affected first of all the prelacies under the jurisdiction of the Cilician Catholicosate. The Prelacy of Lebanon, controlled by the Dashnak majority Civic council, had no problem in accepting the legitimacy of elections. A few "dissident" churches under the Hnchakyan control remained distanced from the Catholicosate. In Syria, the Diocese split. While Aleppo remained under the jurisdiction of Cilicia, Damascus, under the control of the Hnchakyans and their allies, seceded and placed itself under the jurisdiction of Ējmiatsin (Migliorino 2008, 104).

Growing hostilities between the factions following the elections of 1956 were further fueled by deteriorating international conditions and the policies pursued by the Lebanese government. The parliamentary elections of 1957 were accompanied with bloody encounters between the Dashnaks and their opponents (Schahgaldian 1979, 217).

Meanwhile, in response to the Suez crisis of October-November 1956, the US President Eisenhower established what became known as the Eisenhower Doctrine. Very much in the same spirit as the Truman Doctrine, the Eisenhower Doctrine of January 1957 expressed the US determination to protect the political independence and territorial integrity of countries in the Middle East and provide military aid for the fight against Communism. While the charismatic leader of Egypt, Gamal Abdel Nasser, opposed the Doctrine, President Camille Chamoun of Lebanon expressed willingness to adhere to the Doctrine. Chamoun, as a Christian, justified his

position by the necessity to struggle against the rising mostly Muslim anti-imperial movements in Lebanon, sympathetic to Nasser's policies and believed to be backed by the Communists (cf. Schahgaldian 1979, 215-16). The victory of the government list in the Lebanese parliamentary elections of 1957, therefore, was a matter of utmost importance. While the opposition recorded many irregularities and an atmosphere of terror during elections, the government resorted to every means to secure a crushing victory. The polarization and tensions escalated between the Lebanese pro-Western government and pro-Nasser opposition eventually leading to the five-month Civil War of 1958. Allied either with the pro-Nasser Muslim opposition or the pro-Western government forces, Armenian factions violently targeted members of one another during the civil war and continued even after the Lebanese factions stopped fighting. Truce between the Armenian political factions was concluded only with the intervention of the Lebanese Minister of Interior on December 7, 1958, after 35 or so Armenians fell victim from both sides during tit-for-tat assassinations (Messerlian 1963, 265; Sanjian 2012a). The immediate bloodshed stopped, but tensions and conflicts continued on transnational and ideological levels, polarizing the Armenian community transnationally.

Ideological Polarization and Territorial Division of the Armenian Community in Lebanon

The elections of 1956 and the subsequent violent clashes had several repercussions. The Dashnaktsutyun's anti-Communist struggle was not only fought externally, but also internally within its own rank and file. According to Schahgaldian's estimates, between 1954 and 1956 almost thirty percent of the regulars, including many "veteran party leaders in both Lebanon and

Syria," deserted the party or were expelled (Schahgaldian 1979, 213-4). The party transformed into what he called a "secretive authoritarian paramilitary organization" (*ibid.*, 221). Very much along the same lines as Darbinian defined, for the Dashnaktsutyun there could be no neutrals in the conflict. The party viewed all non-Dashnak Armenian factions, including the compatriotic unions outside its control, the AGBU, and those expelled from the party, as enemies and behaved accordingly (Schahgaldian 1979, 222). The most notable expelled members, such as Antranig Dzarugian or Khosrov T'ut'unjian, usually assumed a very anti-Dashnak stand, which in many ways played in favor of the Hnchakyans and the Ramkavars.

The community schism was marked not only by social, political and ideological radicalization, but gradually also geographically. In the course of several years following the violent clashes of 1958 in Beirut, the Hnchakyans came to fully control the Armenian neighborhoods of Nor Hachn, Khalil Badawi and Charchabouk, leaving the much larger Bourj Hammoud under the Dashnaktsutyun's control. The River Beirut became a natural demarcation line, dividing neighborhoods controlled by the Hnchakyans from the Dashnak controlled Armenian quarters in Bourj Hammoud (Migliorino 2008, 102; Sanjian 2008b). The polarization of the Armenian community continued despite the changing political climate in Lebanon. The Civil War of 1958 led to political change in Lebanon, and the new government tried to be more even-handed. In the face of rising anti-imperialist Arab nationalist movements in Egypt and Syria, the new president, Fuad Chehab, assumed a more moderate policy towards Arab movements and took a more neutral stand on the international arena[267] (Migliorino 2008, 99; Schahgaldian 1979, 231-238). The atmosphere of reconciliation in Lebanon did not immediately affect the Armenians, and the

[267] The Armenians supported Chehab in the elections, and when he was elected, both Armenian parties sent separate delegations to congratulate him (Sanjian 2012a).

upcoming elections of 1960 only further aggravated the polarization inside the community. The "old configuration of forces was completely reversed," as the Dashnaktsutyun expressed support for president Chehab and his list, while the anti-Dashnaks joined the new opposition movement, which also included the former president Chamoun (Schahgaldian 1979, 242). Amid continuing assassinations in the Armenian quarters, the Dashnaks again had all their candidates elected in 1960. The violent electoral campaign stimulated the further crystallization of the Hnchak and Dashnak neighborhoods.

The radical polarization of the Armenian community had an impact on all levels of social relations among Armenians. The Hnchak families were forced out of the Dashnak controlled territories in Bourj Hammoud, while the Dashnaks were forced out from the Hnchak controlled neighborhoods. Concerned of personal security, many Dashnak or Hnchak sympathizer families voluntarily left their old residence to move to a neighborhood controlled by their respective parties (Messerlian 1963, 312; Sanjian 2012a). On a more personal level,

> … intermarriage or even ordinary interpersonal relations between the two [factions] ceased altogether. The schools, churches, clubs and other public centers of one faction were closed to members or sympathizers of the other action. Entire Armenian neighborhoods in Beirut-Burj Hammoud, Khalil Badawi, Hajn and many others - were sealed off to members of the opposite camp… (Schahgaldian 1979, 221)

The social distancing of the Dashnak and Hnchak neighborhoods through the 1960s put all the institutions, businesses, shops, schools and other organizations operating in those neighborhoods under the direct or indirect control of the respective Armenian parties. The neighborhoods grew into self-contained communities, where the political parties controlled and governed the entire communal life from matters concerning the entire community to settling occasional interpersonal disputes. Through their respective club networks the parties provided the security of the neighborhoods and businesses under their dominion. Both the Hnchakyans and Dashnaks

expanded the network of parallel youth, women, artistic and athletic organizations, and the upbringing and education of children was organized along strictly political lines. The Ramkavars, in contrast, had not been able to develop a strong community base in Lebanon. The party had a stronger base in Egypt and in the United States. In April-May 1954 the Ramkavar Ninth World Congress was held in Beirut, which decided to create youth organizations everywhere and initiate a more active recruitment policies, but most of the projects remained on paper because of the lack of administrative and financial resources (Dallak'yan 2007, 199). In comparison to the Hnchakyans or Dashnaks, the Ramkavar party had not become as dominant among Armenians in Lebanon. The closer connections with the AGBU leadership and the presence of many Ramkavar members in the high ranked positions within the AGBU made the Ramkavar-AGBU affiliation an alternative to the Dashnak and Hnchak controlled neighborhoods.

In the early 1960s the ranks of the Dashnaktsutyun were significantly augmented due to an influx of Syrian Armenian Dashnaks. The triumph of the Arab anti-imperialist movements in Egypt and Syria was marked by the proclamation of the United Arab Republic (UAR) in February 1958 by the union of Syria and Egypt. The creation of the UAR had certain implications for the Armenian community in both countries. The victory of the Muslim Arab nationalism in Egypt and Syria notably worsened the conditions of Christians in both countries (cf. Fisk 2001, 70). The new suppressive regime outlawed all political parties in the UAR, significantly repressed cultural and religious freedoms. Armenian schools, press, social clubs, youth and other organizations were shut down or closely monitored. Nasser's anti-Western policies targeted especially the Dashnaktsutyun. The discovery of huge depots of arms and ammunitions owned by the

Dashnaktsutyun led to the arrest of more than a hundred members of the party, including many leaders of the party. They were accused of "espionage" and connections with the CIA, Israel and Turkey. The UAR had a short life and was dissolved in 1961, but the suppression of the persecution of the Dashnaks did not end with the UAR. The trial of those arrested by the UAR occurred under the successor regime. The party had been significantly weekend in Syria following the events in the early 1960s, but it became stronger in Lebanon. According to estimates provided by various Lebanese Armenian newspapers, by 1970 the number of Syrian Armenians in Beirut was between 40,000 and 60,000, most of them being Dashnak sympathizers and affiliates (Migliorino 2008, 104; Schahgaldian 1979, 64).

The Dashnak Anti-Communist Offensive and the Expansion of the Cilician See

The Dashnak anti-Communist offensive, formulated in the fifteenth and sixteenth World Congresses and aiming at erasing all traces of Communism and/or pro-Sovietism from churches, schools, cultural and ethnic organizations, acquired new impetus after the election of Catholicos Zareh I. Since schools and cultural organizations throughout the diaspora had been controlled largely by the opposing Armenian factions, the only organization still uniting Armenians, at least formally, remained the Armenian Church. Following the election of Zareh Payaslian, several petitions from various Armenian churches and dioceses under Dashnak control began arriving to the Catholicos of Cilicia, requesting to join the jurisdiction of the Cilician Catholicosate. From the viewpoint of the Cilician See, as Biwzand Eghiayan explained, Catholicos Zareh I only reluctantly endorsed such petitions in response to the persistent refusal of opponents and

Catholicos Vazgen I to recognize his legitimacy (Eghiayan 1975, 718). "Clearly," concluded Eghiayan, "it was only several months after the *opposition front's* implementation of the divisionism, that Catholicos Zareh found himself *justified* before God and the Nation to respond to deeds based on the principle of divisionism by extending his aegis on diasporic dioceses, which had lived under spiritual deprivation for years" [emphasis original] (*ibid.,* 718). From the viewpoint of the Dashnaktsutyun, however, many churches contained "communist and pro-Soviet traces," which had to be eliminated. The election of a Dashnak-supported candidate fit squarely with the party's political agenda to challenge Ējmiatsin's worldwide jurisdiction.

The Dashnak-controlled churches in the US hailed the election of Zareh Payaslian and were the first to send a petition for joining the jurisdiction of the Catholicosate of Cilicia in February 1957. Catholicos Zareh approved the petition of these churches in October 1957, and sent the Prelate of the Church in Lebanon, Khoren Paroyan (Khoren Baroyan), on a mission to America. Paroyan had a productive trip to the United States. Upon arrival, he participated in the consecration of the St. Stephen's Church in Watertown and was received by some eminent members of the Syrian and Lebanese diplomatic missions in America and the United Nations (Eghiayan 1975, 744-45). In the era of McCarthyism and the "Great American Red Scare,"[268] the anti-Ējmiatsin activities of the Catholicosate of Cilicia were truly appreciated by the American officials. On October 28, 1957, Paroyan was received by vice-president Richard Nixon, who praised the contribution of the Cilician See to the common fight against Communism by stating: "[i]t does not suffice to fight against dark and sinister forces with only military and economic weapons. It is absolutely necessary to fight spiritually and I am happy that has been done in your

[268] Joseph R. McCarthy was a Republican Senator, who accused many high-ranking State Department officials, often falsely, in subversive activities in the early 1950s. The term 'McCarthyism' came to be associated with the "the great American red scare." For further details on McCarthyism and the American Red Scare see Fried (1997).

Church" (quoted in Phillips 1989, 153). A few months later, in February 1958, the US Department of State issued a statement, which recognized the legitimacy of the Prelacy of Armenian Church affiliated with the Catholicosate of Cilicia:

> There has recently developed in the Armenian Apostolic Church a considerable body of opinion, which opposes allegiance to the Armenian Catholicos (Patriarch of the Church) who resides in Etchmiadzin in Soviet Armenia. This group favors recognition of the spiritual jurisdiction of the Catholicos of Cilicia who resides in Antelias, Lebanon. The Catholicos of Cilicia, Zareh I, recently sent a personal emissary to visit Armenian churches in the United States.
> The Department of State does not as a matter of policy intervene in the affairs of the churches in this country or abroad… While maintaining its policy of non-interference in religious affairs, the Department will continue to encourage the maintenance of cordial relations between officials of the United States Government and officials of the Armenian Apostolic Church under the jurisdiction of the Catholicosate of Cilicia (quoted in *Crisis* 1958, 7).

Encouraged by this statement, the Central Diocesan Board of the Armenian National Apostolic Church of America published a lengthy Memorandum in English. Claiming to represent the "majority of Armenian American faithful," the memorandum denounced the Catholicosate of Ējmiatsin as the "political instrument of the Soviets," and the prelates of the "minority" "dissident" North-American Diocese of Armenian Church as "Soviet agents" (*Crisis* 1958, 34-59). In order to justify the legitimacy of their religious assembly and prelacy, the Memorandum quoted various articles from American newspapers, which contained references to the pro-Soviet activities of their opponents. The Memorandum also made a reference to the report of *Intelligence Digest* published in 1956*,* which denounced Catholicos Vazgen I as a "well-trained Soviet agent."[269] In response to the opponents' charges of the illegality of Catholicos Zareh's election, the Memorandum questioned the election of Catholicos Vazgen I of Ējmiatsin (*ibid.,* 22-32; 187). Some of the statements in the Memorandum echoed Reuben Darbinian's article in the *Armenian Review* published two years earlier in 1956. He also compared and contrasted the elections of Vazken I of Ējmiatsin and Zareh I of Cilicia to claim that while Zareh I's election

[269] See the text quoted above.

was held at a "perfectly legal assembly," Vazken I's election was a "shocking sham" at the "Soviet-packed consistory of Etchmiadzin" (Darbinian, 1956, 6). In the list of supporters of the "dissident church," i.e. Ējmiatsin-affiliated Dioceses, the Memorandum mentioned all major Armenian-American organizations, except the Dashnaktsutyun and Dashnak affiliated Armenian Relief Society, Armenian Youth Federation and ANCHA. The list included the following "pro-Soviet" and "anti-American" supporters of the so-called "dissident church:"

> (a) The "*Armenian Progressive League of America*" - the Armenian Communist Party in America,
> (b) The "*Armenian Democratic Liberal Political Party*" (Ramgavar) a left-wing pro-Soviet political organization,
> (c) The "*Armenian Huntchakian Party*" - a Marxist, pro-Soviet party.
> (d) The "*Armenian National Council*" - a cooperative, "clearing-house" unit serving all three parties above. The Council is Communist in character.
> (e) The "*Armenian General Benevolent Union*" - a so-called charitable and educational organization which is the treasure-chest of the Armenian pro-Soviet front.
> (f) The "*Knights of Vartan*" - a secret, ritualistic organization supposedly dedicated to the support of the church, but political and pro-Soviet in character [emphasis in original] (*Crisis* 1958, 110)

In addition, the Memorandum went on to comment that "a group of other organizations consistently support the dissident church. These include a number of "compatriotic" organizations" (*ibid.,* 125). In order to dispel any doubts that their opponents might be in the majority, the Memorandum clarified:

> *Note:* The list above may lead … to believe that the dissident church has an imposing following. Nothing is further from the truth.
> Membership in these organizations is held usually by the same group of people - for instance, an AGBU member is usually a member of or supporter of the Knights of Vartan, the ADL, etc. The combined membership of all organizations is ridiculously low. The dissident church group makes up for its lack of numbers by the din it makes, by the mission it so relentlessly follows, by the resources it has at its command (*ibid.,* 125).

The debates of whose church and position was legitimate and who had the right to represent the Armenian-Americans continued through the 1960s (cf. Alexander 2009, 81). The Dashnaktsutyun continued enjoying the benefits of the anti-Soviet rhetoric as the number of the

party's sympathizers grew with the continued influx of the DPs from Europe and elsewhere.[270] Yet, the task of erasing "Communist and/or anti-Soviet traces" from churches remained unachievable in the United States. The few Dashnak-affiliated churches initially in jurisdictional limbo, joined the Catholicosate of Cilicia, and were organized as the Prelacy of Armenian Church in the Untied States. The Prelacy continued constructing new churches, wherever the Dashnak communities still did not have churches. The majority of churches, however, remained under the jurisdiction of the Diocese of Armenian Church, which continued to be affiliated with the Catholicosate of Ējmiatsin.[271]

The Dashnaktsutyun's anti-Communist campaign extended beyond Lebanon and the United States. The Dioceses of Armenian Church in Greece and Iran, all controlled by the Dashnaktsutyun, seceded from Ējmiatsin and joined the Cilician See in 1958-1959. Due to the immediate proximity to Ējmiatsin and with more than 70 Armenian churches, the three Dioceses of Iran were of special importance (cf. Eghiayan 1975, 746-49; Sanjian 2012a). In the course of a few years, thanks to the active work of the Dashnaktsutyun in those communities, the Catholicosate of Cilicia expanded its jurisdiction beyond the limited jurisdiction the See had acquired in the Middle East in the late 1920s.[272] But the attempts in France failed because the Dashnaktsutyun had been significantly weekend during WWII, and the party was still slowly

[270] By the mid-1950s ANCHA and its leader had become closely affiliated with the Dashnak circles. George Mardigian was one of the delegates to visit Antelias in 1958 representing the Board and the Armenian National Church of America (Eghiayan 1975, 746). The arriving Armenian DPs through the channels of ANCHA, therefore, were more sympathetic to the Dashnak-affiliated organizations and churches, who had assisted them.
[271] The Prelacy developed parallel administrative structures to the Diocese. Similar to the Diocese, the Prelate was the spiritual and administrative leader of the Prelacy. While the Diocese was run by the Diocesan Council, the Prelacy was run by the Central Executive Committee. Both were made up of lay and clergy members. The Diocesan Council was elected at the Diocesan Assembly, and the Prelacy Central Executive Committee at the National (Prelacy) Assembly (cf. Phillips 1989: 161).
[272] Before 1956 only Dioceses of Aleppo, Damascus, Cyprus and Lebanon fell under the jurisdiction of the Catholicosate of Cilicia (Dallak'yan 2004, 154)

recovering and expanding the network of its clubs, youth and sports organizations, and chapters of *Croix Bleue des arméniennes*.

By the 1960s, the Armenian community had significantly declined in Marseille, Paris and elsewhere mostly due to assimilation. Yet the community life did not disappear. *Haratch* occasionally reported on Armenian events happening in various towns in France. By the 1960s, although several new churches had been established in Issy-Les-Moulineaux, Chaville, Decines and Valance, other churches had become inactive following the death of priests or after the Armenian community nearby had scattered or assimilated. This was the situation in some churches in Marseille in 1960, which did not have permanent priests and organized Parish councils. At the same time, Marseille had been the center of the Diocese of Southern France since 1927 and hosted the largest number of Armenian churches. The *Harach* editorial on January 7, 1960 by Hrant Samuelian reflected the dire situation of Armenian churches in Paris, Lyon, Marseille or elsewhere, expressing hope that the situation would improve in 1960. It was in such context, that some Dashnak controlled church parishes in Marseille actively sought to connect with the Cilician See. Several petitions were made to Catholicos Zareh I, requesting to appoint new priests. In response, Catholicos Zareh I sent Father Shahan Dedeyan to serve the flock at St. Loup Armenian church in Marseille in 1962 (Eghiayan 1975, 779-80). The following year, amid conflicts and disagreements, the Dashnak initiated Diocesan Assembly elected Bp. Ardavazt Terterian the Primate of the Diocese of Southern France. Terterian was a member of the Cilician Brotherhood, who had spent several years in France studying in seminaries (Eghiayan 1975: 780-81). Questioning the legitimacy of the Assembly, some churches refused to recognize his authority, and this situation prevailed until 1970 (Eghiayan 1975: 781-85;

Boghossian 2005: 156-9). Several events happening in the 1960s, which will be discussed in detail in the following sections, eventually led to the failure of the Dashnaktsutyun to connect the Diocese of Southern France to the Cilician See.

As a result of the Dashnak campaign of erasing the "Communist and pro-Soviet traces" in Armenian churches abroad, some churches eventually came under the control of the Dashnaktsutyun, rather than becoming independent. The Cilician See, which had adopted rules inspired by the Ottoman Armenian Constitution of 1863, allowed significant participation of lay individuals in the governance of its Dioceses and the community. According to this constitution, each Diocese had a National Assembly (*Azgayin eresp'okhanakan zhoghov*), Religious and Civic (Executive) Councils, as well as various boards appointed by the Civic Council (cf. *Kanonadrut'iwn* 2010). By securing uncontested majorities in all these councils and boards, the Dashnaktsutyun gained direct access to controlling the schools, properties, and finances of the Prelacy, especially in Lebanon, where the Lebanese consociational political system granted broad autonomy to religious communities. By connecting other Dioceses to the Cilician See and by actively excluding the opponents in the antagonistic bipolar Armenian world, the Dashnaktsutyun could in the same way exert more influence on the management of properties, finances and overall diocesan affairs elsewhere. Had the Cold War continued with the same intensity as in the 1950s, the Dashnaktsutyun would have probably been able to control a greater number of Dioceses in France and in other diasporan communities. But the thaw in the Soviet-US relations in the early 1960s, following the Cuban missile crisis, marked a new phase in the Cold War in which the anti-Communist rhetoric and struggle gradually lost its urgency in American political discourse (Alexander 2009, 81). The Cold War rhetoric of the Armenian

parties was yielding to rising anti-Turkish sentiments among Armenians worldwide. The gradual emergence of the Armenian Genocide as a prevailing discourse among Armenians, the reestablishment of active relations between various diasporic circles and Soviet Armenia and Ējmiatsin in the 1960s, and a number of other events eventually pushed the Dashnaktsutyun to abandon the policies of erasing "Communist and pro-Soviet traces" in Armenian churches. The Dashnak anti-Communist offensive of the 1950s, as much as the party leaders justified it as a struggle against denationalization and destruction of the Armenian Church by the Soviets, resulted in the further institutional and administrative separation of the Catholicosates of Ējmiatsin and Cilicia and the transnational schism of the Armenian diaspora.

Towards Reconciliation: The Soviet Thaw, the Genocide Convention and the Change of Political Course in the Armenian Diaspora

While the Armenian political factions fought each other, allied with the pro-Soviet and pro-Western blocs in Lebanon in the 1950s, the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted in 1948, and changes in the Soviet policies following Stalin's death in 1953 and Khrushchev's accession to power began having their somewhat delayed effects on Armenian political thinking and institutional structures worldwide. Under such conditions, as this section will discuss, the approaching fiftieth anniversary of the Great Crime (Mets Eghern)[273] in 1965 acquired a special meaning both in Soviet Armenia and in the diaspora, which determined the change in the political agendas and the course of the formerly hostile Armenian camps.

The official renunciation of territorial claims against Turkey by the Soviet authorities following the death of Joseph Stalin in 1953 exacerbated the conflicts among Armenian factions in the diaspora. The Dashnaktsutyun grew more confident in its claims that Soviet intentions had never been honest. Yet, the change of Soviet leadership entailed certain revisions and retreat from the Stalinist policy lines, which had certain repercussions on Soviet Armenia and Armenians in the

[273] Before the invention of the word 'genocide' Armenians generally referred to the massacres of 1915 as Mets Eghern. The expression "Mets Egher" is still widely used among Armenians as a more informal reference to the Armenian Genocide.

diaspora.[274] At the level of constituent Soviet Republics, de-Stalinization led to some decentralization of power and the toleration of expressions of national sentiments. With relaxation, local officials of the constituent republics were granted more autonomy to make decisions on the economy, industry, culture, education and other social matters. As the fiftieth anniversary of the Armenian genocide approached, the Soviet authorities largely tolerated the growing national sentiments in Soviet Armenia, because they were anti-Turkish in nature and posed no threat to the Soviet rule (Suny 1993, 186). Even though the Soviets had renounced the territorial claims against Turkey, Turkey's adherence to NATO in 1952 had placed her in the Western camp.

Meanwhile, from about the mid-fifties, but especially from the early sixties, the plan to establish relations with diaspora was adopted (Melik'set'yan 1985, 361). In a number of respects the Soviet leadership remained satisfied with Vazgen I's extended trip to the Middle East and Europe in 1956. Upon his return, Vazgen I was received by the Premier of the Soviet Union and he made some requests on behalf of the Armenian Church. Using the occasion, he even raised the issue of the possible annexation of Nagorno-Karabagh and Nakhijevan regions to Soviet Armenia (Corley 2010, 196).[275] The more favorable attitude towards the Armenian Church opened up new perspectives for reestablishing relations with the diaspora. In 1960 the Soviet authorities invited many representatives of the friendly Armenian diasporic organizations to participate in the fortieth anniversary of the Sovietization of Armenia. These delegates were received personally by the leader of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev. Using the occasion,

[274] Nikita Khrushchev's speech at the twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist party in February 1956 caught many by surprise and astonishment as he harshly condemned the totalitarian policies of his predecessor - the purges, the cult of personality and abuse of power. The speech at the height of the Cold War marked the beginning of social and political relaxation in the USSR (see Taubman 2006, 268; Suny 1993, 181-82).
[275] Nagorno-Karabagh and Nakhijevan were autonomous regions attached to Soviet Azerbaijan.

they referred to their hope to see the annexation of historical Armenian territories in Turkey, as well as in Soviet Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabagh and Nakhijevan) to Soviet Armenia. Khrushchev was expected to be present at the celebrations of November 29, 1960 in Armenia, and some diasporans hoped that he would make a statement on Karabagh and other Armenian territories, but the visit and celebrations were postponed until May 1961 (Sanjian 2012b). Despite the fact that the issue of territories were not addressed, relations with the diaspora continued to improve. On August 12, 1961 the Soviet Council of Ministers officially endorsed the resumption of repatriation in response to petitions from Soviet Armenia and the diaspora (Melik‘set‘yan 1986, 154). In parallel to organizing repatriation, the Communist party of Armenia developed a plan of actions for establishing relations with the diaspora. From the late 1950s, but especially in the 1960s, Soviet Armenian dance troops, bands, composers, athletic collectives, performers, and scientists had been occasionally sent to various diasporic communities; more regularly, many publications and films on the progress of the economy in Soviet Armenia, culture and science, music LPs, newspapers, and photos were dispatched to the diaspora (Dallak‘yan 2007, 228; Melik‘set‘yan 1985, 361). In the host countries, unions like the JAF and the UCFAF in France or the Ramkavar *Tekeyan Cultural Association,*[276] the Hnchakyan *Nor Serount Cultural Association*[277] in Lebanon proudly hosted these collectives arriving from homeland to underline the fallacy of the Dashnak claims that Armenian culture was threatened in Soviet Armenia.

[276] Tekeyan Cultural Association was founded in 1947 in Beirut by some prominent Ramkavar leaders (Dallak‘yan 2007, 150-153).
[277] This should not be confused with the Dashnak *Nor Seround* youth organization in France (see Chapter 4.1). The *Nor Serount Cultural Association* was founded in Beirut in 1955 by some prominent Hnchakyan intellectuals (Sanjian 2003, 311).

From 1958 the diaspora Armenian youth were offered scholarships to study at the institutions of higher education in Yerevan. From about the mid-sixties the number of such students and scholarships grew steadily and rapidly (cf. Melikʻsetʻyan 1985, 426-28). In 1962 the Soviet Association of Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries established a special Department of Relations with the Diaspora Armenian Communities for the purpose of connecting with Armenian associations abroad. The department shortly established contacts with more than 500 Armenian organizations abroad. In a few years the scope of its activities had expanded to such an extent that the Soviet Armenian government decided to establish a separate committee for cultural ties with diaspora Armenians. The committee, officially named *Spʻyurkʻahayutʻyan het mshakutʻayin kaperi komite* [Committee for Cultural Relations with Diaspora Armenians], but more commonly known as *Spʻyurkʻi komite* [Diaspora Committee], was founded in May 1964. It significantly expanded the scope and depth of relations with the diaspora. Besides cultural projects, the Committee also contributed to the advancement of educational, scientific, and other efforts in the diaspora. The Committee began issuing *Hairenikʻi dzayn* (the Voice of the Homeland) weekly from August 1, 1965, which along with the already existing radio broadcast and the monthly *Sovetakan Hayastan* (Soviet Armenia),[278] established regular contacts with diaspora Armenians in many countries. Increasingly, the Diaspora Committee promoted itself as the shield against the assimilation of Armenian in the diaspora (Dallakʻyan 2007, 228-30; Melikʻsetʻyan 1985, 367-68; 375-82; Ter-Minassian 1997, 42).

As relations grew closer, Vazgen I undertook several extended trips throughout major Armenian diasporic communities in the Middle East, Europe, North and South America. The trip to

[278] The Soviet Association of Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries, established in 1944, issued the monthly *Sovetakan Hayastan* (Soviet Armenia) from 1945 (see Babloyan 1986, 241).

Jerusalem in 1963 was particularly significant, as Vazgen met with the newly consecrated Catholicos of Cilicia, Khoren Paroyan. Prior to 1963, several attempts of reconciliation between Ējmiatsin and Cilicia bore no fruit. The expansion of the Cilician See had made the matters worse. The death of Catholicos Zareh I, on February 18, 1963, and the succession of Khoren Paroyan created new possibilities for rapprochement. The meeting of the Catholicoi, which occurred in Jerusalem on October 26, 1963, was labeled as *voghjagurum* (embracement), symbolizing the formal rapprochement between the Sees (cf. Eghiayan 1975, 772-75). The persisting problem between the two Sees, namely, the matter of subordination and the expansion of the Cilician See, however, remained unresolved. The Ramkavars were quick to describe the *voghjagurum* as an "unconditional surrender."[279] However, despite the fears, the reconciliation essentially put an end to the further expansion of the Cilician See in Europe and elsewhere and prevented the further deepening of the schism in the church (cf. Eghyaian 1975, 777-78).[280] The meeting was important in another respect as well. Towards the fiftieth anniversary of Armenian genocide commemorations both Catholoci realized the importance of the unity of the church and of the Armenian people.

As the Armenian world remained bedeviled until the early 1960s with ever widening divide, the Nuremberg Trials and "Genocide," a term a Polish Jewish lawyer coined, emerged as a rallying cry and provided an international context for the Armenian Genocide. In parallel to the

[279] The Ramkavar Central Committee of Lebanon issued a special announcement and expressed concerns that the endorsement of the Cilician See would continue rather than prevent the Dashnaktsutyun's undermining of Ējmiatsin (Dallak'yan 2007, 234)

[280] In 1963, diocesan matters in Marseille remained uncertain due to the reluctance of Catholicos Khoren to dispatch Artavazt Terterian, as the Prelate of the Diocese of Southern France, without having the matter cleared with Catholicos Vazgen. Terterian finally arrived in Marseille in February 1964. In 1970, however, Catholicos Vazken I announced Bishop Hakob Vardanian as the representative of the Catholicosate of Ējmiatsin in Marseille, refusing to recognize Terterian as the representative of the Armenian Church. This put an end to the uncertain situation in Marseille, and Terterian returned to Antelias (Boghossian 2005, 159; Eghiayan 1975, 784-85).

intensifying relations of Soviet Armenia with diaspora and of Ējmiatsin with Antelias, both in Soviet Armenia and in the diaspora Armenians of various factions began articulating the Armenian massacres or the Great Crime (Mets Eghern) within the frameworks of the recently adopted UN convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.[281] The Armenian diasporic circles, closely following the political developments of the late 1940s, had not missed the adoption of the Convention, and several papers began considering the applicability of the convention to the Armenian case. A *Haratch* editorial of May 25, 1948, entitled *Genocide* wondered if it was necessary that another "storm to explode in the world," so that people could learn the word Genocide. It went on to comment:

> The mass assassination attempt against the Armenian people - Genocide - had served for filling up books and manuscripts, or for spilling rhetorical jewels. But the other [the Jewish Holocaust - V.S.] immediately led to a logical end - trial and execution. Certainly, because the Armenian [genocide] was of "local" significance, far removed from their markets of profit. But the other [had] an international weight. It was Europe's heart that was being cut apart through conquest.

Haratch also addressed the adoption of the UN Convention in an editorial on November 27, 1948, which argued that the massacres of Armenians, Greeks and Kurds in Turkey between 1914 and 1922 were also genocide, regardless of the fact that the term did not exist at the time. The author, Shavarsh Missakian, ended the article by referring to Turkey as "the classical country of Genocide."

The term was discussed in several other editorials and articles in *Haratch* as well as in other Armenian diasporic newspapers in the late 1940s. But in the chilling Soviet-American relations the opposing Armenian camps had been so much obsessed with the pro- and anti-Soviet struggles that genocide remembrance and recognition had not been publicly articulated in unison.

[281] The Convention was adopted on 1948 and came into force in 1951.

While annual commemorations of April 24 continued, different Armenian factions usually held separate private services amid political tensions and sometimes even clashes. The growing attention towards the Jewish Holocaust and excessive retributions imposed on Germany eventually made the genocide discourse in Armenian periodical press more prevailing in the 1960s.

The Soviet relaxation and international responses to the Jewish Holocaust, having their delayed effects on Armenians in the form of intensifying Armenia-Diaspora relations and new perspectives for the pursuit of the Armenian Cause, slowly but steadily softened the mutual intolerance of the political factions. Towards the fiftieth anniversary of the Armenian genocide, the Armenian political factions especially in Lebanon had reconsidered the effects of their strategies. More and more the political press of opposing factions began addressing themes regarding the shared history of the massacres, the need to preserve Armenianness against the threats of assimilation, and often, in between the words, the need for unity. Anti-Turkish sentiments and references to Armenian Genocide by Turkey began increasingly articulated in all Armenian newspapers.

In August 1964, both Catholicoi issued encyclicals calling on the Armenian people and factions worldwide for unity in the commemoration events of the fiftieth anniversary of the Armenian genocide. All Armenian newspapers promptly and prominently disseminated the lengthy encyclicals. In the following months, talks were initiated at the highest levels of political party leaderships in Lebanon. On February 1, 1965, an announcement of the Dashnak Bureau published in *Aztag* revealed that talks to have a united commemoration by the three parties had

failed. The front page *Announcement* regretfully noted that a group of Armenians created a committee and issued an appeal to the Armenian people, but their committee represented only the Hnchakyans and Ramkavars. The *Announcement* referred to the appeal of the "Interim Central Committee for the Pursuit of the Armenian Land Cause" published in *Zartonk* on January 17, 1965. The failure to create a joint committee demonstrated the unwillingness of the Armenian political parties to put aside narrow interests and become vehicles of unity. The stalled negotiations between the parties resumed with the participation of the church. In February 1965, the Committee for the fiftieth anniversary commemorations of the Armenian Genocide was formed at the Cilician Catholicosate. The Committee included representatives from Armenian political parties and was to be co-chaired by the spiritual heads of the Armenian Apostolic, Catholic and Evangelical communities (cf. *Aztag,* February 13, 1965; *Zartonk*, February 14, 1965; *Ararad*, February 16, 1965).[282]

During his visit to France in January-February 1965, Catholicos Vazgen I emphasized the importance of creating unity among all the Armenian organizations, factions and parties for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the genocide. On March 18, 1965, *Haratch* notified its readers of the creation of a committee in Paris, which brought together representatives of the three Armenian political parties and confessions, as well as of 42 other organizations and unions. Even in Marseille, where the community had been divided, an April 24 Commemorations Committee was established under the chairmanship of Rev. Haroutioun Helvadjian, an Evangelical Armenian pastor (Boghossian 2009, 217-18).

[282] *Haratch* in France was closely following the development of events in Lebanon. The entire text of the Call was copied from *Zartonk* on January 19, 1965 issue, and the Dashnak Bureau announcement was printed on February 5, 1965. On February 24, 1965, *Haratch* notified of the creation of the Central Committee in Lebanon.

On April 24, 1965, more than ten thousand Armenians marched down the Avenue des Champs-Élysées from the Armenian Cathedral of St. Jean Baptiste to the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. The next day, on April 25, several thousand Armenians attended the mass at the Notre Dame led by the Exarch of the Armenian Catholic church (*Haratch*, April 27, 1965; *Achkhar* May 1, 1965). The same day, more than eighty thousand Armenians gathered at the stadium in Beirut, where the leaders of Armenian churches of all confessions in Lebanon held a joint requiem for the victims of the Genocide. The leaders of all three Armenian political parties gave lengthy speeches, sharing the same stage and united around the same cause.[283] The unprecedented unity of the community laid the foundations for a common agenda in the form of growing anti-Turkishness. Even the Dashnaktsutyun, some of whose leaders had been ready to cooperate with Turkey against the Soviets in the 1950s, now disseminated anti-Turkish propaganda on a much larger scale through its official organ *Aztag* in Lebanon. The Dashnak Central Committee of Lebanon issued an address on April 24, 1965, which explicitly charged Turkey of committing genocide against Armenians.[284]

Genocide commemoration services were held in a number of other countries as well. In the United States, massive commemoration services of the fiftieth anniversary were held in various towns and cities, but the fiftieth anniversary did not unite the Armenian-American community.[285] Perhaps most surprisingly for all Armenian communities in the diaspora was the spontaneous rally in Soviet Armenia. On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary, on April 24, 1965 tens of thousands flooded the Lenin Square in Yerevan and chanting "our lands, our lands" moved to the

[283] *Aztag* (April 26, 1965); *Ararad* (April 27, 28 1965), *Zartonk* (April 27, 1965).
[284] The address was published in *Aztag* on April 24, 1965.
[285] The approaching fiftieth anniversary of the Armenian genocide did not unite Armenians in the United States, since the community had been divided not only politically, but also institutionally. Even after the reconciliation of Ējmiatsin and Antelias, the institutionalized divisions in the community could not produce any joint action in 1965.

Opera House, where the representatives of various Soviet Armenian institutions were holding an unprecedented special session dedicated to the fifteenth anniversary of the Genocide[286] (Zarobyan and Grigoryan 2004; Dallak'yan 1998, 131-33). It seemed the entire Armenian universe was connected across countries and continents through massive events in Yerevan, Beirut, Paris, New York and elsewhere.

In the morning of April 24, 1965, as *Haratch* reported on April 29, several "Turkish Armenians"[287] as they referred to themselves, gathered at the Taksim Square in Istanbul to place flowers at the Republic Monument in honor of Mustafa Atatürk as an expression of "appreciation and brotherhood to the Turkish nation." The crowd observed three minutes of silence in commemoration of "the souls who died for the great Turkish nation and the dear Turkish fatherland." While Armenians worldwide mobilized around the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, Armenians in Istanbul found themselves in a very difficult situation. In response to the involvement of the Armenian Church in the mobilization of efforts toward the fiftieth anniversary commemorations the Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul, Archbishop Shnrok Kaloustian (Shnork' Galustian), issued a statement on April 9, 1965. Many newspapers in the diaspora translated and published the text shortly afterwards. The statement, published in *Haratch* on April 16, 1965, partially read:

> …It is a historical truth that the Turks and Armenians had lived in a brotherly and good-neighborly atmosphere since the first day. As the greatest proof of this reality we must remember the decision of Sultan Mehmet Fatih, which is already part of history.[288] Fatih the Great … had issued a decree and had settled Armenians in all corners of his wide Empire. Since then, for many centuries, the Armenian Community has

[286] Things got out of control in Soviet Armenia and the authorities could not stop the demonstrators from breaking into the Opera House and disrupting the meeting. The Armenian newspapers in the diaspora, however, like *Harach,* mentioned about this incident only in passing, emphasizing instead the massiveness of the rally in Yerevan (see *Haratch*, April 30, 1965).
[287] *Haratch* published two excerpts in Armeno-Turkish, one of which ended with a signature *"Türk Ermeniler."*
[288] Refers to the establishment of the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul and the recognition of the Armenian *millet*.

> always been useful to the society, as a loyal element, and many Armenians have assumed the highest political and administrative responsibilities and provided successful results.
> In the last years of the Ottoman Empire, several foreign powers, aiming to rob privileges from the Sultans, to continue with the Capitulations and, finally, to divide the Ottoman State, tried to use various communities as tools, including the Armenians. Thereby, the exploiting countries wanted to disunite the two nations, who have lived together in brotherhood for centuries. The consequences of this and [other] events that happened have been recorded in history as instructive samples, and are meant to strengthen our human and brotherly sentiments, and which indeed mean the same to us.
> Commemorating the dead is the right and moral responsibility of all people. It's just that such expressions of respect should not sow enmity in the hearts of nations…
> As for us, the Armenians of Turkey, we have been a society, which had lived in the Turkish Republic and raised by the ideas of Atatürk, who in the past forty years has shown its civic honest, constructive and loyal feelings. We have the fortune to witness the sentiments of brotherhood and trust that today continue to exist among our fellow-countrymen. Some of our fellow co-religionists abroad do not have the right to cast a shadow on these relations of love and respect. Turkish Armenians consider themselves as the inseparable part of this country. This is why they will consider any movement against the interests of this country as absolutely improper.

The deportations and genocide of Armenians during WWI eliminated the Armenian presence from especially the Armenian provinces. Despite the fear that hundreds of Armenian notables were arrested on April 24, 1915, and later were put to death in the interior, the Armenian Patriarchate and a small number of Armenians remained in Turkey throughout the Republican period and developed a vibrant community. The Armenians of the Republic of Turkey had remained uninvolved in the political struggles and the processes of Armenian diaspora since the 1920s, as the country had prohibited ethnic political parties (cf. Akçam 2004, 23ff). In the absence of Armenian political parties the pro- and anti-Soviet orientations, orientation towards Soviet Armenia, participation in or opposition to repatriation and many other burning agenda items for other diasporic communities had been irrelevant for Istanbul Armenians. Instead, the Istanbul Armenians had developed a sense of Armenianness without contrasting it to Turkey and the Turks. They had come to consider the events of 1915 as historical lessons, which should be remembered in order to strengthen "human and brotherly sentiments" among the Armenians and Turks, rather than instill hostility between them. If before 1965 the Istanbul Armenians had not been actively involved in the political and ideological struggles of the diaspora, the events of

1965 directly posed some questions to their loyalty and future in Turkey. The statement of the Patriarch and the symbolic gesture of a "Turkish-Armenian" crowd at Taksim square were first and foremost an assurance of loyalty to Turkey, and secondly, represented acts of distancing themselves from events happening both in Soviet Armenia and the diaspora.

The year 1965 marked a turning point both in Soviet Armenia and in the diaspora for a number of reasons. First of all, the theme of genocide became dominant in Armenian transnational discourse, stretching from Soviet Armenia to the Middle East, Europe and the Americas. With some exceptions, genocide became central in the discourse of the Armenian periodical press of the time in the diaspora, providing a major impetus to the unprecedented expression of national sentiments in Soviet Armenia. The fiftieth anniversary of the Armenian massacres in Turkey, now firmly identified as genocide, became the most crucial factor capable of bringing together previously antagonistic Armenian factions. Secondly, Ējmiatsin and Antelias were able to act in concord on this issue. Even though the matter of subordination and jurisdictions persisted, previous antagonism had significantly declined and the state of no relations disappeared. The Dashnak newspapers, which used to be extremely critical of Catholicos Vazgen I and more than once had labeled him as a KGB agent, now provided lengthy coverage on his 1965 visit to France and England, praised his sermons, speeches and activities in the diaspora.[289] Thirdly, if from the 1920s through the 1940s relations between Armenian confessions had been competitive, in 1965 the heads of the Armenian Apostolic, Armenian Catholic and Evangelical Armenian churches came together in Lebanon to preside over the April 24 committee and the commemoration events. Fourth, the year marked an unprecedented unity of the Armenian political factions in Lebanon, who only few years ago had been engaged in deadly clashes among

[289] *Aztag,* February 8, 9 issues of 1965; *Haratch,* February 2, 1965.

themselves.[290] Finally, the year was crucial in Soviet Armenia, as the leadership of Soviet Armenia enthusiastically and the leadership of Soviet Union reluctantly endorsed the expressions of Armenian nationalism as long as they targeted Turkey and not Soviet Union.

The Khrushchev relaxation was having its delayed effects on the Armenian community transnationally even after the Soviet leader was removed from his post in 1964. The Brezhnev era did not alter the basic course taken by the government of Soviet Armenia regarding the expressions of national sentiments and relations with the diaspora. In the second half of the 1960s several important monuments were erected in Armenia, marking a significant symbolic departure from "socialist in content." The Soviet Armenian government embarked on constructing a genocide memorial complex in Yerevan. The memorial was ready by 1967 and the opening ceremony took place on November 29, 1967, on the forty-seventh anniversary of Soviet Armenia.[291] The same year, the 98-foot-tall pedestal on a hilltop in Yerevan, which contained a museum dedicated to the Great Patriotic War, and used to support Stalin's 55-foot-tall statue until 1962,[292] was decorated by a magnificent 72-foot-tall statue of a woman with a sword in her hand and a shield under her feet symbolizing Mother Armenia. In 1968 another memorial was erected in the historical battlefield between Armenians and Turks in Soviet Armenia (cf. Hambardzumyan 1984, 227-28).

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[290] See the previous section.
[291] *History of Tsitsernakaberd Memorial Complex*. Armenian Genocide Museum. http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/Description_and_history.php. Accessed September 9, 2014.
[292] The base and the museum were built in 1950 and Stalin's statue was erected in 1951. The denunciation of Stalin by Khrushchev led to the removal of Stalin's statue in 1962. The pedestal was vacant until 1967 ("HH PN Mayr Hayastan Zinvorakan Tangaran" ["Mother Armenia" Military Museum of the RA Ministry of Defense]" http://www.mayrhayastan.am/history.html. Accessed September 9, 2014)).

The monuments became the expressions of the retreat from Stalin's "socialist in content" and symbolically marked the permanence of the shift towards "national in content." Increasingly, the Soviet government of Armenia began promoting Soviet Armenia as the overall homeland, ready to provide all kinds of assistance to Armenians abroad and to support the preservation of Armenian identity. Despite the limited number of repatriates after 1962, the influence of Soviet Armenia in various Armenian communities abroad continued to grow. In parallel to the growth of national sentiments and the resumption of active policies towards the diaspora, from 1963 the government of Soviet Armenia and the Soviet secret services also began intensively working towards the Dashnaktsutyun, hoping to bring the party to a more pro-Soviet position. Besides, the Dashnaktsutyun was targeted by the KGB as the strongest of all Armenian organizations operating in the Middle East (cf. Corley 2001, 4). In a book published in 1994, a KGB Major General and the former Chief of Counter-Intelligence Oleg Kalugin mentioned the Dashnaktsutyun among other anti-Soviet organizations in the West, infiltrated by the Soviet KGB.

> …the émigré organization we most thoroughly infiltrated was the Armenian exile group, Dashnak Tsutiun [*sic*]. Once it had been a staunchly nationalist group that campaigned for an independent Armenian state. Over time, we placed so many agents there that several had risen to positions of leadership. We succeeded in effectively neutralizing the group, and by the 1980s Dashnak Tsutyun [*sic*] had stopped fighting against Soviet power in Armenia. The organization and some of its members had been coopted by the KGB (Kalugin 2009, 221).

In a more recent article, Felix Corley (2001, 7-9) quotes some lengthy passages from secret KGB books and documents to demonstrate how the KGB was able to recruit some party members, even from among the "most authoritative Dashnak leaders."[293] While the extent of the KGB

[293] Hrayr Marukhian's name was often mentioned in connection with the KGB-Dashnak cooperation (see Panossian 2006, 373). Marukhian denied his or the party's involvement with the KGB, admitting, however, that there had been certain contacts with the representatives of Soviet Armenia from the early 1960s (see Marukhian 1992, 69-71; Panossian 2006, 374).

influence on the change of the Dashnak policies still remains to be fully uncovered in documents still unavailable, the Dashnaktsutyun's change of political course from anti-Soviet to pro-Soviet seems to have occurred in response to several other factors. First of all, by the 1960s, most of the representatives of the older generation leaders had passed away or had lost influence because of advanced age. Levon Shant', Ruben Ter-Minasian, Dro, Vahan Navasardian passed away in the 1950s, Simon Vrats'ian and Reuben Darbinian died in the late 1960s. Among the new generation leaders many were not as radically opposed to the USSR as their predecessors. Many in the party interpreted the changing conditions in Soviet Armenia as public displays of commitment to the national cause, to something the Dashnaktsutyun had fought for many decades (Schahgaldian 1979, 110). Secondly, local political developments in the Middle East and France in the 1960s also seem to have facilitated the change of the Dashnak policies towards a more neutral or pro-Soviet orientation. After the denouncement of the crisis of 1958 in Lebanon, President Fuad Chehab, who succeeded Camille Chamoun, gradually distanced Lebanon from the alliance with the US to a more neutral ground between the United States and Arab national movements. The French orientation at the time seemed to be the most suitable for Lebanon in the US-Soviet bipolar world, as France under President Charles De-Gaulle was emerging as an influential European power aspiring to an equal status with the US within NATO[294] (cf. Howarth and Varouxakis 2003, 190; Schahgaldian 1979, 232). President Chehab's French orientation certainly influenced the Dashnaktsutyun. The party supported Chehab in the presidential elections of 1958 and participated in the parliamentary elections of 1960 on the government list. Having suffered the consequences of their anti-Sovietism in the UAR in 1961, the Dashnak leaders in Lebanon were cautious of not provoking the government against the party, and subscribed to the mildly

[294] De Gaulle eventually withdrew from NATO's military command structure in 1966, although France remained within the organization (Howarth and Varouxakis 2003, 190)

pro-Western policies of the new president. In addition to all these factors, the unprecedented unity during the commemorations of the fiftieth anniversary of the Armenian Genocide in Lebanon and the significant shift towards reinforcing Armenian national identity in Soviet Armenia made the Dashnaktsutyun rethink its policies and make certain adjustments under the new conditions. At the Nineteenth World Congress in 1967 the Dashnaktsutyun officially endorsed temporary visits of its followers to Soviet Armenia and expressed its support for repatriation (Corley 2001, 5). The tactical program was significantly revised and the anti-Soviet policies were abandoned in the twentieth World Congress in 1972, with a new accentuated shift towards the Armenian Cause.[295]

[295] Gaïdz Minassian calls this process *La révolution culturelle haïtadiste* [The Haidatist Cultural Revolution]. *Hai Dat* is the "Armenian Cause" in Armenian (Minassian 2002, 17-20; 24-29)

Conclusion

WWII and the Cold War significantly determined the transnationalization of political agendas and identity politics in the Armenian diaspora. While in the first years of WWII Armenian political parties in the diaspora demonstrated certain flexibilities within certain country contexts, the Cold War affiliations with the pro-Soviet and pro-Western blocs polarized the Armenian political factions in the diaspora transnationally.

As shown in the previous chapter, during WWII the decentralized nature of the Dashnaktsutyun permitted its central and local committees to define their positions in response to specific conditions in their respective countries. If in the United States local chapters significantly retreated from anti-Soviet rhetoric after the American alliance with the USSR, in Lebanon the party organ hailed the advances of the Red Army toward the end of the war and expressed full support to Soviet Armenia. If in France the local chapters became practically inactive during WWII, in Germany many active and former Dashnak leaders cooperated with the Nazis, hoping to liberate Armenia after the defeat of the Soviets. Similarly, if the pro-Soviet Armenian factions took advantage of conditions in France and the United States to define themselves as the '*patriots*' and to denounce the Dashnaks as 'traitors', in Lebanon a more cooperative atmosphere developed between Armenian political parties during the later stages of WWII.

The Cold War conditions determined the transnational cohesion of the pro- and anti-Soviet Armenian diasporic factions and identities. If the pro-Soviet factions took advantage of the conditions during WWII to denounce and alienate the members of the Dashnaktsutyun especially in the United States, the Cold War provided more favorable conditions for the Dashnaktsutyun. Encouraged by the US policies against the Soviet expansion and enjoying the Western support, the aggressive anti-Soviet offensive launched by the Dashnaktsutyun transnationally, extending from the Untied States to the Middle East and France, made the party transnationally more influential compared to its pro-Soviet adversaries. Yet, the Dashnak mission of "erasing all traces of communism" remained incomplete. Instead of bringing all Armenian churches outside the Soviet Union under the jurisdiction of the Catholicosate of Cilicia, the expansion of the Cilician See in Iran, Greece and the United States, with the powerful and pro-active engagement of the Dashnaktsutyun, escalated hostilities and caused a transnational schism in the Armenian diaspora.

The shift from pro- and anti-Soviet antagonism to shared anti-Turkish and Armenian genocide recognition campaigns in 1965 marked the beginning of a new era in the Armenian diaspora. As the Armenian factions came together in commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the Armenian genocide in 1975, in Lebanon the Armenian parties joined their efforts in defining a common stand toward the political crisis and civil war, which quickly engulfed most of the country in the spring of 1975. If the violent clashes of Armenian factions in Lebanon in 1958 were the reflection of the radical polarization of Armenian political factions in the 1950s, the policy of "positive neutrality," adopted by the Armenian parties in the second Lebanese civil war of 1975-1990, was the reflection of a more cooperative political culture shaped in the 1960s and the early

1970s. The formal unity, achieved in many countries at the time of the fiftieth anniversary commemorations of the Armenian Genocide, however, existed only at some level, and institutionalized divisions, as the following chapter will discuss, prevailed. Formally united, yet politically and institutionally divided, the Armenian communities in different countries continued forging different types of Armenianness. While the mutual exclusions in the self-identifications of *'patriots'* and *'true Armenians'* were significantly toned down, conflicting affinities toward Soviet Armenia or for a future independent Armenia, as the following chapter will demonstrate, remained an integral part of the identity politics, pursued by various Armenian political and communal institutions.

Chapter 5

Divided in Unity: Armenian Factions, Diasporic Identities and Subethnic Communities in France and the United States

Introduction

The 1970s and 1980s were marked in the Armenian diaspora by three parallel processes. First of all, the Armenian political and lobbying efforts in Europe and North America on the whole failed to achieve any tangible results in the quest for the recognition of the Armenian genocide or in claiming the Armenian lands, which were roughly defined by all as the Armenian Cause. This resulted in the marginalization and radicalization of certain Armenian youth circles, who sought alternative means of political struggle. Secondly, the unstable situation in the Middle East, namely the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990), the revolution in Iran (1979), the crisis in Turkey (in the early 1980s), as well as the relaxation of emigration policies in the Soviet Union produced massive waves of Armenian emigration from these countries to various destinations, often ending in Europe and North America. The newcomer Armenians brought different mentalities, habits, linguistic and cultural traits, which came into contact and conflict with local Armenian identities in the West. Finally, while the Armenian organizations put aside the Cold War hostilities, and the antagonistic political culture of the 1950s was replaced by a more cooperative political culture in the 1960s and early 1970s, institutional divisions in the diaspora continued to

prevail. Each of the three sections in this chapter discusses these processes in detail to argue that despite the temporary unity achieved in 1965 and later, and despise the fact that genocide increasingly became the common denominator of Armenianness in the world, the Armenian diaspora became more fragmented across subethnic[296] and institutional affiliations in the United States, France and elsewhere in the West, and remained transnationally divided.

The first section explores the emergence of Armenian lobbying and radical organizations for the pursuit of the Armenian Cause and the effects of their activities and rivalry on Armenian political factions in the diaspora. It particularly examines how the radically different and changing tactics of various Armenian lobbying groups and other organizations in the pursuit of the Armenian Cause in France and the United States determined the allegiances of diaspora-born generations and defined the identities of those organizations. It argues that while the efforts of peaceful lobbying attracted many supporters from among the American or French-born generations of Armenians, organizations directly or indirectly encouraging more radical and violent means of struggle alienated many American and French-born generations and became predominantly represented by the Middle-Eastern-born Armenians. The Armenian genocide, however, became the common denominator of Armenianness, regardless of these divided efforts, subethnic and organizational affiliations.

The second part of the chapter explores the particularities and differences of Armenian experiences and identities shaped under different host-country conditions in the Middle East, France and the United States. It goes on to address how these identities came into clash in France

[296] This term is borrowed from Sabagh, Bozorgmehr and Der-Martirosian (1990) to denote Armenians originating from different countries.

and the United States following the influx of the Middle Eastern Armenians in the 1960s and 1970s, in the contexts in which the emancipatory social movements in both societies had resulted in increased tolerance towards pluralism and difference. By relying on interviews conducted by author with some notable representatives of Armenian subethnic communities in France and the United States, as well as on other primary and secondary sources, this section examines the possibilities of constructing homogeneous Armenian identities through education and schools in Lebanon, France and the Untied States, and the efforts of the Armenian elites and institutions to that end. It goes on to discuss the processes of stereotyping, inclusions and exclusions between Armenians originating from different countries in the United States and France, in order to stress the heterogeneity and fluidity of Armenian diasporic identities.

The chapter concludes with the analysis of certain continuities in diasporic identities and discourses, which had been shaped by the rivalry of the pro- and anti-Soviet diasporic factions, to argue that by the 1980s two clearly distinct paradigms of Armenian diasporic belongings and identities had emerged. While the exclusive self-identifications of the '*patriots*' and '*true Armenians*' were replaced by more moderate discourses, the institutionalized divisions reproduced the conflicting perceptions of the Armenian homeland with their attendant identifications, policies and programs. These continuities shaped new transnational paradigms, emphasizing either the role of homeland or the potential of the diaspora in matters that both factions came to perceive as common. The more moderate 'homeland-centered' and 'diaspora-centered' paradigms, the former shaped within pro-Soviet circles, and the latter within formerly anti-Soviet Dashnak circles, continued forging alternative diasporic identities transnationally, providing spaces of belonging beyond subethnic identities. While the proponents of the former

paradigm continued encouraging relations with Soviet Armenia, the actual homeland, the proponents of the latter continued forging the loyalty to the symbols of the "United" Armenia, thus promoting a more abstract homeland, to be attained in future.

The Campaign for the Armenian Cause:
Political Lobbying, Transnational Terrorism and Effects on Diasporic Political Factions

The fiftieth anniversary commemorations of the Armenian Genocide marked the beginning of a steady turn in the priorities of all Armenian diasporic political factions towards the Armenian Cause. The commemoration events of April 1965 had signified that the Armenian Genocide commemorations had the potential of mobilizing and uniting the rival Catholicosates of Ējmiatsin and Antelias, as well as masses in Soviet Armenia, Lebanon, France and elsewhere around the same goals. The transnationally institutionalized Armenian organizations in the established diaspora were now in power to exert influence on host-countries. The emergence of the Armenian Cause as a top priority in the political agendas of the Armenian political parties was expressed in the creation of special *Hay Dat* (Armenian Cause) committees. In parallel with the Armenian National Committee of America, the Dashnaktsutyun created in 1965 branches of the *Committee for the Defense of the Armenian Cause (Comité de défense de la cause arménienne - CDCA*) in France,[297] Lebanon and elsewhere (Ter-Minassian 1997, 37; Migliorino 2008, 150). The Dashnaktsutyun's ultimate abandonment of its anti-Soviet orientation was another milestone, accentuating the Armenian Cause in the party's new political agenda. By 1970, the Ramkavars had also founded a lobbying branch in the United States, known as the Armenian Rights Movement, renamed to Armenian Rights Council of America in 1983

[297] The CDCA was the successor organization of the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia (Mouradian and Kunth 2010, 40).

(Dallak'yan 2007, 356; 408).[298] The reviving Hnchakyan chapters in California and Europe because of the new immigration from the Arab world initiated the Armenian Council of America and of Europe for similar purposes. Despite the common interest in lobbying activities, these organizations acted independently. The first all-Armenian attempt of a joint action in 1965, as impressive as it had been especially in Lebanon, France and elsewhere, had not materialized in the United States due to long-standing hostility, conflict and alienation within the community. But as the sixtieth anniversary of the genocide approached, unity in the United States took on a greater urgency.

The Armenian Assembly and the Joint Commemorations of the Sixtieth Anniversary of the Genocide

Two Armenian-American professors, residing in a small Armenian community in metropolitan Washington for years, both working at George Washington University, had never encountered one another before they met in an event at the Iranian Embassy in 1971. One of the professors, Haikaz Grigorian, was a Dashnak Central Committee member affiliated with the Prelacy parish in Chevy Chase, Maryland. The other was John Hanessian, respected among the anti-Dashnak circles and a member of the St. Mary Church - a Diocesan parish in Washington (Grigorian 1995, 3-4). Despite their affiliations with hostile camps, these academics found common grounds and agreed that "the time was ripe to bring the Armenian groups of all persuasions together" in an assembly (*ibid.*, 5). Grigorian and Hanessian were able to bring together a Steering

[298] The October 1972 World Congress of Ramkavars in Beirut regretfully recorded that the party's branch in France had been in a crisis for a quite long time (Dallak'yan 2007, 293).

Committee of well-known Armenians from among various academic and political circles, as well as secure support from some prominent Armenian-American businessmen and philanthropists, such as Stephen Mugar, Alex Manoogian and Hrayr Hovnanian. These efforts resulted in the establishment of the Armenian Assembly of America in 1972 through the generous contribution and enthusiastic support of Stephen Mugar.[299] The primary goal of the Assembly was "to serve as a forum and to provide a national framework or the promotion of communication within the Armenian-American community" (*ibid.*, 15). It became an umbrella organization that brought together the Armenian factions by securing equal representation from the Dashnaks and Ramkavars, in addition to double representation from a group of the so called "neutrals," with no party affiliation (*ibid.,* 1995, 16; Phillips 1989, 200-201). With some reservation and reluctance, the Dashnak and Ramkavar committees in the United States also became interested in uniting their efforts in a common organization. To this end, the annual report of the Ramkavar Regional Committee of America and Canada recorded in 1974:

> Since the first day the ADL [Ramkavars] assumed a friendly, but reserved stand towards the "Armenian Assembly," which is the initiative of a well-known wealthy individual with limited experience in [Armenian] national affairs, and one or two ambitious young men [probably referring to Grigorian and Hanessian - V.S.] (quoted in Dallak'yan 2007, 328).

The initial success of the Assembly was because of the commonly recognized need for joint action to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the Armenian genocide. The need to act in unison was reconfirmed in the joint appeal of the top executive bodies of the Armenian political parties. On September 2, 1974 the Central Committees of Armenian political parties, all based in Beirut, issued a joint statement calling on the Armenians to put aside all disagreements and unite for the sixtieth anniversary throughout the world. *The Armenian Mirror Spectator* published the English version of the appeal on September 28:

[299] Stephen Mugar was a successful businessman and a well-known Armenian-American philanthropist in Boston.

> The Armenian Democratic Liberal Party [Ramkavar], the Armenian Revolutionary Party [Dashnaktsutyun], and the Social Democratic Hnchakyan Party feel that the time has come to present a united front to the world on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the genocide executed on the Armenians. Putting aside, on this occasion, the differences of political and sociological concepts which exist in different areas among these parties, the three Armenian national political parties deem it necessary that sixtieth anniversary commemoratives be held jointly together in all communities where Armenians reside, remember the genocide, and demand justice.

The *Appeal* stressed the importance of the joint will and efforts so that the demands for the realization of the Armenian Cause, namely the return of Armenian lands to their only rightful owners - the Armenian people, could not be hindered by internal disagreements (*ibid.*).

The reemphasized need for joint action in the United States made negotiations between the Ramkavars and Dashnaks possible within the framework of the Armenian Assembly. Following the creation of a Pan-Armenian Central Committee for the Commemorations of the Armenian Genocide, several April 24 Commemoration committees were established in various towns across the United States. Armenian Assembly representatives participated in the committees to facilitate negotiations between the Dashnak and anti-Dashnak factions. The usage of the Armenian Tricolor during the commemorations posed a major issue of disagreement between the parties. While the Dashnaktsutyun insisted on its display, the anti-Dashnak factions were against using the flag. Eventually, the parties came to an agreement of not displaying any flag of Armenia during the commemorations (Phillips 1989, 174-75). The compromise, reached through numerous meetings and thanks to the efforts of the Armenian Assembly, was effective, as the joint commemorations of the sixtieth anniversary of the Armenian Genocide brought the Armenians in the United States together as never before. Many of the leading American newspapers reported on the Armenian demonstrations and commemorations in various towns and cities. An article in *The New York Times* on April 24, 1975 introduced the Armenian

Genocide to its readers and notified them of the Armenian demonstrations and other commemoration events planned by Armenian churches and political parties in New York. The next day, the *Washington Post* reported on the Armenian marches on April 24 from the Capitol to Lafayette Park to "recall the Day of Massacre." The same day, *Los Angeles Times* reported on the march of 2,500 Armenians from Broadway to the City Hall "for an observance recalling the genocide suffered by Armenians at the hands of the Turks." *The Boston Globe* reported on 3,500 Armenian-Americans and "Armenian sympathizers" demonstrating at the Rockefeller Center and the United Nations area in New York. The widespread commemoration events on April 24 throughout the US were paralleled by similar events in other major capitals in Europe, in Soviet Armenia and elsewhere. On April 26 *Haratch* reported about the massive commemorations in Yerevan, with tens of thousands Armenians participating in the silent walk. The paper provided extensive coverage of marches in Paris, Lyon, Marseille and other small Armenian communities in France.

The unprecedented mobilization of the Armenian diaspora on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary, while rewarding in many respects, failed to achieve any tangible political results in the United States, France or anywhere else. In the context of strained relations between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus and the UN involvement in the crisis, the efforts of the Dashnak CDCA to have the Armenian Genocide recognized by the UN Human Rights Council in 1974 were blocked by the representatives of Turkey (Minassian 2002, 36). In the United States, while the Armenian Assembly coalition lobbied to make the US Congress recognize the Armenian Genocide, the resolution of the House of Representatives of April 8, 1975 recognized April 24 as a "National Day of a Remembrance of Man's Inhumanity to Man," carefully avoiding any direct

reference to the Armenian Genocide and Turkey.[300] In the appeal made in April 1975, the Pan-Armenian Central Committee of the Sixtieth Anniversary Commemorations of the Armenian Genocide from Beirut recorded that the current political conditions were not favorable for the advancement of the Armenian Cause, but called on the Armenians to stay determined toward the Armenian demands.[301] The failure of the Armenian organizations in the past decade to achieve any advancement in what they defined as the Armenian Cause created much discontent among Armenians of various partisan affiliations and soon turned into pernicious apathy.

Armenian Terrorism and the Advancement of Armenian Cause

On January 28, 1973, *The Los Angeles Times* reported the assassination of two Turkish LA Consulate officials by Gourgen Yanikian, a "Turkish-born Armenian," 77 years of age.[302] Describing the event as an act of vengeance against the Turks for killing his entire family, for exterminating 2 million Armenians and taking over Armenian lands, Yanikian reportedly called on the Armenians to launch "this new type of war" against Turkish representatives (*Los Angeles Times,* January 30, 1973). Yanikian's act was not claimed by any Armenian political party or organization. However, it reverberated across the Armenian world. About two years after Yanikian's attack, an Armenian secret organization revealed its radical means of struggle by detonating explosives in Beirut over a course of less than a month. The first explosion on

[300] "The Great Armenia debate: House Manages to Keep Eye on the Little Picture," *Los Angeles Times*, April 11. "Armenian Genocide Issue Proved to Be Touchy," *Washington Post*, April 12.
[301] *Haratch* published the full text of the appeal on April 27, 1975.
[302] Yanikian invited the Turkish diplomats to a luncheon at the Baltimore Hotel cottage near Santa Barbara, where he killed both. He lured them by insisting that he had been in possession of a century-old stolen painting from the Sultan's palace and intended to return to Turkey (cf. Hyland 1991, 25).

January 20, 1975, targeted the building of the World Council of Churches, for "promoting the emigration of Armenians to the United States" (Hyland 1991, 26). The act was against the Dashnak-affiliated ANCHA, known in the 1960s and 1970s for its partnership with the World Council of Churches to help Armenians move permanently to the United States (Sanjian 2007, 278; Zadoian 2012, 72-3). In less than a month, another bomb destroyed the Turkish Airline offices in Beirut. Both acts were claimed by a certain Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA) (Hyland 1991, 25-6).

The emergence of a terrorist Armenian organization in the heart of Lebanon in 1975 was not accidental, as the country had already been immersed in the Middle Eastern crisis, escalated by the new wave of expulsion of Palestinians by Israel in 1967. If the assassination of two Turkish diplomats in a remote corner of the world inspired the founding of ASALA, the social-political conditions in the Middle East had a direct impact on the transformation of a number of desperate Armenian youth into resistance fighters. The Palestinians' guerrilla fights to regain their homeland inspired some of the founders of the ASALA, who became personally involved in the PLO (Hyland 1991, 24-27; Migliorino 2008, 148-55). At the same time, the leaders of the ASALA shared with Yanikian the sense of frustration with the failure of Armenian organizations to achieve tangible results on the sixtieth anniversary of the Armenian genocide. Turkey still refused to recognize the deaths of Armenians and so did the world powers including the United Nations.

ASALA appeared as a radically different movement, promoting not only radical means of struggle but also adhering to a leftist ideology. Similar to the Hnchakyans and Ramkavars, the

organization unconditionally acknowledged the legitimacy of Soviet Armenia, believing that the liberated Armenian territories of Eastern Turkey should be annexed to Soviet Armenia. On July 10, 1978, ASALA revealed its political platform. The first part of the document defined the political alliances of ASALA with the leftist, anti-imperialist and anti-Turkish movements and countries. The government of Turkey, the allies of the Turkish State and those who failed to recognize the Armenian genocide were announced as enemies. Consequently, those fighting against Turkey and "American imperialism" were defined as friends. The Turks and Kurds "oppressed by the [Turkish] state" were seen as the "only official allies" of ASALA, and the Soviet Union was projected as a "friendly country." The second part of the document expressed ASALA's utter disappointment with the Armenian political parties and declared its political stand vis-à-vis the Armenian organizations and Soviet Armenia:

> 5. The leaders of the Armenian political parties have not obtained any result in sixty years; the time of the ARF is long gone;
> 6. All Armenians look up to ASALA, as it fulfills their needs perfectly; ASALA … aims at bringing together all political currents, at drawing closer the bonds among all Armenians…;
> 7. The Armenian Church … must again assume the role it played the past [sic] by becoming a torch illuminating the path of the Armenian people and its revolution;
> 8. The ASALA fighter is not a terrorist but a pure revolutionary;
> 9. ASALA is alone, independent, … It does not compromise. … It does not owe something [*sic*] to anyone;
> 10. Soviet Armenia is the unique and irreplaceable basis of the Armenian people; it is a free Armenian land… (quoted in Hyland 1991, 27)

Claiming that "the time of the ARF[303] is long gone" in the context of the Lebanese civil war was a bold statement by ASALA. First of all, the Dashnaktsutyun had by then grown into the most influential Armenian political party in Lebanon and had managed to bring under its control both the Catholicosate of Cilicia and the Prelacy of Lebanon with all their community structures. The Dashnaktsutyun had a quasi monopoly in Armenian representation in the Lebanese parliament and maintained good relations with the Lebanese government and the ruling elites. Secondly, the

[303] Armenian Revolutionary Federation - the Dashnaktsutyun.

ASALA statement was released in the midst of the Lebanese civil war, when the three Armenian political parties had agreed on a policy of "positive neutrality," and the Dashnaktsutyun and Hnchakyans had organized militia groups to defend the Armenian neighborhoods from possible outside threats.[304] An organization challenging the Dashnaktsutyun in the 1970s in Lebanon had to have absolute confidence in the legitimacy and potential popularity of its course. The confidence of ASALA was built on the prevailing discontent among the Armenian youth toward the activities of traditional political parties. The leader of ASALA, nicknamed Mujahid, and known among fellow Armenians as Hagop Hagopian, was a young Armenian engaged in the Palestinian struggle in Lebanon. Like him, many young Armenians were inspired by the PLO in Lebanon. If the Palestinians were ready to fight for the restoration of their rights and their homeland, many young Armenians in Lebanon thought the Armenians could similarly defend Armenian rights (Schahgaldian 1979, 255). ASALA was largely responding to such aspirations, articulated by certain radical youth groups. In a short span of time, ASALA was able to develop small support groups (Popular Movements) in France, Great Britain, Italy, Cyprus, Greece, Iran, the United States, Canada and elsewhere (Hyland 1991, 30). In some cases, the new recruits and sympathizers of ASALA came from the ranks of the Dashnak youth. Having its base in West Beirut, far from the Dashnak-controlled Bourj Hammoud, ASALA's challenge to the Dashnaktsutyun was not just verbal, it had practical violent implications.

In response to the creation of ASALA and anticipating the kind of support the organization would enjoy among the youth, the Dashnaktsutyun initiated the creation of a similar organization

[304] During the first years of the Civil War, the Maronite political leadership in Lebanon did not welcome the Armenian "positive neutrality," considering it treacherous. In an attempt to involve Armenians in the war against the Palestinians, the Maronite militia forces even launched limited attacks on Bourj Hammoud in October 1978 and again in 1979 (Migliorino 2008, 153; Minassian 2002, 54).

shortly after the first attacks of ASALA in Beirut. The appearance of ASALA with its dismissing of the Dashnaktsutyun as the party whose time had long passed, could not be tolerated by the party. Justice Commandoes of the Armenian Genocide,[305] as the terrorist organization became known, apparently enjoyed the backing of the Dashnaktsutyun. The Dashnak leadership never acknowledged it publicly, but members of the Justice Commandoes were known to be affiliated with Dashnak chapters in various countries (Hyland 1991, 61-3; Migliorino 2008, 155; Minassian 2002, 43; 77). With the creation of the JCAG, a rivalry with ASALA for recruiting young sympathizers began. While ASALA represented a political organization with a distinct ideology, the JCAG was apparently the action wing of the Dashnak party with limited purposes. Therefore, while both organizations fought for the Armenian Cause, their political platforms and perceptions of this cause significantly differed. If ASALA was fighting for the liberation of Armenian territories in Turkey to be annexed to Soviet Armenia, the JCAG was created to realize the Dashnaktsutyun's pursuit of the "United" Armenia. If ASALA was strongly pro-Soviet, the Dashnaktsutyun was more reserved toward Soviet Armenia. As before, "Free, United and Independent" Armenia was still part of its program with a growing emphasis on the "United" rather than "Free and Independent" (cf. Libaridian 1999, 128). If ASALA was Marxist at least in rhetoric, the Dashnaktsutyun, and especially the JCAG commandoes were nationalist.

The first murder perpetrated by the JCAG was the assassination of the Turkish Ambassador in Vienna on October 22, 1975. Two days later, the JCAG assassinated the Turkish ambassador to France and his driver (Minassian 2002, 44; Hyland 1991, 67). Affiliation with the Dashnak party was an advantage for the Justice Commandoes compared to the ASALA. If ASALA had to

[305] Gaïdz Minassian argues that the creation of JCAG was the anticipated outcome of the *haydatist* revolution of the Dashnaktsutyun and ASALA only facilitated the process (Minassian 2002, 35).

solicit supporters from the Middle East, Europe and elsewhere, the transnational network of the Dashnaktsutyun, as well as their youth groups in various countries provided readily available infrastructure for JCAG activities in Europe and elsewhere. The JCAG closeness to the Dashnaktsutyun had also some down sides, however. In contrast to ASALA, instead of recruiting some of its youth from among the locally born Armenians in Europe or the United States, the JCAG commandoes were mostly recruited from among more militant Middle Eastern born Armenians.

In the 1970s, Middle Eastern Armenians began to dominate the Dashnak leadership and chapters transnationally. At three consecutive World Congresses, between 1972 and 1985, the members of the Dashnak Bureau predominantly represented two countries - Lebanon and Iran.[306] As the number of Middle Easterners began to rise in the West from the 1960s, tension between the Middle Eastern and Western-born Dashnaks became more pronounced in France and the United States. By 1965, due to the active work of ANCHA many Armenians from Eastern Europe and the Middle East, mostly of Dashnak leaning, had also settled in California. The 1965 Hart-Cellar Immigration Act eliminated the national origins quota system in the United States, making emigration to the United States much easier. Immigration to France had been easier for Middle Eastern Armenians, as the country had more liberal policies of immigration for francophone

[306] At the Twentieth World Congress of the party in 1972, Hrayr Marukhian, an Iranian born Armenian was elected the chairman of the Bureau. He was based in Lebanon since the mid-1960s. Initially, Marukhian enjoyed the support of another prominent Middle Easterner, Sarkis Zeitlian, who was elected a Bureau member in 1972 (Minassian 2002, 38). The two, however, had different perspectives on the future of the Dashnaktsutyun. Marukhian represented the socialist wing and Zeitlian, the nationalist wing within the Bureau. Marukhian was the proponent of rapprochement with the Soviets, while Zeitlian represented the anti-Soviet faction. The common fight for the Armenian Cause united their efforts, but tensions between the two remained until Zeitlian mysteriously disappeared in West Beirut on March 28, 1985 and was never seen again. According to some accounts, the KGB was involved in Zeitlian's abduction and executed him in the Soviet Union (Minassian 2002. 50-1; 70-1; 104).

immigrants (cf. Weil 2008, 231). The worsening conditions in Lebanon in the beginning of the 1970s further encouraged emigration of Armenians to Europe and the Americas.

Following the Twentieth World Congress of 1972, the structure and organization of the Dashnaktsutyun underwent certain changes. They were expressed in the centralization of governance, the abandonment of anti-Soviet and the assumption of anti-Turkish policies, the implicit endorsement of terrorist acts for the advancement of the Armenian Cause, and the ensuing rise of Middle Eastern Armenians to the leadership. All of these were certainly going to have repercussions on the chapters in the Western countries. Many of the Western-born Dashnaks were opposed to the centralization, to terrorism and to the party policies dictated from abroad, because they thought such policies were detrimental to the activities of the party in the West. As Gaïdz Minassian notes, the opposition group in the West denounced the "Middle-Easternization of the Dashnak identity" and condemned the "imperialist methods" of the Dashnak Bureau (Minassian 2002, 45). To deal with the opposition, the party leadership resorted to purges and expulsions. In France, between 1972 and 1977, several promising French-Armenian young activists were expelled from the Dashnaktsutyun and the Dashnak controlled Armenian Students Union of Europe (l'Union des étudiants arméniens d'Europe). Among them were Ara Toranian, Christian Der Stepanian and Kegham Kevonian, who became quite prominent with the movements and organizations they started shortly afterwards. Similarly, in the Untied States, hundreds of members of various Dashnak affiliated organizations and chapters were expelled from the party (Minassian 2002, 46; cf. Ter-Minassian 1994, 228).

Consistent with changing priorities concerning the political course and preferred methods of struggle, the party quit the Armenian Assembly in 1983 and strengthened the ANCA to continue as an independent lobby group in the United States[307] (cf. Minassian 2002, 46; 49). The purges certainly privileged the Middle Eastern Armenians within the party chapters. If the Western-born Dashnak youth were brought up under the strong influence of the individualistic culture of host countries and were trained in the educational systems of the Western world, the Middle-Eastern-born Dashnak generation of the 1960s grew up in a more communitarian conservative Dashnak-Armenian milieu: they were brought up in militant Dashnak families of the generation of the 1950s, were educated in (Dashnak-controlled) Armenian schools, Dashnak clubs, athletic and youth organizations, socializing in Dashnak-controlled neighborhoods. Due to the difference in mentalities, value systems and priorities, the average Middle-Eastern-born Dashnak could easier pledge loyalty to authority and unquestionably follow the decisions taken at higher levels, than a Western-born Dashnak brought up and educated in the individualistic milieu of Western societies. If resorting to violence and terrorism could be more acceptable in the Middle East and for the Middle Eastern Dashnaks, many Western born Dashnaks, who had established friendly relations with influential political leaders and parties in Europe and the United States, opposed to such means.

On September 24, 1981, four ASALA commandoes occupied the Turkish Consulate-General in Paris. The incident acquired much publicity. For hours numerous channels reported in their news programs of Armenians and the Armenian Cause. This was a shocking experience for many French-born Armenians. As several news programs on public TV and radio addressed Armenian

[307] *Armenian Reporter* published the news on July 28, 1983 in "ARF quits Armenian Assembly over Dispute in Interpretation of Mission & Voting system."

issues, the genocide and the Armenian Cause, to shed light on the reasons behind terrorism, many young people suddenly rediscovered their "Armenian roots" and wanted to be part of the movement. Many young Armenians perceived the attackers of the Consulate as fighters for the Armenian Cause, rather than terrorists (Minassian 2002, Ter-Minassian 1994, 228). By then, the periodical *Hay Baikar,* started by Ara Toranian in 1977, had already given birth to the *Mouvement national arménien* (MNA), which served as ASALA's political support arm in France (Minassian 2002, 46). ASALA continued receiving publicity, as Ara Toranian, the leader of the MNA, made several appearances on TV and radio, negotiated with French political parties and the government, making good connections with some prominent French leaders. Toranian represented the generation of young people, born and raised in France, who were very inspired by the Armenian armed struggle. In his own words, before ASALA "…there was no pride in being Armenian, we had failed, we were finished. Everything we had were old stuff, conservative, narrow, caricatured… ASALA brought us pride!"[308] Benefitting form such popular support, ASALA sought to bring the French-Armenian community under its dominance through Ara Toranian's MNA (Minassian 2002, 65-6). The lack of ideological and organizational centralization provided ASALA with more flexibility. Not all ASALA adherents and ASALA popular movements shared its Marxist and leftist ideology, yet the armed struggle for the Armenian Cause and the liberation of Armenian territories united them all.[309]

In response to the increasing popularity of ASALA among French-born Armenian youth, the Dashnaktsutyun made coordinated efforts to portray the JCAG commandoes as exemplary role models for Armenian youth by glorifying their actions. On July 27, five young Armenians from

[308] Interview with Ara Toranian. October 25, 2012.
[309] Ara Toranian defined himself as more nationalist, than socialist, which had not been a problem for being the spokesperson of ASALA in France.

Lebanon, aged 19-21, launched an attack on the Turkish Embassy in Lisbon. The attack was claimed by the Armenian Revolutionary Army, an organization also closely affiliated with the Dashnaktsutyun and, according to Hyland (1991, 61), the successor of the JCAG. Having to change their plans and improvise on the spot, the ARA commandoes only killed the wife of one of the Turkish diplomats and a Portuguese policeman, while all of them got killed as a consequence of an explosion in the attack (cf. Hyland 1991, 69). The incident was publicized by many Dashnak newspapers, requiem services were held in many Dashnak organizations and churches in Lebanon and the Untied States. The Dashnak youth organizations (such as the AYF, Homenetmen or *Nor Seround*[310] in France) were especially active in organizing such memorial programs in many countries. In France, where the church was not under the total control of the Dashnaktsutyun, the party organizations put much effort to organize memorial services for the Lisbon group. The regional committee of the *Croix bleue des Arméniens de France* encouraged such services in all Armenian churches of France on July 31, 1983. Concerned that not all churches would hold memorial services, the committee ended the brief message published in *Haratch* with an admonition: "Every Armenian must feel obliged to commemorate the young Armenians, who sacrificed their lives for the Homeland, on the Altar of Freedom."[311] The admonishment did not seem to help much, and the Dashnak-affiliated organizations had to exert additional pressure on Armenian churches. A few months after the Lisbon incident, succumbing to pressure, the Armenian Cathedral of St. Jean Baptiste in downtown Paris opened its doors at 7:00pm on Saturday, September 17, for an overnight vigil, and held a memorial service the next day. A huge red poster with the pictures and names of the martyrs of the group, known as "the

[310] The Dashnak youth organization in Paris, founded in 1945. The organization published a monthly organ *Haiastan* (see previous chapter).
[311] "Hogehangist: Nahatak hing hay eritasardnerun hishatakin." [Requiem: In Memory of the Five Armenian Young Martyrs]. 1983. *Haratch*, July 30-31.

Lisbon Five," at the church entrance was decorated by three wreaths laid by the Dashnak Party Paris Committee, *Nor Seround*, and Homenetmen-France, the Dashnak affiliated athletic and scouting group.[312] On October 1, 1983, the Board of Trusties of the *Association culturelle de l'Église Apostolique Arménienne de Paris et de la région parisienne* released a statement, clarifying that the Prelate reluctantly opened the doors of the church on Saturday evening in order to avoid "unpleasant events." The Board expressed sorrow for the deaths of five Armenians in Lisbon, but reminded that the church was a spiritual institution that could not permit non-religious gatherings.[313] If many Armenians and certain Dashnaks wondered about the Lisbon failure and condemned the suicidal nature of the act, the dominant Middle Eastern comrades in the Dashnaktsutyun considered the Lisbon incident as an act of heroism and an expression of the highest form of patriotism (cf. Minassian 2002, 92-93). Framing the act as a sacrifice "on the Altar of Freedom," as an example of ultimate devotion to the Armenian Cause, could make a deep impression on the radicalized Armenian youth worldwide. In their rivalry with ASALA, this strategy was perceived to work in favor of the party.[314]

While the glorification of the JCAG and ARA commandoes by the Dashnaktsutyun had a long lasting effect on the party and its sympathizers in general, ASALA's popularity was short lived. ASALA attacks had occasionally targeted civilians and citizens of non-Turkish origin as part of the struggle against imperialism and against pro-Turkish countries. The arrest of ASALA members in France triggered attacks against France and French organizations elsewhere. France became an important target country for ASALA as the organization had the largest network in

[312] "Hskum ew hogehangist Lisboni hing andznazoh eridasardnerun hamar." [Watch and requiem for the Young Martyrs of Lisbon]. 1983. *Haratch.* September 20.
[313] "Haghordagrutyun" [Press Release]. 1983. *Achkhar.* October 1.
[314] Until nowadays, Dashnak circles all over the world hold annual commemoration services in memory of the Lisbon Five on July 27.

France. Most of the ASALA incidents happened in France[315] (cf. Minassian 2002, 44). Following the arrest of Monte Melkonian, one of the prominent ASALA leaders in November 1981, ASALA bombed the Air France office and the French Cultural Center in Beirut. Such indiscriminate attacks continued in France, targeting a McDonalds restaurant and a train station in Paris. The attacks on non-Turkish objects and civilians created profound disagreements within the ASALA leadership in the Middle East, as well as between the latter and their political support groups in Europe. By 1982, Mujahed (Hagop Hagopian), the most radical leader of ASALA, dissolved all of the ASALA supporting movements (ASALA-PM) in many countries. Ara Toranian also began distancing the MNA from ASALA (Ter-Minassian 1994, 228; Hyland 1991, 30-1; 50-1). By now, ASALA ranks had become divided between radical and moderate wings. The radical wing under the leadership of Mujahed indiscriminately targeted Turkish and non-Turkish objects as opposed to the moderate wing, led by Monte Melkonian, who thought the struggle was against the Turkish government only. The internal tensions erupted after July 15, 1983, when a bomb at the Orly Airport in Paris killed eight civilians and wounded fifty-four. Following the incident, the moderate wing broke away from ASALA under the leadership of Monte Melkonian and formed the ASALA Revolutionary Movement. Ara Toranian's MNA also broke away from ASALA in support of the ASALA Revolutionary Movement. The factions turned against each other, killing many of the experienced commandoes, which significantly weakened the organization and repelled many of the ASALA sympathizers (Hyland 1991, 38-1; 52-3; Minassian 2002, 90).

[315] According the Geographic Distribution of Incidents table provided by Hyland (1991, 233), France topped the list of countries with 36 incidents in total, followed by Lebanon (29), Turkey (29) and Italy (18). According to the table, ASALA instigated only 4 acts within the United States.

By 1986, as the European political circles were becoming more aware of the Armenian Cause and more willing to address the issue publicly, both ASALA and the JCAG/ARA worldwide refrained from violence. Back in April 1981, on the eve of the Armenian Genocide commemoration, François Mitterrand, then a presidential candidate, made a most significant statement: "It is impossible to erase the trace of genocide with which you were struck" (quoted and translated from Minassian 2002, 69). Three years later, on January 7, 1984, President Mitterrand paid a surprise visit to the Armenian community in Vienne, Isère, where local Armenians were celebrating Armenian Christmas at the municipality. The President began addressing the community by appreciating the presence and contributions of Armenians in France and emphasizing Missak Manoushian's invaluable input in the *Resistance.* As the speech unfolded, President Mitterrand made a few references to the 1915 events, eventually declaring France's stance towards the Armenian Cause:

> Wherever France has something to say, it wants to remind on every occasion that the Armenian identity is marked by the great tragedy of genocide.[316]

Occasions for expressing the French attitude towards the Armenian Cause were plenty at the United Nations, the European Parliament and the European Community, as the president had hinted. Recalling his words expressed three years earlier, Mitterrand condemned the acts of violence in France, which had been hospitable and friendly country to the Armenians:

> Sometimes, witnessing certain dramatic [events] which occurred when the Armenian Cause had been, in my view, misguided by violence …, I said to myself that there is no misunderstanding and there cannot be any misunderstanding between the Armenians and France. France is a country of welcome [host country], hospitality, and the sons and daughters of those who suffered so much know well that they have all been totally accepted in the French community…
> Certain elements, who generally come from outside, wanted to carry out acts of violence against France, whose responsibility had been only friendly; acts, of which we all have suffered. This is not an acceptable method and surely I will never accept it (*ibid.*).

[316] "Allocution de Président de la République (texte intégral)." 1984. *Haratch*, November 1.

A minor speech made in front of a small Armenian community in Vienne was a remarkable event for the Armenian community. For the first time the president of a major European country was acknowledging the events of 1915 as genocide. To what extent the statement made by President Mitterrand was determined by Armenian "armed resistance," is hard to estimate. But it was widely believed among Armenians that terrorism did have an influence on the politics of the Armenian Genocide recognition in France. While ASALA and the JCAG/ARA had been involved in planning and launching attacks in France, their political and diplomatic wings, the MNA and CDCA negotiated with various French political circles and parties a way out of the social-political crisis (Minassian 2002, 75; 96). Changes in the attitude of the French authorities towards the Armenian Genocide between the 1970s and the 1980s had been enormous. Many Armenians, especially in Marseille, still remember how back in the early 1970s the city authorities resisted the opening of a genocide memorial on the premises of the Cathédrale Arménienne Apostolique *Serpotz Tarkmantschatz* (*Saints Traducteurs*) on Avenue du Prado. The memorial was scheduled to be dedicated in April 1972, but the provincial authorities, concerned about the inscription on the memorial, held up its opening. The inscription, particularly, read:

> A la mémoire des 1.500.000 Arméniens victimes du génocide ordonné par les dirigeants turcs de 1915. A la gloire des Combattants et Résistants Arméniens morts pour la Liberté et la France.
> [To the memory of 1,500,000 victims of the genocide ordered by the Turkish leadership in 1915. To the glory of Armenian Combatants and Resistance Fighters, who died for Freedom and France].

Several months later, with the support of some influential French politicians sympathetic to the Armenian Cause, the memorial was dedicated on February 11, 1973 with the text of the inscription intact[317] (Boghossian 2009, 220-5). After a decade long Armenian "armed struggle," the attitude of the French authorities had changed to such an extent that the President of the

[317] As an act of protest against France, Turkey recalled its Ambassador from France. Next ambassador, Ismail Erez was appointed more than a year later, in November 1974, who was assassinated by ASALA on October 24, 1975 (cf. Boghossian 2005, 397; Hyland 1991, 67; "Fransayi Turk' despanĕ sppanuats" [Turkish Ambassador of France Killed] 1975 *Haratch,* October 26).

country explicitly referred to the events of 1915 as genocide. The East-West détente in international politics, Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974, military coup in Turkey of 1980 and the subsequent restoration of democracy a few years later, the prevailing attitudes in Europe towards Turkey and the United States, all these events certainly provided the background against which President Mitterrand openly referred to the Armenian Genocide. But the reference to the "acts of violence" perpetrated by some foreign [Armenian] elements in France in the speech was a salient indicator that the president wanted an end to Armenian "violence" in France. In exchange for his acknowledgment, the president demanded to stop the unacceptable acts of violence once and for all. Following the President's speech, Armenian terrorist attacks ended in the territory of France.

If in the period between the fiftieth and sixtieth anniversaries of the Armenian genocide the activities of various Armenian organizations did not yield any tangible gains, by the seventieth anniversary the militant Armenian organizations could claim some achievements. The president of France privately recognized the genocide, and the European Community became more aware of the Armenian Cause. On June 18, 1987, the European Parliament adopted a resolution "On a Political Solution to the Armenian Question." It recognized the massacres and deportations in 1915-1917 as genocide "within the meaning of the [UN] Convention of the Prevention and the Punishment of the Crime of Genocide."[318] Along with other unmet conditions, the European parliament considered Turkish refusal to acknowledge the Armenian genocide as another obstacle to Turkey's accession to the European Community.[319] The act of the European

[318] "Resolution on the Political Solution to the Armenian Question," 1987. *Official Journal of the European Communities*. July 20. C 190/119.
[319] The article read in full: "[The European Parliament] believes that the refusal by the present Turkish Government to acknowledge the genocide against the Armenian people, committed by the Young Turk government, its

Parliament effectively put an end to Armenian terrorism that had threatened various European countries in the past decade.

The Effects of Armenian Terrorism on Armenian Political Factions in the Diaspora

The decade of Armenian terrorism had a profound influence on Armenian diasporic dynamics both locally and transnationally. Locally, the ASALA and to a lesser extent the JCAG/ARA operations made a profound impact on Armenians in France, as the majority of ASALA and significant amount of the JCAG/ARA acts were carried out in that country (cf. Hyland 1991, 233-34). These activities had a two-fold effect in France. On the one hand, the terrorist attacks alienated number of French-born Armenians, who refused to be associated with terrorism, and introduced new tensions between Armenian organizations, especially between ASALA sympathizers and Dashnak supporters. On the other hand, the struggle for the Armenian Cause instilled a sense of pride and aroused national sentiments among some French born Armenian youth, which led to occasional solidarity between the otherwise opposing camps. As a side effect, the ASALA and JCAG attacks gave birth to what Ter-Minassian (1994, 231) calls a "true "Armenian movement," (*véritable "movement arménien"*) referring to the emergence of various new organizations and the revival of others. Among the newly formed organizations, Ara Toranian's MNA, Kegham Kevonian's *Terre et Culture* and Christian Der Stepanian's *Solidarité*

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reluctance to apply the principles of international law to its differences of opinion with Greece, the maintenance of Turkish occupation forces in Cyprus and the denial of the existence of the Kurdish question, together with the lack of true parliamentary democracy and the failure to respect individual and collective freedoms, in particular freedom of religion, in that country are insurmountable obstacles to consideration of the possibility of Turkey's accession to the Community" (*ibid.*).

Franco-Arménienne became quite notable.[320] While Ara Toranian's MNA allied itself with ASALA, the other two represented more neutral organizations between ASALA and the Dashnaktsutyun. The actions of ASALA and the JCAG/ARA also contributed to the revival of the Dashnak-affiliated organizations, such as the youth chapters of *Nor Seround*, the charitable *Croix-Bleue* and CDCA (Boghossian 2005, 399; Ter-Minassian 1994, 231). Along with the MNA, CDCA became actively involved in the promotion of the Armenian Cause in France and Europe, representing the lobbying arm of the Dashnaktsutyun in France. Regardless of the other organizations' attitude towards ASALA and the JCAG/ARA, inspired by the new wave of the Armenian revival in France, most had become actively involved in activities focusing on Armenian Genocide related issues in one way or another.

As the oldest "national" institution, the Armenian Church had to adopt a stand on the actions stigmatizing the Armenians in France. Shortly after the first attacks of ASALA and the JCAG in Europe had shaken the French media and society, Archbishop Serovpé Manougian (Serovbe Manukian), the Prelate of the Armenian Church in Paris, publicly and fervently condemned the acts of violence (Boghossian 2005, 397). The JAF and the UCFAF were also quick to express against terrorism. The organizations found that these "acts of violence and terrorism" caused serious harm to the calls for recognizing the Armenian Genocide, as well as raised prejudice against "…the Armenian community in France."[321] Yet many of the JAF and the UCFAF affiliates (some of them former Communists) were quietly sympathetic towards ASALA's anti-

[320] *Terre et Culture* was founded in 1976 (formally 1978) and aimed at the preservation of Armenian cultural heritage by reconstructing Armenian monuments in Iran, Syria and elsewhere (Interview with Kegham Kevonian. November 9, 2012; cf. Ter-Minassian 1994, 231). *Solidarite Franco-Arménienne* was founded in 1983. The organization mostly introduced Armenian culture, history and the Armenian Cause to the Europeans through publications in French (Hovanessian 1992, 258; Ter-Minassian 1994, 231).
[321] "Communiqué." 1976. *Ashkhar*, June 5.

imperialist struggle (Ter Minassian 1994, 228). Impressed by the modest gains in the pursuit of the Armenian Cause, many activists from both the JAF and the UCFAF in the 1980s participated in demonstrations for the release of the Armenian "political prisoners" in France. The trial of Max Hraïr Kilndjian of JCAG in January 1982 at the Criminal Court in Aix-en-Provance had mobilized all organizations in Marseille. Kilndjian was arrested in February 1980 for a failed attempt against the Turkish Ambassador in Berne (Switzerland). The UCFAF sided with their rivals, the Dashnaktsutyun, and others in demonstrations for the release of Kilndjian. The result was more than rewarding, as the Court sentenced Kilndjian to a two-year imprisonment, the time he had already spent in detention (*Les Arméniens* 1983, 213). Similarly, in January 1984, the trial of four ASALA members for their September 1981 attack on the Turkish Embassy brought together in solidarity various Armenian political factions in Paris (cf. Ter-Minassian 1994, 228).[322] While the JAF had not been involved in any terrorist attacks and had always officially rejected violence, an explosion in a trash container shattered the JAF headquarters in Marseille on March 17, 1984. Armenian organizations in Marseille condemned the act in a joint communiqué, suspecting Turkish organizations in instigating the attack.[323]

Occasional solidarity between rival Armenian organizations in France, produced by the activities of ASALA and the JCAG/ARA, did not turn into permanent communal solidarity, as the entrenched differences between the anti-Dashnak factions and the Dashnaktsutyun persisted. United around some common short-term goals, the JAF/UCFAF and the Dashnaktsutyun still

[322] Apparently, the Orly bombing and President Mitterrand's condemnation of violence influenced the verdict, as all four of the detainees were sentenced to seven years, despite the demonstrations and lobbying of Armenian organizations ("Chors hay eritasardneru datavarutiwně" [The Trial of Four Armenian Young Men]. 1984. *Haratch*, February 2).
[323] "Vochrap'ordz Marseili "JAF" shenk'in aṙjev" [A Terrorist Attempt in Front of the JAF Building]. 1984. *Haratch*, March 20.

represented opposite poles on many other accounts. Since the 1970s, the JAF/UCFAF had developed close cultural ties, exchanges and frequent visits to Soviet Armenia. In contrast, the Dashnaktsutyun still publicly remained very diaspora-oriented, despite a limited, yet steady change in its political course after 1972. Secondly, in contrast to the JAF/UCFAF, the Dashnak chapters in France were administratively subordinate to the central headquarters of the party.[324] The generational, organizational and ideological transformations the Dashnaktsutyun underwent worldwide, as well as the influence of the JCAG/ARA activities, led to significant changes in the French chapter as well. Even if the Armenian Genocide recognition campaigns created an accessible common ground between the JAF/UCFAF and the Dashnaktsutyun, the centralizing policies of the Dashnak Bureau, which led to the gradual domination of the Middle-Eastern-born Dashnaks within the party, reinforced the exclusive Dashnak identity even further.

Transnationally, if the JCAG/ARA activities made a direct and long-lasting impact on the Dashnaktsutyun and its affiliate organizations worldwide, ASALA's impact on Armenian organizations outside France was indirect at best and relatively insignificant, because of the internal rift it suffered in the early 1980s and the rapid decline of the transnational network of ASALA after 1982. While many of the former ASALA members, who had survived the strife dispersed by the end of the 1980s, the JCAG/ARA fighters continued to be glorified as heroes within the Dashnak circles worldwide. The day of the Lisbon 5, July 27, became a day of solemn remembrance in the calendar of the Dashnaktsutyun. Since 1984, Dashnak youth chapters from Lebanon to the United States have devoted works of poetry, songs, and eulogy to the memory of the five Armenian "martyrs" in Lisbon. Scout groups organize marches and keep vigil, and memorial services are held at the Cilician See churches. These commemorative events always

[324] The headquarters of the Dashnak party were based in Beirut until the early 1980s.

serve as important instructive occasions for relating and relaying the legacy of Lisbon Five to the current challenges faced by the party and for heightening the sense of loyalty to the Dashnaktsutyun and the Armenian Cause.

Simultaneously, the Dashnaktsutyun fashioned heroes from out of the JCAG commandoes, imprisoned in the United States. The July 1984 issue of *Haytoug*, the organ of the Western chapter of Armenian Youth Federation, memorialized the martyrdom of the "Lisbon 5" and other Dashnak martyrs, demanded freedom for Armenian political prisoners (i.e. imprisoned members of the JCAG/ARA), and published the photographs of and brief messages by the imprisoned commandoes. One of the prisoners, Hampig Sassounian, thanked his AYF peers for "all the sacrifices made for the benefit of the Armenian Cause" (*Haytoug* 1984, 9); Dickran Berberian, another prisoner, warned that imprisoning the commandoes "cannot stop the determination of the struggle of Armenian youth. The Armenian Youth has decided to struggle until total victory [is achieved]" (*ibid.,* 15). Some of the imprisoned commandoes continued to regularly contribute articles and poetry to *Haytoug*. Through publicizing the JCAG/ARA peers in youth periodicals, such as *Haytoug* of the AYF-Western region, *Haiastan* of *Nor Seround* in France or *Razmik* of the Dashnak youth organization in Lebanon, through annual commemoration services and speeches, as well as various actions and fund raising campaigns for the release of Armenian prisoners, the Dashnaktsutyun worldwide encouraged values of loyalty and dedication among the youth. Repellent to many outside the party circles, the process solidified the loyalty of the rank and file and sympathizers. The Dashnaktsutyun emerged from the decade of 1975-1985 more centralized, organized, solidified in the ranks, and more transnationally mobilized (cf. Tölölyan 1992, 20).

The Hnchakyan and Ramkavar parties, by contrast, distanced themselves from the ASALA and JCAG/ARA actions in the West. By the 1970s the Hnchakyans had an insignificant presence in France and the United States. The organ of the party in the Eastern United States, *Eritasard Hayastan,* ceased publication by the end of the 1970s, and the party did not exist as an organizationally active entity. Similarly, the Ramkavar party chapters were almost dissolved in France, as the World Congress of 1965 had recorded (cf. Dallak'yan 2007, 243-45). This condition in France continued through the next decade, as the Ramkavars failed to recruit young members from among the upcoming generations. The Sixteenth World Congress of the Ramkavar party in 1982 recorded that the party had been completely absent in France (cf. Dallak'yan 2007, 388). Although the Ramkavars had not been directly affected by the activities of ASALA or the JCAG/ARA in Europe, the Central Board of the party expressed against terrorism and violent means of struggle on number of occasions (Dallak'yan 2007, 346-49; 388-89).

In the United States, the Ramkavars refrained from entering into direct confrontation with the Dashnaktsutyun because of the precarious conditions in wartime Lebanon, but they followed the Dashnaks in withdrawing from the Armenian Assembly (Dallak'yan 2007, 397; Grigorian 1995, 18). The political unity of the 1970s, achieved with much difficulty in the United States, fell apart by the early 1980s. While sharing a common goal, the radically different means that the Assembly, the Dashnaks and Ramkavars envisioned for its achievement, rent the organization apart. If in France, the detention of Armenian commandoes occasionally generated solidarity among the rival organizations, in the United States terrorism further polarized the community. In

June 1982, the Diocesan Assembly of Armenian Church of the See of Ējmiatsin condemned the acts of terrorism, while the Cilician See Prelacy refrained from making any statement on terrorism in its assembly held around the same time.[325] The compromised political unity in the United States prevented joint commemorations of the 1985 seventieth anniversary of the genocide (Dallak'yan 2007, 405-406). If the major issues separating the factions prior to 1965 had mainly been ideological, stemming from profound disagreements around the legitimacy of Soviet Armenia, in 1985, the major factor for the disunity in the United States became the disagreement around the pursuit of the Armenian Cause, which at least nominally was shared among all factions.

Despite the divided efforts, the struggles for the recognition of the Armenian genocide eventually made the genocide an important marker of Armenian identity transnationally. Yet as the following section will discuss, the increasing influx in the 1970s and the 1980s of the Middle Eastern and Soviet Armenians, all with their own backgrounds, gave rise to new tensions over different perceptions of Armenian identity and Armenianness in France and the United States.

[325] "Diocese of the Armenian Church Condemns Violence at Assembly." 1982. *Armenian Reporter,* June 10, 6; "Prelacy Annual Assembly Fails to Endorse Statement on Terror," 1982. *Armenian Reporter,* June 10, 4.

Debating Armenianness: Immigration Flows, School Movement and the Clash of Identities in the Diaspora

As the diaspora-born generations of the 1960s and 70s came into their own, the intensifying East-West migration of Armenians and their concentration in various towns and cities in France and the United States revealed the existing multiple expressions of Armenian identities. The heterogeneous compatriotic cultures, dialects, localized customs and habits of the 1920s, which had created the diversity of the first Armenian settlements in the host countries, had been largely erased by the 1960s, yielding to a more homogeneous Armenian identity in some countries and to acculturation and assimilation in others. The countries in the Middle East bore the legacy of the Islamic empires, notably the Ottoman and Persian, where Christian religious minorities had been granted certain internal autonomies, and religion provided a thick barrier against quick assimilation. Consequently, Armenian institutions had been able to lay stronger foundations and forge a more cohesive Armenian identity through the growing network of community organizations and schools in the 1920s and 1930s. In the West, the initial diversity of Armenian immigrants had been erased by the coercive education systems of the host nation-states. This section will discuss different types of Armenian identity shaped under different sociopolitical contexts, which came into clash after the 1960s with the intensifying immigration of Armenians from the Middle East to France and the United States.

France, the United States and other Western countries, where church was separated from the state, had produced different policies and attitudes towards religion and church. Although not formally endorsed as it has been stated in chapter 2, Protestantism in the United States constituted a key marker of an American identity. Even after the elimination of religious instruction from public schools in the 1920s, the American public remained highly religious. Many of the American political leaders and even the presidents continued resorting to religious terms and language in their public addresses (Little 2007, 41-3). By contrast, the cultural principle of *laïcité* in France, as argued in chapter 2, defined the unpopularity of church attendance among Frenchmen. Church attendance or affiliation, therefore, was not as high as in the United States. If Armenian churches in the United States became important community centers, always at the center of the activism of various Armenian-American organizations, Armenian churches in France, with some exceptions, particularly in Marseille, up to the 1960s were not as central in community affairs.

Varying state policies towards religion and religious communities, local cultures, social-economic integration perspectives, as well as policies towards immigrants and minorities in different host-countries had made an enormous impact on the formation of respective Armenian communal institutions and the upbringing and education of the diaspora-born generations. If the varying degrees of tolerance towards confessional communities in the countries of the Middle East had created conditions for the establishment of a multitude of community organizations and institutions, including community schools for teaching the Armenian language, literature,

culture, and history, the assimilationist policies of the United States and France had been directed first of all against the preservation of non-American or non-French identities.

Even though Armenians had not been formally integrated into French society until the end of WWII, the early attempts by the Armenian refugees to establish day schools in France remained largely unsuccessful due to the prevailing assimilationist policies of the state (see chapter 2). By the 1970s, only two Armenian private boarding schools had been operating in the entire France, both in the Paris region. Even though they could not compete with free, compulsory state controlled national public schools in France, they provided at least an alternative to the ineffective weekly or evening Armenian classes offered by various Armenian organizations and institutions. The all-boys Mouradian School (collège Samuel Moorat) of the Armenian Catholic Mekhitarist order was quite old, having been founded in Paris in 1848. The school moved to Venice because of the Franco-Prussian war in 1870, and then reestablished in Paris (Sèvres) in 1929[326] (cf. Bardakjian 1976, 22; Mouradian and Kunth 2010, 45). The other school was the secular all-girls *Tebrotzassère* (Dprotsaser). The school was founded in Constantinople in 1879 by some Armenian educated women. It was transformed into an orphanage during WWI, and then moved first to Salonica, Greece in 1922, then to Marseille in 1923, and finally, established in the Le Raincy suburb of Paris in 1928. In 1970 the boarding school was reorganized into a co-educational day school, offering *primaire* and *college*[327] level education (*Historique*; cf. Mouradian and Kunth 2010, 46; Mouradian and Ter-Minassian 2003, 638).

[326] The college was turned into a biweekly Armenian school in 1980, which only provided classes in Armenian language, history and culture from primary to high school levels. The program was designed to prepare students for the foreign language requirement test at the end of *lycée* (high school) for acquiring a graduation certificate (baccalauréat) and being able to enter institutions of higher education (Interview with Rev. Fr. Haroutioun Bezdikian, the principal of the College. October 30, 2012).
[327] Roughly equivalent to American primary and middle schools.

In the United States, no Armenian day school was founded until the mid-1960s. Quite naturally and consequently, under the secular homogenizing social milieu of the American and French nation-states generations of Armenians of diverse compatriotic origins were assimilated into American and French societies. The founding of various Armenian youth and athletic organizations, coffee houses and clubs, churches and political circles by the first generation certainly provided spaces for socialization, for connecting with other Armenians and remaining involved in Armenian life, but increasingly French (in the case of France) and English (in the case of the United States) came to replace Armenian within the organizations (see chapter 2). Even if a relatively small portion of the second generation, born and raised in France or the United States, learned some Armenian at home, by taking private lessons or by attending weekly language courses (usually on Saturdays) provided by churches and other organizations,[328] Armenian was no longer the primary language of communication for the second (and consequently third) generation coming of age. The number of second generation Armenians with good Armenian-language training in France and the United States was extremely low compared to the estimated numbers of Armenians in those countries. By the 1970s, some among these small groups with good knowledge of Armenian had acquired important positions within various Armenian organizations, but the Francophone or Anglophone French- or American-born generations were represented heavily among the leadership and membership of the same organizations. Conditions in France and the United States had been unfavorable for the

[328] The exclusion of religious instruction from public schools both in France and the United States left religious education up to the respective church communities. Many churches in France and the United States organized Sunday classes of religious instruction. Copying from the Western model of Sunday schools, Armenian churches in the United States and France began offering weekly Armenian language classes alongside religious instruction (cf. Kooshian 1987, 98-100; Svajian 1987, 112-3) These weekly classes, however, were not enough for the preservation of the language. The second generation in both countries, therefore, grew increasingly Francophone or Anglophone.

production of a linguistically homogeneous Armenian community. Yet, the difficulty of learning Armenian had not prevented some French or Americans of Armenian origin from developing a certain sense of commitment and belonging to Armenianness and from getting involved, actively participating in and often leading various Armenian organizations in these countries.

Production of Armenianness in the Middle East

Compared to the West, the Middle Eastern countries provided a diametrically different picture. Sociopolitical conditions in these countries were quite favorable for the reorganization of the Armenian Church and political parties and for the resumption of nation-building attempts in the host-countries. In his comprehensive analysis of the emergence and variations of Armenian nationalism and the Armenian nation, Razmik Panossian writes:

> If what was going on in the Armenian SSR was 'Soviet-style' nation-building, in the communities abroad it was 'diaspora-style' nation building - particularly in the 1920s and 1930s. The process was typical of elite mobilization efforts intent on moulding a conscious nation, except that it was done outside a homeland and without state institutions. If Stalin and Russification were the main threats in Soviet Armenia, parochialism and voluntary assimilation were the main threats in the diaspora. Nonetheless, under the leadership of competing organizations, a heterogeneous group of people with fundamental differences in terms of regional identity, religion (Apostolic, Catholic and Protestant), language (Armenian, Turkish, dialects), occupation and class, social status (refugees, assimilated elites, intellectuals), political loyalties and cultural influences from host-states were moulded into a relatively coherent community with a collective consciousness as a *diasporic nation*. In short, 'Armenianness' as *the* most important identity category was either created or reinforced in the diaspora, superseding the differences within and between the communities [emphasis in original] (Panossian 2006, 292).

As the "best analytical commencing point" Panossian emphasizes the case of "diasporic nation building" in Lebanon, where Armenians concentrated in the 1920s and 1930s in large numbers.

Lebanon, as well as most of the former Ottoman countries, indeed, provided ideal conditions for the reorganization of Armenian churches, political parties and the resumption of the nation-building efforts through regular Armenian language schooling. Shortly after Armenians settled in refugee camps in Syria and Lebanon, in parallel with schools organized in the Armenian orphanages by various international or Armenian relief organizations, such as Near East Relief or the AGBU, Armenian churches and political parties also began opening schools (see chapters 2, 3, cf. Libaridian 1999, 121; Migliorino 2008, 70). Through the 1920s and 30s the number of Armenian schools in Syria, Lebanon and Egypt increased rapidly. By 1965 there were more than 65 Armenian schools (including 5 religious seminaries) in Lebanon,[329] about the same number in Syria and about a dozen in Egypt. The standardizing Armenian dialect of Constantinople (Western Armenian), which had been the language of instruction in Armenian schools throughout the Ottoman Empire by the late nineteenth century, had been adopted by schools establishing in various Armenian diasporic communities. The increasing intervention of the Syrian and Egyptian governments in their respective education systems and state-promoted Arabization policies significantly affected the Armenian schools in the 1960s and 1970s. In the 1960s, both in Syria and Egypt, Armenian schools and Armenian-language instruction recorded significant decline (Migliorino 2008, 116-17; 120). In contrast, with the swelling of the number of Armenians in Lebanon due to immigrating Syrian and Palestinian Armenians, Lebanon in the 1960s was emerging as the most important Armenian political and cultural center in the Middle East. From the late 1940s the country had attracted the leadership of all Armenian political parties, where they had a real chance to get involved and participate in local politics. Armenian schools, on the other hand, had been remarkably free on curriculum, mostly focusing on

[329] In 1964 *Aztag* editorial board in Lebanon initiated a survey of Lebanese-Armenians educational organization. Several articles published in *Aztag* from November 4, 1964 provided general descriptions of the Armenian schools operating in Lebanon. The editorial of November 6 reported of 68 Armenian schools in Lebanon.

Armenian instruction and gradually from the 1960s adjusting to the Lebanese national curriculum (Migliorino 2008, 117). Schools flourished and various Armenian cultural organizations and printing houses proliferated. The abundance of Armenian organizations, as well as the existence of Armenian neighborhoods outside the school provided spaces for socialization where the Lebanese born second generation Armenians could mingle with other Armenians, spend days, weeks, months and years within an Armenian setting. Various youth and athletic organizations and clubs maintained by the political parties, churches, cultural unions, Armenian language newspapers and books, served as primary and secondary agents of Armenian socialization and homogenization. The standard Western Armenian, rather than Arabic, replaced the diversity of dialects and languages spoken by the first generation refugees. Many Lebanese Armenians still remember campaigns against Turkophone Armenians, when party activists posted announcements on the doors and windows of Armenian businesses with a brief note: "Respond in Armenian to speakers of Turkish."[330] The heterogeneous community of refugees of the 1920s had yielded to a linguistically homogeneous, self-conscious and self-sustained Armenian community in Lebanon by the 1960s.

By 1965 Armenian Catholic and Protestant communities had also become very active and competitive in the domain of Armenian education in Lebanon. Despite their relatively small numbers compared to the Apostolic Armenians, both Catholic and Evangelical Armenian schools were quite successful in soliciting Armenian students beyond their respective Catholic or Evangelical Armenian families. The Lebanese educational system required instruction of science either in French or in English. Accordingly, the Catholic schools placed more emphasis on

[330] Avedikian, Hagop. 2013. "Hay yerg u yergaran." [Armenian Song and Songbook]. *Azg daily*. May 4. http://www.azg.am/AM/culture/2013050401. Accessed September 27, 2014. Sometimes, the line "Remember the one million" was added (author's personal correspondence with Ara Sanjian, February 26, 2015).

French and prepared students for the French *Brevet* diploma or the French Baccalaureate, alongside the Lebanese national certificate and baccalaureate programs.[331] The Evangelical Armenian schools emphasized English in their curriculum, and their secondary schools prepared students for the Lebanese baccalaureate and entrance exams to the American University of Beirut, the Beirut College for Women[332] and Haigazian College.[333] Haigazian College, established in 1955, was another contribution of the Evangelical Armenians to the Armenian community in Lebanon. By 1965 Haigazian had grown into a four-year college program, offering Bachelors of Arts degrees in several majors. It became the only institution of higher education in the diaspora established and managed by an Armenian organization (*Aztag* Nov. 7, 1964; Sanjian 2000, 9; 11-2). Although the college was not exclusively for Armenians, it placed significant emphasis on the Armenian component of its curriculum. For overseeing the instruction of Armenian Studies courses and promoting research in Armenian studies, the college had an Armenian Studies chair from the beginning. It also had a BA degree in Armenian Studies.[334]

The nature of Armenian identity produced in Lebanon, Syria and Egypt, however, was strongly defined by partisan and lesser so by confessional affiliations. Despite the fact that Western Armenian was the most important homogenizing common median for Armenians of various

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[331] As reported in *Aztag,* by 1965 the Mekhitarist secondary school (founded in 1937) and the Hripsimeants' college of the Armenian Sisters of Immaculate Conception (founded in 1922 in Junieh) prepared students for the French baccalaureate exams; the Mesrobian College (founded in 1939) and Srpouhi Agnes (founded in 1937) in Bourj Hammoud prepared for the Lebanese state certificate and the French Brevet (*Aztag*, Nov. 16; 18; 26, 1964)

[332] Now Lebanese American University.

[333] Armenian Evangelical College (founded in 1923) in Beirut, Armenian Evangelical Central High School (founded in 1922) in Achrafieh, Beirut, prepared for the state baccalaureate and the AUB entrance exams. The Shamlian-Tatikian Evangelical School (founded in 1939) in Nor Marash, Bourj Hammoud, and the Gertmenian school (founded in 1931) prepared for the Lebanese state certificate (*Aztag*, Nov. 7; 16; 18; 26, 1964)

[334] Initially, Armenian students admitted to the college were required to take classical Armenian, Medieval and Modern Armenian literature and history of Armenian Church (Sanjian 2000, 11).

partisan and confessional affiliations, the content of Armenian subjects, especially when it came to modern Armenian history, significantly differed from one school to another and depended on their sponsor political party's or confessional community's definition of the Armenian. The majority of Armenian Apostolic schools in Lebanon had been under the indirect control of the Dashnaktsutyun, as the party's lay members and sympathizers dominated the "national bodies" (*azgayin marminner*) of the Prelacy of Armenian Church in Lebanon - the Diocesan Assembly (the legislative body of the Apostolic community), and its executive wing, the Civic Council, and all the other sub-councils, including the Educational Council. By 1965 the Armenian Apostolic community formally had more than 25 schools, predominantly under the control of the Dashnaktsutyun. The Hnchakyans retained control over Sahakian school from the early 1920s, which did not become part of the Prelacy school system. By the 1960s the AGBU had established five schools, while the Ramkavar Tekeyan Cultural Association had founded the Tekeyan school in 1951 (Varzhabedian 1981a, 435-37). Except for the Armenian "*azgayin*" schools,[335] the Dashnaktsutyun directly controlled *Chemaran*, which was also not affiliated with the Prelacy.

In contrast to the "'soviet-style' nation-building," with the absence of a centralized coordinating body between the Prelacy affiliated and other schools, as well as among the three Armenian confessional communities, the "'diaspora-style' nation-building'" while homogenized the Armenians ethnically, around the common language, common past/ancestry/history, reproduced heterogeneities on political and confessional grounds. Thereby, it contributed to the consolidation of the existing fragmentations in the community. In the 1920s, when the school

[335] Armenian schools affiliated with the Prelacy of the Armenian Church are commonly referred to as *azgayin* (national/communal) schools.

movement just had commenced in Lebanon, as Schahgaldian notes, "the only mission of … schools was the creation of a new breed of Armenians in the image of what the [Dashnak] party considered '*true Armenians*', conscious of their history and culture, well-versed in their mother tongue and dedicated to the ideals of Armenian nationalism" (Schahgaldian 1979, 165). The situation had not changed much by 1965, as everything from the interior design of schools to their curriculum and syllabi expressed the presence of a certain ideology in the schools. The Prelacy and other Dashnak-affiliated schools could easily be distinguished with the presence of the Armenian tricolor flag in a public place, the maps of "United Armenia" and pictures of various Dashnak heroes decorating the hallways and classrooms of the schools. Similar partisan symbolism was present in Hnchakyan, Ramkavar and even Ramkavar-friendly AGBU schools. The instructive materials reflected partisan ideologies as well. Most of the teachers of Armenian subjects within the Armenian Apostolic community schools were cardholder members or affiliates of political parties. Most textbooks were written by party intellectuals[336] (cf. Panossian 2006, 297).

Armenian neighborhoods and the social milieu reinforced these partisan identities outside the schools. As Migliorino observes, "…an ideal Dashnak-leaning family would live on the Bourj Hammoud side of the Armenian areas, send children to a Dashnak-friendly school, attend a Dashnak-friendly church, read a Dashnak newspaper, support the Homenetmen sports club, attend Hamazkayin cultural events, etc. Hnchak families would affiliate with their own sets of

[336] In the report on Armenian Educational Institutions in Lebanon the pro-Dashnak author expressed a concern that the AGBU Tarouhi Hagopian (Daruhi Hakobian) all-girl high school used Kersam Aharonian's (Gersam Aharonian) editorials, published in a single volume as a history textbook for upper classes. (*Aztag*, 11 November 1964). Kersam Aharonian at the time was a member of the Ramkavar Central Board, held an influential position within the AGBU Educational Council and taught history at the AGBU affiliated high schools (Aharonian 2006, 201-3). Similarly, Simon Vrats'ian was the long time principal and the history teacher at the Dashnak affiliated Nshan P'alanjian Chemaran.

institutions, and so on…" (Migliorino 2008, 116). Clubs established by the political parties also constituted a significant element of the social structure in Lebanon's Armenian neighborhoods, with their triple social functions of socialization, group formation and social control. Party clubs operating daily from early morning till late night served as places for various gatherings, mingling, social and leisure events. Heavily decorated with partisan symbolism, the clubs welcomed only members and sympathizers of all generations, demarcating in-groups and out-groups, promoting exclusive identities among Armenians of various affiliations. Predominantly among the Dashnaks and Hnchaks, who controlled Armenian neighborhoods, the trinity of club, school and church generated the new "breed" of Armenians, with deeply partisan and often mutually exclusive identities. However fragmented and partisan, (Western) Armenian was the everyday language of these clubs, Armenian schools and churches, as well as the Armenian quarters in Bourj Hammoud and Beirut. By the end of the 1960s the Armenian community in Lebanon had grown predominantly Armenophone with Western Armenian established as the primary language of communication among Armenians of various affiliations.

It must be mentioned that the "'diaspora-style' nation building," as Razmik Panossian noted in his book, was not strictly typical to Lebanon. It can also describe the forging of an Armenian identity in Egypt and Syria, but especially in Iran and Istanbul, which had been quite different from the rest of the Arab Middle East. The formal toleration of the Armenian church and Armenian Apostolic community both in Turkey and Iran allowed the Patriarchate in Istanbul and the community in Iran to operate Armenian schools and offer Armenian-language classes to the community. Through the network of schools the Armenian Patriarchate in Istanbul continued producing generations fluent in Armenian in the Republican Turkey. Even though Armenian

schools were limited to teaching the Armenian language and religion, and no Armenian history classes were allowed, sciences, Turkish history and geography were often taught in Armenian as well. The partisan aspect of Armenian upbringing, compared to Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and elsewhere, was completely absent among Armenian families and schools in Istanbul.[337] In Iran the Armenian community had also been able to produce a relatively homogenized Armenian community, but the common denominator here was Eastern Armenian, in contrast to the rest of countries in the Middle East. A number of Armenian churches and schools throughout the country had been established long before the twentieth century.[338] Politically, Iran had served as an important base for the activities of especially Dashnak revolutionaries at the turn of the century. Since then the Dashnaktsutyun had maintained continuous presence in the Iranian Armenian communities and had acquired much prominence in the course of the twentieth century,[339] but the church remained loyal to Ējmiatsin until the second half of the 1950s. The Dashnak control of the Cilician See and its subsequent expansion brought the three Armenian Church dioceses in Iran with their communal structures and schools under the control of the Dashnak party as well (see chapter 4).

Different types of Armenian identities, thus, had been shaped under different host-country conditions in the Middle East as well. If prior to the 1960s and 1970s these differences in

[337] Interview with Kurken Berksanlar, the former president of the Organization of Istanbul Armenians in Los Angeles. March 8, 2014.
[338] In Iran, Armenians constituted significant numbers long before the twentieth century. Until 1828, Eastern Armenia had been part of the Persian Empire. In 1604-05 the Armenian population residing at the Ottoman-Persian borderland had been deported to the interior of the Empire by the Safavid ruler Shah Abbas I, giving birth to Armenian communities in New Julfa, Isfahan and elsewhere.
[339] The party had become influential in Iran from the early 1920s, but especially in the years of Cold War, thanks to the activities of Dro and his intelligence group and the support from the Shah (see chapter 4). The other parties, notably the Hnchakyans and Ramkavars, never had any significant presence in Iran. The non-Dashnaks gathered around some local organizations, including left wing or even Communist, as well as the AGBU (Pahlevanian 2003, 239-58).

Armenian identities had not been conspicuous in the dynamics of the Armenian diaspora, the intensifying East-West migration flows in the 1970s created concentrations of Armenians of various host-country backgrounds in the West, in which Armenians originating from different countries became more aware of the particularities of their Armenian identities. These in turn created tensions and conflicts, new bases for inclusions and exclusions.

Armenian Immigration and Changing Social-Political Contexts in the United States and France (the 1960s and 1970s)

Decolonization, changes in international political conditions and national crises in the countries of the Middle East produced waves of Armenian emigration to the countries of Western Europe, North and South Americas, where differences in the perception of Armenianness came into contact and conflict. From as early as the 1960s Armenians began emigrating from the Middle East to Western Europe, the Americas, Australia and elsewhere. The emigration of Armenians intensified in the late 1960s through the early 1980s due to political instability and discriminating policies against the Armenians in Turkey, the Arabization policies in Syria and Egypt, the Lebanese civil war, and the Islamic Revolution in Iran. At the same time, the exodus from Soviet Armenia began in the mid-1970s and continued in ever-greater numbers under Gorbechev's era of *perestroika* and *glasnost* from the mid-1980s.

France and the United States were among the most attractive destinations for the new waves of immigrants.[340] The 1965 Hart-Cellar act abolished quota restrictions on immigration to the United States, opening the country to an influx of skilled and unskilled workers. At the time the booming French economy also attracted workers from abroad (cf. Batalova and Terrazas 2013, 29; Weil 2008, 151-3). In the wake of the Arab-Israeli war of 1973 and the international oil embargo, France stopped accepting immigrants in July 1974. This ban, however, did not stop the flow of Armenians, as France remained committed to the UN 1951 Geneva Convention on Refugees and continued accepting refugees fleeing their countries "owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion" (*Geneva Convention,* article 1.2; cf. Hargreaves 1995, 20). Armenians, fleeing Turkey, Lebanon and Iran fit this category of refugees. Similarly, Armenians fleeing the Soviet Union could claim persecution on political grounds. Naturalization terms had been relaxed and the five-year residency requirement was lifted for people entering France under the Geneva Convention, from Francophone countries or from countries formerly under French mandate (Weil 2008, 231). For many Armenians, France thus provided real possibilities for permanent settlement.

Armenians from the Middle East, especially from Lebanon, had begun arriving in the United States from the late 1950s and early 60s through the ANCHA, even before the elimination of the quota system (cf. Mirak 1997, 383; Sanjian 2007, 278). The early arrivals mostly represented the anti-Communist camp, the Armenian DPs from Bulgaria and Romania. Upon their arrival in New York, they were met by the representatives of ANCHA and the Armenian Relief Society,

[340] Canada and Australia also attracted large number of Armenian immigrants from the Middle East.

and after a few days of briefing and orientation at St. Illuminator's Cathedral in New York[341] they were sent off to their final destinations. For many, Los Angeles was the preferred destination (Zadoian 2012, 84-6). Many Lebanese Armenians had also arrived to Los Angeles mostly through the transnational network of the Dashnaktsutyun. By 1965, metropolitan Los Angeles hosted a noticeable number of former DPs, commonly referred to as *Ṙusahays* (Russian Armenians), and Armenians from Lebanon, known as *Beyrut'ahays* (Armenians from Beirut). While the *Ṙusahays* mostly settled in Montebello, the *Beyrut'ahays* preferred the San Fernando Valley[342] (cf. Zadoian 2012, 98). The number of Armenian immigrants to the US grew rapidly especially after the elimination of the quota system in 1965.

Compared to the first Armenian immigrants from the Ottoman Empire, the new immigrants to France and the United States benefitted from more favorable social-political conditions and organized closely-knit communities. If the former had experienced the coercive effects of Frenchification or Americanization, the rise and spread of civil rights movements from the 1960s had resulted in more liberal conditions for human rights, equality and expressions of difference.[343]

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[341] St. Illuminator's Cathedral in New York served as the headquarters of the Antelias affiliated Prelacy of the Armenian Church since 1958.

[342] Interview with Walter Karabian. March 6, 2014.

[343] The massive strikes and demonstrations of May 1968 in France, combined with the effects of decolonization, as well as the influx of immigrants had an enormous impact on the leftist political parties, especially the Socialists, the Dashnaktsutyun's counterpart in France. The Socialists began advocating multiculturalism and pluralism. *Le droit à la difference* ('the right to be different') acquired an enduring popularity in France, especially in the 1970s. During his campaign for the presidential elections in 1981, François Mitterrand publicly endorsed it. In the 1980s, the concept was materialized into a law, which removed restrictions on foreigners' rights of association (Hargreaves 1991, 88-9). The French government even provided subsidies to foreign associations, whose activities helped the immigrants to integrate in French society. A limited amount of instruction in the mother-tongue was provided in French public schools (*ibid.*, 193-95). Similarly, in the Untied States, the Civil Rights movement radically affected perceptions of racial, ethnic and other minority groups in the 1960s, leading to a fast growing sensitivity towards people of various racial, ethno-religious, gender and other minority backgrounds. The movement had an impact on education nationwide, as many schools began introducing curricula focusing on pluralism and multiculturalism (for further details, see Washburn, Neil and Abbot 1996).

For many American-born Armenians, who had in various ways clung to their roots, the Civil Rights movement provided a welcome impetus. Many others, especially the oldest immigrants of the 1880s and 1890s, who had been detached from Armenian organizations and institutions in Fresno, Worcester and elsewhere, began discovering certain aspects of their Armenian identity, a side "which had a history of 3000 years, a side which developed its own alphabet, had its own literature, its own church" (Hagopian 1984). They were also challenged by the newcomers, a different breed of Armenians, who now claimed leadership roles in the community, especially in California. If earlier in the century, assimilation into American and French societies was the only way to integration, from the 1960s both societies increasingly adopted difference, multiculturalism and plural identities, whether ethnic or linguistic, religious or cultural. Benefitting from the changing conditions in the United States and France, Armenians arriving from especially Lebanon, after a brief period of adjustment, became actively involved in Armenian organizations and institutions, created new organizational structures after Middle Eastern models, and gradually squeezed many Armenian-Americans out of the leadership positions in Armenian organizations.

Armenian Immigration and the School Movement in the United States and France

In 1955 two parallel events in Boston and Los Angeles set the stage for Armenian education and Armenian studies in the United States. In Boston, a group of Armenian visionaries started the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research. Inspired by Richard N. Frye, a Professor of Iranian and Central Asian studies at Harvard University, who emphasized the need

for creating Armenian Studies chairs in American universities, this group aimed at establishing an endowed professorship in Armenian Studies at Harvard and later in other leading universities.[344] In Los Angeles around the time of the creation of NAASR, Mateos Ferrahian, a first generation Armenian-American attorney, bequeathed $300,000 for the purpose of establishing an Armenian high school in America (cf. Kossakian 2014).[345] The American-born Boston Armenians realized their dream by establishing an endowed chair in Armenian studies at Harvard. In California ten years after the passing of Mateos Ferrahian two Armenian groups of newcomers began competing for the establishment of a daily Armenian high school. The timing for founding an Armenian school could not have been more favorable as the ethnic school movement was proliferating in the Untied States in the 1960s (Ordjanian 1991, 80).[346] The *Ṙusahays* in Montebello and the *Beyrut'ahays* in San Fernando Valley raced to get a certificate from the state to receive the Ferrahian funds. Both groups were affiliated with the Dashnak faction, and the Prelacy of the Armenian Church decreed that two-thirds of the funds should go to the *Beyrut'ahay* initiative, and one-third to the *Ṙusahay*. With the support of the Holy Martyrs Armenian Church board, Gabriel Injejikian, a young educator from Lebanon, founded the first Armenian day school in Encino (San Fernando Valley, Los Angeles) in September 1964. A year later the school was named Holy Martyrs Ferrahian School after the major benefactor (Kossakian 2014). Around the same time, in 1965 the *Ṙusahays* started Mesrobian School in Montebello.[347]

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[344]. Interview with Raffi Yeghiayan. May 16, 2014; "History" *NAASR*. http://www.naasr.org/index.php/about-us-site-map-menu-93/history-site-map-menu-123. Accessed October 3, 2014.
[345] Interview with John Kossakian, the principal of Ferrahian School. March 4, 2014.
[346] Anahid Ordjanian (1991, 79) defines "ethnic school" as "an educational institution, which teaches a collective political identity which differs in some way from the collective political identity taught in public schools of the dominant nation-state in which it is located."
[347] Interview with Walter Karabian. March 6, 2014. Interview with Vatche Semerdjian. February 20, 2014.

The lifting of the immigration restrictions to the United States in 1965 cleared the way for the unrestricted flow of Armenians from the Middle East, who settled in various parts of the US with the help of Armenian organizations and institutions. Some of them were brought over to meet the need for journalists fluent in (Western) Armenian for Armenian language periodicals. The existing Ramkavar and Dashnak networks were able to recruit and transfer new cadres from the Middle East. The Ramkavar *Nor Or*, published in Fresno since 1921 moved to Los Angeles in 1964, where a generation of Middle Eastern Armenians actively contributed to the paper and gradually assumed its editorship.[348] *Baikar* and *Mirror-Spectator* in Boston also benefitted from similar contributors.[349] Similarly, a generation of Middle Eastern Armenians came to staff *Asbarez* in California and *Hairenik* association in Boston.[350]

The pace of the Middle-Easternization of Armenian political parties and affiliated organizations in France and the Untied States accelerated in the 1970s, especially after the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war in 1975. The Middle Eastern Armenians, arriving in France and the United States, often found institutions and organizations resembling the Armenian institutional structures of Lebanon (Syria or Egypt). The network of Armenian churches, regardless of the Dashnak and non-Dashnak divide, as well as the Dashnaktsutyun, Ramkavars and the AGBU with their affiliated organizations and associations, provided familiar structures through which

[348] Among the editors of *Nor Or*, Antranig Poladian (1957-58), Noubar Berberian (1958-1960), Misak Haigents (Kupelian) (1963-68), Oshin Keshishian (1968-70; 1977-78) and Vatche Semerdjian (co-editor in 1977-78; 1981-86 coeditor) had been active within the AGBU/Ramkavar circles in the Middle East prior to their arrival to the United States (see Antreassian 1981: 63-6; Aharonian 2006, 202; Danielian 1982,17-8; "Nor Ori" Kmbagirnerĕ," 2013).
[349] Edmond Azadian, who was born in Lebanon, worked several years as the assistant editor of *Zartonk* in Beirut, then as the editor of the Ramkavar organ *Arev* in Cairo. He assumed the directorship of the *Baikar* Association in Boston in 1967. He coordinated the publications of *Baikar* in Armenian and *The Armenian Mirror-Spectator* in English (Azadian 1999, I-II; Dallak'yan 2007, 361; Interview with Edmond Azadian. June 29, 2013).
[350] Minas Tölölyan arrived from the Middle East in 1960, assumed the editorship of *Hairenik* in 1962. After Reuben Darbinian passed away in 1968, he also succeeded Darbinian as the editor of *Hairenik Quarterly* (former *Hairenik Monthly*). While the *Quarterly* ceased publication in 1970, Tölölyan continued as the editor of *Hairenik* until 1979 ("Khmbagirner").

many Lebanese Armenians could integrate into the local Armenian community. For the Dashnak sympathizers this coincided with the beginning of the activities of the Justice Commandoes and the export of some radical Middle-Eastern Armenians to the West. The Bureau leaders, who needed to engage the party's transnational network in support of the activities of Justice Commandoes in Europe and the United States, launched a series of internal reforms, which significantly centralized the party and marginalized many influential leaders from the European and American regional committees (see previous section). The party rank and file or sympathizers originating from the Middle Eastern communities largely benefitted from the top-down centralization, as the highest ranked party leadership was interested in their inclusion and advancement in American and French chapters.[351]

Wherever the Middle Eastern Armenians found familiar organizations and institutions in their new host countries, they joined them, thereby integrating themselves into local Armenian affairs. Wherever the Lebanese Armenians could not find familiar institutions and organizations, they created new ones in close resemblance to structures in Lebanon. Due to the sizable numbers and

[351] As the number of Middle Eastern Armenians grew, local chapters of the Dashnaktsutyun and its affiliate organizations in Los Angeles became gradually dominated by Armenians from the Middle East (Interview with Viken Hovsepian, the Chairman of the Dashnaktsutyun Western USA Central Committee. March 5, 2014). In New England and New York the pace of the Middle-Easternization of the Dashnaktsutyun was slower due to several factors. First of all, the headquarters of the Dashnak party had been in Boston since the establishment of the party in the United States at the turn of the century. Throughout the next decades the New England chapters had been more influential than the chapters in California. By the 1960s, the Boston region published four periodicals - *Hairenik* and *Hairenik Monthly* in Armenian, *Armenian Weekly* and *Armenian Review* in English, while the California region published only *Asbarez*. Secondly, if the concentration of the DPs and the Middle Eastern Armenians in Los Angeles from the 1950s and 1960s began changing the balance between the American-born and the Ṙusahay/Middle-Eastern Dashnaks, in Boston area the American-born Armenians outnumbered the Armenians originating from the Middle East. In 1978, for example, almost all members of the Central Committee of the Eastern USA were American-born Armenians (Sarkisian 1995, 22). Finally, with the support of the party leadership, many radical Middle-East-born Dashnaks became involved in the party's youth organization (AYF) and began filling the ranks of the party in California at a much faster pace. Similarly, the influx of the Middle Eastern Armenians to France in the 1960s and 1970s, combined with the centralization and disciplinary measures undertaken by the Dashnak Bureau leadership, brought many of the Dashnaks of Middle Eastern origin to leadership positions within the party chapters in France (see previous section; Interview with Dikran Terterian. September 20, 2014).

concentration of the Middle Eastern Armenians in California, by 1982 Los Angeles had grown into a unique Armenian universe, where an Armenian "could spend an entire day among Armenians as an Armenian" (Tölölyan 1983). Various estimates put the number of Middle Eastern Armenians in Los Angeles in the 1980s between 50,000 and 75,000.[352] In such a community, where there had been no *Homenetmen*[353] chapters, the Middle Eastern Armenians founded a local chapter of *Homenetmen* in 1968, despite the fact that local chapters of Armenian Youth Federation organized sports events and annual Olympic games. Similarly, following the Lebanese-Armenian model of "nation-building," the Middle Eastern activists sought to recreate the club-church-school trinity in the United States. If in the decade of 1964 - 1974 only five-six daily Armenian schools had been established in various regions of the Untied States, by 1985 more than a dozen Armenian day schools had opened nationwide, with the overwhelming majority in Southern California (Peroomian and Avagyan 2003, 52-5). By the end of the 1980s, Western Prelacy[354] of the Armenian Church had the largest number of schools in California. In close resemblance to those in Lebanon, many of the school buildings were next to the Prelacy churches. Alongside schools and churches, the Middle Eastern Armenians also established party "clubs," even though, as they realized, such "clubs" could not perform the same scope of social functions as they had in Lebanon and served basically as community centers for occasional gatherings, events and leisure.

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[352] Reflecting on his impressions in Los Angeles in *Haratch* (May 6, 1983), Khachig Tölölyan put the number of Middle Eastern Armenians between 50,000 to 75,000. Based on the US census of 1980, Sabagh, Bozorgmehr and Der-Martorisian (1990, 4) suggest that the number of foreign-born Armenians in LA was 52,400.
[353] *Hay marmnakrt'akan ĕndhanur miut'iwn* (Armenian General Athletic Union).
[354] The Western Prelacy of the Armenian Church was established in 1973 under the direct jurisdiction of the Catholicosate of Cilicia. The rise of the number of Armenians in California determined the need for establishing a separate Prelacy ("Prelacy History" http://westernprelacy.org/prelacy-history/. Accessed October 4, 2014.

Armenians affiliated with the Hnchakyan, Ramkavar, and AGBU circles and arriving from the Middle East were also active in establishing community structures. Regardless of which faction founded Armenian schools, the fact that establishing Armenian schools was possible in the United States inspired many.[355] During his visit to Lebanon in 1963 Alex Manoogian, the president of the AGBU, acknowledged that for the preservation of Armenian identity the "American-Armenians needed the help of the Middle East" (cf. Melk'onyan 2005, 474). In 1967 in his address at the AGBU Annual General Assembly in New York he stressed that the organization was going to embark on establishing Armenian day schools in the Untied States (*Armenian Reporter,* December 2, 1967). Through the involvement of the Middle Eastern Armenians, in 1969 the AGBU founded an Armenian day school in Southfield, Michigan. In 1976 the AGBU also established Manoogian-Demirdjian school in Canoga Park, Los Angeles. The Ramkavars, along with reviving *Nor Or,* their newspaper, organized several chapters of the Tekeyan Cultural Association across the United States, started the *Armenakan* youth movement in 1974 in California and established the Arshag Dickranian Armenian day school also in California in 1981 (Dallak'yan 2007, 395-99). The arrival of the Middle Eastern Armenians revived the Hnchakyan chapters in California as well. By the end of the 1970s the Hnchakyans arriving from the Middle East organized not only the party chapters, but also the youth organization *Gaydz*, began issuing *Massis*, the organ of the Hnchakyan Western region from 1981, and established a branch of the *Nor Serount Cultural Association* in America.[356]

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[355] On December 2, 1967 the *Armenian Reporter* wrote: "The examples set by the two Armenian day schools founded three years ago in the Los Angeles area - the Holy Martyrs Armenian School and the Ferrahian School [*sic*] - will enhance the efforts of those who will work toward that end, as it has become obvious - and proven - that Armenian day schools can succeed in this country." Holy Martyrs and the Ferrahian were the same school. The other was the Mesrobian School in Montebello.

[356] Interview with Hampig Sarafian. March 4, 2014; interview with Harut Der Tavitian. February 26, 2014; interview with Sevak Khachatourian. March 2, 2014.

Compared to the United States, the process of Armenian immigration to France from the Middle East had been more spontaneous in the 1960s and accelerated only from the second half of the 1970s. First of all, there was no ANCHA counterpart in France to facilitate the immigration and establishment of Armenians in France from the Middle East and elsewhere in the 1950s and 1960s. Secondly, if the continuation of Armenian language periodicals in the United States had been dependent on the "fresh blood" from the Middle East, in France, the Mekhitarist Armenian Mouradian college prepared a generation of French-born Armenians, fluent in Armenian, who assumed leading positions in the community and occasionally contributed to *Haratch* and other Armenian language publications. If in the United States the Dashnaks arriving from the Middle East challenged the American-born Armenians for not speaking Armenian, in France some of their French-born party comrades and strong sympathizers were quite fluent and quite as passionate about the Armenian language and culture.[357] The changes in French society following the events of 1968 prompted some of these young and enthusiastic individuals to take advantage of the *droit á la difference* and establish Armenian cultural centers. Having been integrated into French society and politics, these French-Armenian activists even managed to get the support of local municipalities in establishing and running ethnic cultural centers. In the 1970s several *Maisons de la culture arménienne* emerged in many regions of France, in places where Armenians and especially the Dashnak sympathizers constituted significant numbers. In the mid-1970s, when disagreements over the "special affairs"[358] marginalized many of the French-Armenian Dashnaks, several *Maisons de la culture* distanced themselves from the Dashnaktsutyun. In places where *Maisons de la culture arménienne* remained affiliated with the party, the Middle Eastern Armenians became heavily involved in their activities. In places where

[357] Kegham Kevonian and Garo Hovsepian were quite prominent from among the graduates of the Mouradian College within the Dashnak circles.
[358] The Dashnaktsutyun referred to the terrorist acts of the Justice Commandoes as "special affairs."

they were dissociated from the party, as in Marseille, the Middle Eastern Dashnaks created their own *akumbs* (clubs), usually in densely populated Armenian neighborhoods, in the proximity of an Armenian church.[359] In parallel, the Middle Eastern Armenians actively got involved in school building efforts, as well as establishing Armenian kindergartens in their neighborhoods of concentration.[360]

The growing number of Armenian language newspapers and periodicals, Armenian kindergarten and schools both in France and the United States increased the need for school principals, teachers, editors, artists fluent in (Western) Armenian, and therefore the need for more professionally trained Armenians. These were mostly available in the Middle East. Since the 1970s the *Chemaran* and the Prelacy schools in Lebanon began supplying community leaders, editors and teachers for the Dashnak-affiliated organizations in the West. In 1974 the Hamazkayin started a special teachers' preparation program for the diasporan Armenian schools in *Chemaran*.[361] The Melkonian Educational Institute in Cyprus[362] and schools affiliated with the Ramkavar, AGBU and Hnchakyan circles in the Middle East also became instrumental in

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[359] In Marseille Garo Hovsepian was instrumental in the establishment of the *Maison arménienne de la jeunesse et de la culture de Marseille* in 1976. The internal disagreements gradually marginalized his faction, and the *Maison* separated from the party by the end of the 1970s. Even though it continued serving the Dashnak affiliated Croix Bleue, Nor Seround, Scouts and the Athletic club for various occasions and events, the *Maison* did not come under the control of the Middle Eastern faction. The Middle Eastern Dashnaks and sympathizers, who began concentrating in Beaumont quarter, eventually established the Hraïr Maroukhian Agoump (Akumb [club]) near the Armenian Church in Beaumont (Interview with Dikran Terterian. September 20, 2012. Interview with Garo Hovsepian. September 18, 2012).

[360] The school movement in France was not as prominent as in the United States. Between 1975 and 1980, only two Armenian daily kindergartens were founded in Alfortville (1978) and Marseille (1980). St. Mesrob in Alfortville became a pre-school in 1992. The other kindergarten in Marseille grew into a full *lycée* in 1994 with the support of the Hamazkayin Educational and Cultural Society. By the end of the 1980s, only 5 daily Armenian kindergartens and schools operated in France: the Mekhitarist Mouradian School in Sèvres, *Tebrotzassère* in Le Raincy, St. Mesrob in Alfortville, Hamazkayin in Marseille and Markarian-Papazian established in 1988 in Lyon (Mouradian and Ter-Minassian 2003, 635-37).

[361] "Hayagitakan bardzraguyn himnark" [Higher Institute for Armenian Studies]. *Haratch*. October 6, 1974.

[362] The Melkonian Educational Institute was a co-educational boarding school, established by the Melkonian brothers from Egypt in 1926. The Melkonians entrusted the management of the school to the AGBU (Melk'onyan 2005, 410-21).

meeting the same for their respective organizations. The Lebanese Armenian community thus produced editors, journalists, teachers, artists, and community leaders, who began assuming leading positions within political parties, the AGBU, Armenian churches, newspapers and periodicals, all-day and one day schools in France, the United States and elsewhere. By 1975 Lebanon was referred to as the cultural center of the Armenian diaspora, and Beirut as the capital of the Armenian diaspora (cf. Takooshian 1987, 136). However, the dispersion of the Lebanese Armenians and their assumption of leading positions in their new communities created some tensions both with the established Armenian community in France and the United States and with Armenians arriving from elsewhere.

The Clash of Identities in the United States and France

The influx of the Lebanese Armenians to France and the United States not only supplied "new blood" to what the newcomers perceived as the assimilated Armenian communities in the West, but they also brought a whole set of values, mentality, perceptions and perspectives of Armenianness. In the United States the influx of the Middle Eastern Armenians initiated what Zadoian (2012, 103) calls "culture wars" between "Armenian-Americans and Armenians from the Middle East." The clash of identities was more pronounced in the United States, where Armenian churches had been important community centers and generations of American-born Armenians remained actively connected to and involved in church affairs. Especially in the Prelacy affiliated churches, where the Middle Eastern newcomers and the American-born Armenians would often meet, the Middle Eastern Armenians looked down on American-born

Armenians, who could not speak their ancestral language and to them, did not have an Armenian identity. For the newcomers regular church attendance or regular activity within organizations without speaking the language could not make someone enough Armenian. As Schahgaldian observed in 1979, the Lebanese Armenians boasted of their community as the "most Armenian" of all diaspora communities. "The community was often called "the second Armenia," and its schools, clubs, and publications were often said to be the most noteworthy achievements of the Armenian people in the entire diaspora" (Schahgaldian 1979, 255-56). The newcomers, originating from this milieu, blamed the Armenians-Americans for not speaking Armenian and for forfeiting the Armenian culture. As an Armenian from Lebanon put it:

> We were the cream of the crop over there. The Arabs looked upon the Armenians that way. The Armenians were the skillful people, the clever people, and the educated people. We didn't care about the Arabic language. We went to our own private Armenian schools and we started with Armenian language, Armenian history, Armenian geography. Everything was Armenian. Many Armenians never even bothered to learn Arabic. We conversed with the Arabs in French. This was the educated class of Arabs. So it's a shock for the Armenians to come over here and see our language and culture becoming Americanized (quoted in Phillips 1987, 208-209).

Another newcomer was quoted saying: "Most of them don't know our language, and to me that means they can't call themselves Armenian."[363] Without considering the social-political conditions that made the very fact of Armenian schools, Armenian clubs or going-by-without-learning-Arabic possible in Lebanon, without necessarily realizing that the Lebanese and Syrian type of Armenianness was one of the many possible expressions of Armenian identity in the diaspora, the Lebanese and Syrian Armenians embarked on ambitious plans of (re)creating communities in close resemblance to Lebanon and Syria and imposing their Armenian culture on the American-born Armenians and Armenians from elsewhere. Due to their relatively large numbers and especially active involvement within organizations, in predominantly Prelacy-affiliated churches and Armenian schools, the Lebanese-Armenians imposed a new definition of

[363] "How Others See Us/Armenians in Watertown, Mass.: Pride, Rivalry among the Armenians." *Armenian Reporter,* May 18, 1978.

what it meant to be an Armenian in the diaspora. They offered a new 'standard' of Armenian identity, with the fluency in (Western) Armenian at its core (Panossian 2006, 305). Referring to the same process, Libaridian wrote: "…while no ideal or pure Armenian culture has ever existed or can exist, since the 1950s, the Near Eastern, increasingly the Aleppo-Beirut model, has been promoted as the ideal, making people from that part of the world a natural elite for the leadership of communities worldwide" (Libaridian 1999, 122-23). Reflecting on the tension between the Middle Eastern and American Armenians, on May 18, 1978, an *Armenian Reporter* contributor wrote about the Armenian community in Watertown:

> An even greater source of friction in recent years … has been the relationship between US-born Armenian Americans and the new immigrants. New comers feel the US-born Armenians have become too Americanized.

Most of the newcomers in Watertown joined the St. Stephens church[364] and began actively marginalizing the American-born Armenians. In response, some Dashnak leaning Armenian-American youth were even ready to join the Ramkavar leaning St. James church because the Middle Eastern kids pushed them out (Phillips 1989, 246). [365]

The new 'standard' of Armenianness imposed on the American-born Armenians provoked different reactions. Many felt great resentment for, even though they did not speak the language, they were nevertheless connected with churches, and they had kept their organizations going. But, most importantly, as they thought, their parents had done everything to raise them as Armenians. As one Armenian-American described:

> …Our mothers and fathers came here penniless and they made do. They even sent their sons and daughters to college. They had a very tight family structure and they brought their children up, to the best of their

[364] St. Stephens church was consecrated in 1957, following the 1956 Catholicosal elections in Lebanon. It joined the Dashnak Armenian National Apostolic Church and came under the jurisdiction of the Catholicosate of Cilicia.
[365] "How Others See Us/Armenians in Watertown, Mass.: Pride, Rivalry among the Armenians." *Armenian Reporter*, May 18, 1978.

> abilities, as good Armenians. Yet these new people think that we don't have an Armenian identity. We may not know the language, but we sure know where we come from (quoted in Phillips 1989, 208).

To cope with their frustration and resentment, many American-born Armenians refrained from interacting with the newcomers, socially distancing themselves from them. In the time when ASALA and the JCAG were actively targeting Turkish officials in Europe and the United States, certain stereotyping also determined attitudes towards the newcomers. Many American-born Armenians declared the newcomers as "a different group altogether" (Waldstreicher, 1989, 92). Some viewed them as "foreigners, possibly chauvinists or political radicals," who had yet to "shed their Old World ways" and who tarnished the Armenian-American image (Takooshian 1987, 146). Not all American-born Armenians, however, felt resentment and bitterness against the newcomers. Some, who were involved within various organizations, welcomed the arrival of Middle Eastern Armenians as an important "asset to the prosperous Armenian-American community" (*ibid.*, 146).

As a way of addressing and channeling the growing influence of Middle Eastern Armenians, one of the participants of the California Regional Assembly of the Armenian Assembly in April 1978, reportedly circulated a position paper, which partially read:

> The new immigrant comes into a strange land which has unfamiliar political habits. The immigrant speaks little or no English, and he is likely to take refuge in an Armenian ghetto, a tiny Armenian universe. How can the immigrant best be reached, so that our community can achieve optimal political effectiveness? The immigrant needs to become a citizen, to register to vote, and to vote fervently. He needs to know the primacy of personal contacts with elected officials, the importance of his attending and contributing during a fundraising event for a candidate, and of his encouraging his children to do volunteer campaign work. He needs to be exposed to American politics, to see the opportunity which political mobility affords to encourage his children into political careers (quoted in Sarkisian 1995, 20).

Rather than emphasizing the role of the Middle Eastern Armenians in retaining Armenian identity, the author suggested that the Middle Eastern Armenians should be helped to integrate

into the American political system and should be trained on how to be active in politics. He further proposed that since the ANC (Dashnak) and the Armenian Rights Movement (Ramkavar) had Armenian-speaking staff and ran Armenian-language periodicals, they were "best suited" to help the immigrants "acclimatize." Meanwhile, the paper reserved the task of developing "the American-born resource" for the Armenian Assembly, because lobbying in the United States needed people who were "fluent in English," who had gone to a public school, had "been exposed to American entertainment media, and developed a large circle of non-Armenian friends," who could "mix easily and feel comfortable at American functions," and could "understand best the American way of thinking" (quoted in Sarkisian 1995, 20-1). The report, produced five years after Gourgen Yanikian assassinated two Turkish Embassy officials in California, and when ASALA and the JCAG had been targeting Turkish officials elsewhere, implicitly seemed to call the ANC and the ARM who had certain influence among the Middle Eastern Armenians to channel the newcomers' energies towards 'more acceptable' means of political struggle. More explicitly, the report differentiated between the two groupings – the American-born Armenians and the Middle-Eastern Armenians, and considered the ANC and ARM as best suited to deal with the Middle Eastern Armenians, while the Assembly was reportedly well equipped for dealing with the American-born Armenians.

This paper was prepared at a time, when internal tensions among the different wings of the Assembly were growing. The Dashnaktsutyun/ANC, headquartered in the East Coast, could not accept such a proposal. In response to the report, Leo Sarkisian, an American-born Armenian, a former AYF activist and a prominent member of the ANC, published a lengthy criticism of the report in *Armenian Weekly* on December 23, 1978, entitled "To Increase our effectiveness,

"American-born" and "Newcomer" Armenians Must Work Together!" Sarkisian emphasized certain strengths of the Middle Eastern Armenians which the American-born Armenians lacked, pointing to their aggressiveness and boldness to "confront public officials, even the police when necessary" (Sarkissian 1995, 22). Regarding the "stereotyping of ANC (and therefore, ARF) as an immigrant-oriented organization," Sarkisian thought it resulted from "a narrow (California) focus" and that "the national- and state-level leaders and representatives of ANC represent[ed] "a healthy mix of American-born and "newcomers." Sarkisian acknowledged the existence of many immigrants within the ranks of the Dashnaktsutyun, but he also reminded that the party's Central Committee of Eastern United States was predominantly made up of American-born members.

Even though Sarkisian and many others realized the consequences of generalizations and the juxtaposition of the American-born and the "newcomers,"[366] the very fact that this dichotomy became a topic for discussion within the Armenian Assembly, in *The Armenian Weekly* and other English- and Armenian-language periodicals of the time reproduced these generalizations and stereotyping. Certainly, not all the Middle Eastern Armenians were actively involved in the organizations marginalizing the American-born Armenians, and certainly, not all American-born Armenians felt resentment in their encounters with the Middle Eastern Armenians. Yet these generalizations and stereotyping were further reinforced, as the Middle Eastern Armenians became more visible within Armenian political organizations, the Prelacy churches and schools, and became more pro-active in dictating a new 'standard' of Armenianness.

After the Dashnak and Ramkavar withdrawal from the Armenian Assembly the differences in the Armenian subethnic composition of the organizations became even more pronounced. The

[366] In the 1970s the term was predominantly used to refer to the Armenians arriving from the Middle East.

Armenian Assembly grew into predominantly an American-born Armenian represented organization, the Ramkavars into predominantly more Middle Eastern represented party, while the Dashnaktsutyun with its affiliate organizations provided a mixed representation. In California the Dashnaktsutyun, ANC and other affiliate organizations were increasingly staffed by the Middle Eastern Armenians. In Boston and East Coast, the party and the ANC represented, as Sarkisian noted, a mix of American and Middle Eastern born Armenians.

The parallel influx of new cohorts of Armenians from Turkey, Iran and Soviet Armenia in the 1970s and 1980s almost remained marginal in the "culture wars" between the Middle Eastern Armenians and American-born Armenians, as neither of these cohorts were aspiring for the positions occupied by the American-born Armenians or increasingly by the Middle-Eastern Armenians in various Armenian organizations. In contrast to the Middle Eastern Armenians,[367] these cohorts of Armenians, having developed different kinds of Armenianness and having been shaped by different dominating cultures and country specific social-political contexts,[368] in most cases could not relate to Armenian institutions and organizations, as well as to peculiar institutional and communal cultures.

Armenians from Turkey came from different regional backgrounds but shared a strong affiliation with the church. Even though they preferred to be identified as *Polsahays* [Istanbul Armenians] many among them originated from different provinces in Anatolia. Among the *Polsahays*, some had developed a negative image of the Armenian diaspora in general since the 1965 joint actions

[367] In these generalized perceptions Armenians from Turkey and Iran were differentiated from those coming from the Arab countries. Armenians from Lebanon (Syria and Egypt) were generally labeled as the "Middle Eastern Armenians," while the former were referred to as Iranian- or Istanbul-Armenians respectively.
[368] Anny Bakalian (1993, 231) uses the expression "separate ethnogenesis" to explain the reasons of differences between various Armenian subcommunities.

against Turkey and they refused to be associated with the diaspora (see chapter 4). Others, usually a very small number, who had been sympathetic to the activities of Armenian political parties, refrained from being affiliated with them because of the fear that it would be detrimental to their families, relatives or friends back in Turkey. For most Armenians arriving from Turkey, encountering other Armenian organizations was an entirely new experience. In Istanbul most Armenians had never been instructed Armenian history and had not learned of the Armenian political parties and organizations. Armenian churches, therefore, were the only institutions to which Armenians from Turkey could relate.[369] Both in Watertown and in Los Angeles the *Polsahays* (Istanbul Armenians), as this group of Armenians self-referred and was referred to by others, became gradually involved and represented within the Ējmiatsin affiliated churches. In both places they soon established organizations of Istanbul Armenians aiming to provide a "taste of home," a community center, and various kinds of services to the immigrating compatriots.[370]

The Iranian Armenians, whose immigration to the West intensified after the Iranian revolution of 1979, constituted cohorts of Dashnak members and sympathizers, and more neutral or often anti-Dashnak currents. Upon their arrival, many Iranian Armenians felt comfortable joining the Dashnaktsutyun and its affiliate organizations. Most, however, could not easily integrate into existing Armenian organizations in the United States. Their fluency in Eastern Armenian, rather than Western Armenian, along with differences in customs and traditions made them less compatible with the dominating Western-Armenian-speaking Armenians and their culture, and

[369] Apart from the church, a very small number of Istanbul Armenians later joined the apolitical AGBU, and only a few representatives got involved in other Armenian organizations by supporting the ANC, the Armenian Assembly or other local initiatives.
[370] The choice of "Istanbul Armenians" was a strategic decision by the founders of the organizations in order to avoid the alternative of being referred to as "Turkish Armenians." (Interview with Kurken Berksanlar. March 8, 2014; interview with Fr. Arakel Aljalian. May 7, 2014).

even less compatible with the American-born Armenians. Even before the massive influx after 1979, significant numbers of Iranian Armenians who had arrived in the United States primarily as students, had established Iranian Armenian clubs. In Los Angeles, New York, Watertown and elsewhere Iranian Armenian clubs and societies had existed from the 1950s and 1960s, but they became prominent organizations only after the post-1979 influx.[371]

The Soviet Armenians constituted an entirely different breed, originating from the homeland, where they had never felt the need to define their Armenian identities or question their Armenianness. The descendants of repatriate families from 1946-49 constituted the bulk among the first waves of Soviet Armenian immigrants after 1975. While the repatriate families had some idea of the conditions in the diaspora, upon their return most refrained from participating in any organizations. From among the non-repatriate families, similar to Armenians from Turkey, most Soviet Armenians had not gotten an opportunity to learn about the Armenian political parties, the AGBU, or other diasporic organizations. Secondly, even though many of them might have had some exposure to Western Armenian through some occasional encounters with the repatriated Armenians in Soviet Armenia, the unfamiliar organizations, with their Middle Eastern Armenian or Armenian-American culture, made those organizations less relatable for Soviet Armenians. Thirdly, the difference in the Eastern and Western Armenian languages and their orthographies made the Soviet Armenians less competitive in finding jobs in Armenian schools, in Armenian-language periodicals, radio stations and elsewhere. Finally, in contrast to Istanbul Armenians, for most Soviet Armenians, the church had not been part of their Soviet

[371]. Interview with Tomik Alexanian, the President of the Armenian Society of Los Angeles (Society of Iranian Armenians). March 1,3 2014; interview with Arax Badalian. May 14, 2014. "Iranian Armenians to Honor SHAH." 1967. *Armenian Reporter*, Nov 02, 1. While the Iranian Armenian societies preserved the word "Iranian" in the Armenian version of their association, in English both associations in Watertown and Glendale are registered as "Armenian Society" of Boston and of Los Angeles respectively.

secular upbringing. Consequently, they did not get involved in the Armenian Church affairs in the diaspora as dues-paying parishioners. In most cases Soviet Armenians remained uninvolved in any diasporic organization. Their growing numbers and occasional delinquent behavior made this group also a target of stereotyping by the American-born Armenians (cf. Takooshian 1987, 146).

The clash of identities was not as pronounced in France, but in general, similar patterns manifested among Armenian subethnic groups. Even though *Haratch* had been sounding alarms about assimilation for many decades, except for establishing some weekly Armenian-language instruction schools under the aegis of Armenian churches and various organizations, the French-born second and third generations, who remained mostly uninvolved in Armenian organizations, were indifferent or at most slow in responding to such concerns. The school movement of the 1980s, although not as widespread as in the Untied States, was largely thanks to the efforts of the Middle-East-born Armenians. While comparative research will shed more light on immigration and settlement patterns of Armenians arriving to France and the United States from the Middle East and Soviet Armenia, it seems in France Armenians from the Arab countries were similarly active in joining various existing organizations and especially the Dashnak-affiliated ones; the Iranian Armenians did not form a visible subethnic community; and the Soviet Armenians with some exceptions remained largely uninvolved in the existing structures. Compared to the United States, the Istanbul Armenians (*Polsahays*) in France took different routes to adjustment in France.

Turkey-born Armenians began arriving in France in the late 1940s. The "Wealth tax" introduced in 1942 and levied on the wealthy citizens in Turkey targeted heavily the non-Muslim minorities, including Armenians. At the same time many Armenians were enlisted in the army during WWII. They were basically used as soldiers in labor battalions, in road construction and other projects.[372] Although the tax was abolished in 1944, the unfair treatment of Armenians during the war caused a major outflow of Armenians from Istanbul, mostly to France. Another outflow of Armenians from Istanbul was caused by the outbreak of violence against Greeks and, to a lesser extent, Armenians in Istanbul on September 6-7, 1955.[373] Finally, the persecutions of the Communist party in Turkey during the Cold War forced many communists, including some Turkey-born Armenian members of the party, out of country. From the late 1940s and until the early 1960s many Istanbul Armenians thus kept arriving and settling in France. For the Communist Armenians France provided more favorable conditions, where the JAF and the UCFAF were certainly pro-Communist organizations. Despite sympathizing with the JAF and the UCFAF, the Armenophone Communist Istanbul Armenians, however, were not satisfied with the French language organ of the JAF, *Notre Voix,* and founded the *Achkhar* weekly in Armenian in 1960.[374]

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[372] In retrospect, many Polsahays believe had the Nazis succeeded at Stalingrad, the Armenians enlisted in the army would have never returned (Interview with Berdj Maslak. October 29, 2012; interview with Kurken Berksanlar. March 8, 2014).

[373] On September 6, 1955, the news of an explosion near the Atatürk Museum, Mustafa Kemal's birthplace in Thessaloniki, Greece quickly spread in Istanbul. Although perpetrators were not identified, the incident caused large-scale persecutions of Greeks in September 6-7, 1955. Along with the Greek stores some Armenian owned stores, buildings and businesses were also significantly damaged.

[374] The founder and first editor of *Achkhar* was Avedis Alixanian, who was born in Istanbul in 1910. Alixanian was a member of the Communist party in Turkey. He arrived to France in the 1950s, escaping anti-Communist persecutions. He founded *Achkhar* on May 7, 1960 and edited it until his death in 1984. *Achkhar* was very close to the JAF and the UCFAF and occasionally published JAF/UCFAF press releases and other news (Interview with Berdj Maslak, the Editor of *Achkhar*. October 29, 2012).

Except those involved with the Dashnaktsutyun and its satellite organizations, the French-born Armenians, if involved in Armenian matters, had mostly established organizations peculiar to the French context. The newcomer Armenians from Arab countries, therefore, who sought to get involved in and integrate into more familiar organizational structures in the West, did not pose a challenge to this category of French-born Armenians. In contrast to the American-born Armenians, the French-born Armenians were less involved with the Armenian Church, and consequently, tensions between the newcomers and the French-born Armenians were less acute. The influx of the Middle-Eastern-born Armenians to France in the 1970s and 1980s coincided with the time when the French-born Armenians were experiencing a certain renaissance after the joint actions during the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the genocide and because of the changing French context in the 1970s. The concept of *arménité* emerged in the 1970s among the Francophone third and fourth generations as a way of expressing their difference from their French coworkers and classmates. In search of what it meant to be an Armenian, most of these youth returned to their source of origin, the genocide and their ancestors (Hovanessian 1992, 250-52). The decade of Armenian terrorism (1975-85) evoked different modes of embracing *arménité.* Some representatives of the French-born third generation preferred to avoid any affiliation with the Armenian community, while continuing their own personal quest for family stories and reclaiming their Armenian origins. Others found the expression of *arménité* in becoming more active in politics, more involved in various Armenian organizations, as for the first time the French newspapers and periodicals began writing about the Armenians and their cause. And finally, for some others the terrorist acts served as a wake-up call to begin their quest for *arménité* (cf. Hovanessian 1992, 255-57). In the process, similar to other minorities in

France, the French-born Armenians began increasingly emphasizing the origin of their identities, as *français d'origine arménienne.*

In a comparative perspective, different modes of self-identifications, formed under different country conditions, seem to have determined the intensity of tensions between the Middle Eastern Armenians and second and third generation Armenians born in France and the United States. In the Middle East, particularly in Lebanon, for example, the Armenian identity had been ascribed to a person at birth.[375] Shortly after their settlement in Lebanon, Armenians had been defined as Armenians (whether Orthodox, Catholic or Evangelical) and given rights to participate in the country's social-political life as Armenians. At the same time, they had been Lebanese, enjoyed full rights not because they assimilated in the dominant Arabic-speaking culture, but precisely because they represented separate Armenian confessional communities. Increasingly Western Armenian became the common denominator in all Armenian schools, regardless of confessional or partisan affiliations. Within these communities Armenians became more cohesive like a nation not only thanks to the "elite mobilization efforts," as Razmik Panossian argued in the passage quoted above, but also largely due to the external sociopolitical conditions. Second and third generation Armenians born in Lebanon, especially those within the Apostolic Armenian community, did not have much choice but to develop primarily an Armenian identity.[376] As paradoxical as it could sound in the contexts of France or the United States, growing up as an Armenian in Lebanon was completely compatible with the Lebanese political identity. As Migliorino notes: "…the politico-institutional make-up of the country has

[375] With varying degrees this seems to be true for the Middle East in general, including Iran and Turkey.
[376] According to Schahgaldian (1979: 52), Catholic Armenian families often did not feel a strong desire of culture-specific education. They would often send their children to either French or Maronite schools. Elsewhere, Schahgaldian suggests that by 1970 no more than 50% of Catholic Armenians in Lebanon could speak Armenian (*ibid.,* 230, footnote).

somehow objectively contributed to the remarkable resilience of Armenian cultural diversity in Lebanon," allowing Armenians to feel "100% Armenian and 100% Lebanese at the same time" (Migliorino 2009, 480). Self-identifying as an Armenian, therefore, was more natural for most second and third generation Armenians, than self-identifying as Lebanese. They grew up Armenophone and they could in theory spend an entire life within Armenian circles and not feel the need to interact with other confessional communities.

In contrast, by the 1960s in France and the United States retaining an Armenian identity needed extra efforts and was not encouraged by the social-political conditions. Quite the contrary, conditions in both countries provided limited possibilities for developing an exclusively Armenian identity. Unlike Lebanon, being an Armenian in both these countries meant an attainment of an identity, a choice rather than ascription by birth. The immediate social environment in France or in the Untied States expected that the descendants of the first generations would become fully-fledged French or Americans, even when the coercive policies of assimilation had mostly waned by the 1960s. Under such conditions both in France and the Untied States, the second and third generations grew predominantly Francophone and Anglophone. On the other hand, even if some French-born generations remained active within various community organizations, most grew disassociated from the Armenian churches, while the cultural peculiarities in the United States encouraged many of the American-born to remain affiliated with an Armenian church. If there was an Armenian church in the proximity, the American-born Armenians would most likely remain connected with that church.[377] Through church affiliation the American-born Armenians developed a certain shared sense of belonging

[377] According to Bakalian (1993, 78), about two-thirds of American-born Armenians in New York and New Jersey are affiliated with the Armenian Apostolic Church and only about one-fifth "have left ethnic churches to join other nonethnic denominations or are not interested in organized religion."

to an Armenian community, to a parish congregation, in a private, yet, at the same time, public Armenian space. Affiliation with the church also meant being directly or indirectly signed-up to certain political ideologies, especially since the split of 1933. The church and political parties were more important in shaping the shared perceptions of what it meant to be Armenian for American-born generations (cf. Bakalian 1993, 90). What they had in common at the church and at church events was precisely what made them different from other Americans as a collectivity, and what constituted the Armenian part of their collective hyphenated identity. The French-born Armenians, with rare exceptions, did not have any Armenian public spaces to develop a shared sense of belonging, a shared sense of Armenianness. They had been "struggling for escaping the stigmatization of their migratory reality" and blending into the French society (cf. Hovanessian 1992, 301ff). The quest for *arménité,* emerging in the 1970s, was very much a private experience of one's own dealing with the past, with his or her origins, and therefore, the attendant behavioral patterns greatly differed. In the realization of their *arménité* some joined Armenian churches, others became engaged in Armenian organizations, some got involved in politics, while others practiced the oriental cuisine, learned Armenian or worked with other Armenians (Hovanessian 1992, 260).

The influx of Middle Eastern Armenians created much tension with the American-born Armenians precisely because the newcomers became involved in the very same public spaces and began imposing new perceptions of Armenianness. It was in churches and within organizations that the "culture wars" between the Middle Eastern and American-born Armenians were fought. To borrow Anny Bakalian's (1993, 6) terminology, to the "voluntary, rational and situational" "symbolic" identities of the American-born Armenians, the Middle Eastern

Armenians contrasted their "ascribed, unconscious, and compulsive" "traditional" identities, challenging the American-born Armenians' shared perception of Armenianness. With the arrival of the Middle Eastern Armenians, suddenly, the American-born Armenians were told that whatever they had developed had nothing to do with Armenianness, that they were not Armenians. In more practical terms, it meant that the American-born Armenians were no longer welcomed to the very same Armenian public spaces which they had developed, to the very same organizations and institutions which they had established. Such a clash of identities increasingly formed two categories: by the end of the 1970s through the 1980s the concept of Armenian-American came to mean essentially the American-born Armenians and was contrasted to the "newcomers," even though many of the newcomers were soon acquiring US citizenship. In France tensions between the Middle Eastern Armenians and the French-born Armenians were less acute. Those among the second and third generations, who had been able to develop some proficiency in Western Armenian in France and had been active within organizations, did not get challenged by the Middle Eastern Armenians within those same organizations, because they spoke the same language and felt closer to them.[378] Tensions and disagreements between them, notably within the Dashnaktsutyun, were over political tactics, rather than identity issues. For the majority of French-born second and third generations, who had little or no knowledge of Armenian, the perceptions of *arménité* were predominantly a private, individual or family, past-oriented experience, detached from any organizational affiliation. In contrast to the crystallizing Armenian-American category in the United States, which implied the existence of certain communal traits among the American-born Armenians and which was challenged by the newcomers, the developing identity *d'origine arménienne* among the French-born Armenians did not imply any communal features delineating an identifiable French-Armenian community.

[378] Interview with Hasmik Nadirian-Kevonian. October 11, 2012.

As a result of private and individual quests for *arménité,* many returned to the roots, to the genocide, the dispersion, and the routes of how they ended up in France. Within the context of such a perception of *arménité,* affiliation with the Armenian political parties or churches were not essential, although they certainly provided some outlets for diasporic involvement. Similar perceptions of *Armenianness* also developed among some American-born generations, who had not been affiliated with Armenian churches or Armenian organizations.

Despite the attempts of the Middle Eastern Armenians to impose their exclusive 'standard' of Armenianness on the American and French-born Armenians, the latter had many other ways of expressing their Armenianness. This was done through individual involvement in Soviet Armenia and Armenians-related matters through original initiatives or by involvement with country-specific Armenian organizations in the United States or France, such as the Armenian Assembly, the Knights of Vartan, the JAF or the UCFAF, even the Dashnak-created ANC and CDCA. The changing social-political conditions in Soviet Armenia after 1965, as well as the crystallizing self-reflexive discourses on the homeland and the diaspora, as the following section will discuss, provided alternative ways for the expression of Armenianness in the diaspora.

Homeland and Diaspora Reconsidered. The Crystallization of Transnational Political Paradigms in the Post-Genocide Armenian Diaspora

Several months after the joint commemorations of the fiftieth anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, on the eve of the anniversary of the Sovietization of Armenia on November 28, 1965, *Haratch* outlined in an editorial:

> The barren dispute on the surrounding conditions of the Sovietization of Armenia and the ways of its implementation is still going on between the two adversary fronts abroad. Our [the Dashnak - V.S.] front declares...: "The current regime is neither what we wanted, nor what we sought, and [is] not what we ordered… It was imposed on us by a stronger neighbor…" Another front, for reasons comprehensible to them and, perhaps to us, "corrects" us: "No, you are very wrong… We, the naked [Armenian] people were in need of robust and strong-armed defender and we found [it]… And we were saved… Independence is both a danger and a luxury for us." These two viewpoints are as different in nature from one another as black and white…

The year 1965 opened a new era in relations among the formerly hostile diasporic factions. The joint commemorations almost in every Armenian community had been quite promising, as thousands of Armenians of all political persuasions and spectrums, originating from diverse confessional, compatriotic, cultural and host-country specific backgrounds, from Soviet Armenia to the Middle East and Europe, were ready to shed the Cold War hostilities for the sake of a higher goal. Several months later, when the massive April 24 demonstration in Soviet Armenia and the impressive marches by large numbers of Armenians in the capitals of many countries did not yield any tangible outcome, life returned to its ordinary routine. Remaining loyal to the decades-long established traditions, the anti-Dashnak factions were preparing to celebrate November 29, the day of the Sovietization of Armenia, while the Dashnak factions continued

rejecting it, preferring May 28, the Independence Day of the 1918 Republic of Armenia. The "two viewpoints" as *Haratch* pointed to, continued to prevail.

The difference from the pre-1965 state of affairs was the increasing presence of Soviet Armenia in the activities of the diaspora. Unlike the 1920s, when the chapters of HOK had been operating in many countries and were directly involved in diaspora matters, the involvement of Soviet Armenia from the mid-1950s was rather indirect. From the mid-1960s it became more intense mediated by the Yerevan based *Diaspora Committee* and the Soviet embassies abroad,[379] through the radio program, the weekly *Hayrenik'i dzayn* (The Voice of the Homeland), the monthly *Sovetakan Hayastan* (Soviet Armenia), plus through a number of publications, booklets, films, photos, newspapers, bands and dance troops occasionally touring in various diaspora communities, as well as through other means of cultural exchange. Increasingly, Soviet Armenia was becoming a center, claiming to be the homeland of all Armenians. The active (re)involvement of Soviet Armenia in the matters of the Armenian diaspora in the 1960s was more ambitious than the policies pursued through the HOK chapters in the 1920s and 1930s. Increasingly, self-promoting as the homeland, Soviet Armenia began acting as an aid provider than receiver, and was "perceived to be the bastion of Armenianness, coming to help its culturally 'poor' brothers in exile" (Panossian 2006, 371). The '*patriots'*, as the pro-Soviet faction had been self-identifying from the late 1940s, could only welcome the involvement of Soviet Armenia in the diaspora. The renewed possibilities to visit Soviet Armenia, to study at the institutions of higher education in Yerevan and to have some actual contacts with intellectuals,

[379] In Lebanon, for example, from 1960 to 1991 there was a constant "Soviet diplomat of Armenian ethnicity" at the Soviet Embassy, usually with the rank of an *attaché.* Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Soviet Armenia obtained appointments in a number of foreign Soviet embassies in countries where there were Armenian communities (Sanjian 2007, 275).

scholars and professionals, artists and musicians visiting from Soviet Armenia strengthened ties with the homeland and enhanced the feeling of patriotism. The pro-Soviet JAF and the UCFAF in France, Hnchakyans and Ramkavars in Lebanon, as well as their sympathizers largely benefitted from the new possibilities, acting as the partners of Yerevan based *Diaspora Committee* in various projects. Meanwhile, from 1963 delegates from Soviet Armenia had been having regular, albeit secret, meetings with the Dashnak Bureau members (Sanjian 2007, 277). Even though these meetings probably led in the 1970s to some revision in the Dashnak anti-Soviet policies, rather than becoming pro-Soviet Armenia and celebrating the achievements of Soviet Armenia, the party leadership and intellectuals, to all appearances, continued focusing on the diaspora.

By the 1980s two transnational paradigms had developed on relations between the homeland and the diaspora. The pro-Soviet factions, who comprised different organizations and institutions, inspired by the revived relations with Soviet Armenia, generated a more homeland (Soviet Armenia)-centered paradigm, whereas the Dashnaktsutyun and its affiliate organizations favored a more diaspora-centered paradigm. Both paradigms drew on already shaped approaches to the homeland and the diaspora, but crystallized in the period of 1965-1980.

After their exile from Turkey and the Sovietization of Armenia in 1920, the Hnchakyan, Ramkavar and Communist Armenian circles in the diaspora, as argued in the previous chapters, developed a pro-Soviet Armenia stand. The decades-long struggle against the Dashnaktsutyun's often aggressive anti-Soviet orientation produced among these diverse political Armenian groupings in various countries a shared common attitude towards Soviet Armenia as the

homeland. The Hnchakyans adopted a pro-Soviet and pro-Soviet Armenia attitude quickly after the Sovietization of Armenia in 1920. The party unconditionally supported Soviet Armenia thereafter. The immediate response of the Ramkavars to the Sovietization of Armenia in the 1920s was to adopt supportive stand, but with certain reservations, as the party represented an ideologically opposite pole both to communism and socialism. Following the World Congress of 1946, the party actively embarked on organizing the return of diaspora Armenians to homeland. So did the other pro-Soviet organizations. For the '*patriots*' as the Ramkavar-Hnchak-Communist factions began self-referring in the 1940s and 1950s, relations with Soviet Armenia were essential, albeit not always possible due to political ups and downs in the Soviet Union. The 1960s gave a new impetus to the relations of the pro-Soviet factions with Soviet Armenia, as conditions in Soviet Armenia became progressively conducive to reestablishing and maintaining relations with various segments of Soviet Armenian society. Editorials in *Ararad* and *Zartonk* in Lebanon, letters addressed to the *Diaspora Committee* in Soviet Armenia kept on praising Soviet Armenia and confirming it to be the homeland of Armenians in the diaspora as well. One of such editorials in *Ararad* wrote in 1966:

> Armenia is the hope and belief of every Armenian. Diaspora Armenians [sp'iwṙk'ahayut'yunĕ] embrace her as the meaning and the substance of their existence. The revived Armenia is the national pride of Armenians, the element that lends meaning to its presence and substantiates its future (quoted in Melik'set'yan 1985, 371).

In a letter addressed to the *Diaspora Committee*, Bebo Simonian (Pepo Simonian), the Principal of the Hnchakyan-controlled Rupinian school in Beirut and the chairman of the Hnchakyan *Nor Serount Cultural Association* wrote in appreciation: "I find "*Hayrenik'i dzayn*" extremely useful. The government of our homeland has done a tremendous job by initiating the publication of this weekly, which plays a great role in rallying diasporan Armenians around the homeland" (quoted in Melik'set'yan 1985, 383).

From among the Ramkavars, Kersam Aharonian, the editor of *Zartonk* from 1948, also constructed the image of Soviet Armenia as the "Mother Homeland" through a series of editorials published in April-August 1964. Reflecting on the importance of the creation of the Ramkavar party in 1921, Aharonian wrote:

> It was necessary to keep firm the love towards the Homeland among the Armenian remnants, who survived the shipwreck; it was necessary to organize them and to keep them away from the abyss of hopelessness and assimilation as much as possible; it was necessary to advance and enhance spiritual unity and brotherhood between the Mother Homeland and the children of Armenian people in the Armenian diaspora, despite the unfavorable political conditions; it was necessary to keep alive the interests towards the sacred national cause and it was necessary to adopt a new orientation (Aharonian [1964] 1986, 177).

Stressing the importance of homeland-diaspora relations, Aharonian devoted several editorials to the history, industrial and cultural advancement of the "Mother Homeland" in the 1920s and 1930s; to WWII and the participation of Soviet Armenians in the war; to the conditions in the homeland following the war; and finally to the joint efforts of the homeland and the diaspora in pursuit of the Armenian Cause in the 1940s (*ibid.*, 180-201). Overall, critical of the Soviet regime for the misfortunes of Armenians during the Stalinist repressions and for the abandoning of the Armenian Cause, Aharonian, nevertheless, created a positive image of Soviet Armenia as the "national home." "Our people are fortunate to have their national home [*azgayin ojakh*] at the slopes of the Mount Ararat," wrote Aharonian, adding that the job was incomplete: "Only one-tenth of the homeland, 30,000 square kilometers are in their hands. The remaining nine-tenth is subjected to foreign domination. The big seizer, Turkey, has usurped more than seven-tenths of [Armenian] lands. And out of four and a half million population, only two million [Armenians] live in their national home; more than half of them are migrants, refugees, subjected to assimilation, subjected to dreadful threat of 'the white massacre' " (*ibid.*, 203). Soviet Armenia was portrayed as the "Mother Homeland," yet the homeland did not end there. In Aharonian's

discourse and for the Ramkavars, the Mother Homeland was both Soviet Armenia and the rest of Armenian lands. Therefore, he defined the liberation of the territories occupied by Turkey and the annexation of those lands to Soviet Armenia as the essence of the Armenian Cause (*ibid.,* 204).

The discourse Aharonian created in the pages of *Zartonk* was quite authoritative, as his editorials were published in a single volume the same year in Beirut and became widely circulated and used as teaching material in Armenian history classes in two AGBU high schools in Lebanon. Besides occupying important positions within the Ramkavar party and the AGBU, Aharonian was also a teacher of history at Tarouhi Hagopian and Hovagimian-Manoogian AGBU high schools in Lebanon and used his own notes and essays for instruction (cf. Aharonian 2006, 201-203). His book, entitled *Mets erazi champ'un vra (aknark haykakan harts'i patmut'yan vra)*, [On the Road to the Big Dream (A Review on the History of the Armenian Question)], acquired so much popularity, that in the following decades it was reprinted a second and a third time, last time in Los Angeles in 1986. The failure to achieve the demanded compensations in 1965 did not change the Ramkavar attitude towards Soviet Armenia. Subsequent World Congresses in 1969, 1972, 1977 and 1982 reconfirmed the party's position towards the homeland. Soviet Armenia was perceived as the guarantor of the "national physical existence of the Armenian people" (quoted in Dallak'yan 2007, 267; cf. 291; 391). The preservation of Armenian identity in the diaspora (*hayapahpanum*), which the Ramkavar and AGBU circles emphasized as the most pressing matter in the 1960s and 1970s, could be attained only by intense relations with Soviet Armenia. "Without the spiritual and intellectual relations with the homeland," wrote the AGBU monthly *Khosnag* in 1970, "our efforts for the preservation of the Armenian nation

(*azgapahpanum*) will turn into worthless endeavor. The homeland with all its resources - radio, periodical press, books, cultural relations, mutual visits - fully contributes to our struggle for "being" (quoted in Melik'set'yan 1985, 373).

In France, where the Hnchakyans and the Ramkavars had no visible presence after WWII, the pro-Soviet Armenian periodical press, as well as the activities of the JAF and the UCFAF[380] produced similar discourses on Soviet Armenia-diaspora relations. The "patriotic" organizations, as they quite often identified themselves, became more visible and active in the 1960s. Since its founding in 1960, the bi-weekly *Achkhar,* emphasized the relations with the homeland, (Soviet) Armenia, in a number of editorials and articles. JAF leaders also found the relations with Soviet Armenia important in the efforts of the diaspora to resist assimilation. "Diaspora Armenians," they wrote on the occasion of the creation of the *Diaspora Committee*, "with their modest resources have been struggling and will struggle against that danger [assimilation - V.S.]. But [they] have always had the conviction that it is the mother homeland who can stop the alarming danger of assimilation with her charms and practical means, until the fortunate day, when she will be able to accept her vagrant children into her bosom" (quoted in Melik'set'yan 1985, 371-72). In the 1960s, the members of the JAF and the UCFAF began regularly visiting Soviet Armenia and hosting visitors, guests, dance groups, choir collectives and musical bands from Soviet Armenia. The celebrations of November 29 became more pronounced by the regular presence of guests and artistic groups from Soviet Armenia. The confidence of the JAF and the UCFAF was growing in parallel to the improving relations with Soviet Armenia. On the fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the Sovietization of Armenia in November 1970, organized by the

[380] According to Ch'ormisian (1975, 216), the UCFAF was not able to regroup the "patriotic" mass of the community and the pro-Soviet faction had scattered after the dissolution of the *Front National Arménien*.

UCFAF, the Soviet Ambassador in Paris paid a visit to Marseille. On this occasion, for the first time, the residents of Marseille saw the red-blue-red flag of Soviet Armenia with the hummer and sickle in the upper left corner, erected on the stairs of the municipality building[381] (cf. Boghossian 2005, 307).

In this euphoric context, and in the course of a decade in the 1970s, Lewon Ch'ormisian published a multi-volume history of the past century of the "Western Armenians," the fourth volume of which was devoted to the history of "French-Armenians." Ch'ormisian was a former member of the Dashnak party until his ouster from the party in late 1930s. He travelled to Soviet Armenia in 1945 as one of the delegates to the elections of the Catholicos, and until 1959 was a UCFAF member (Ch'ormisian 1975, 100; 199; 211; 225). After parting with the UCFAF, Ch'ormisian remained non-partisan, but loyal to the "patriotic" faction, as he often referred to the pro-Soviet faction in his works. Even though he lived most of his life in France, his books were published in Beirut. Critical towards all Armenian political parties, Ch'ormisian's major target nonetheless remained the Dashnaktsutyun. In his earlier work on the Armenian political parties published in 1965, Ch'ormisian believed that "the political parties stopped having a national consciousness" and had created instead a "national partisan spirit" (*azgayin kusakts'akan ogi*) which did not coincide with the "Armenian national consciousness" (Ch'ormisian [1965] 1995, 217). This was an implicit criticism of the Dashnaktsutyun, many representatives of which had believed and, in the case of Sarkis Atamian (1955, 272), had even expressly argued, "the Dashnaktsutyun is the Armenian national consciousness."[382] For Ch'ormisian, Soviet Armenia

[381] Stephan Boghossian was an eyewitness to the events, a long time member of the JAF and the UCFAF. In 1970, he was the secretary of the Marseille Regional Board of the UCFAF, one of the organizers of the fiftieth anniversary celebration events (Boghossian 2005, 306)
[382] See chapter 4.

represented the homeland and the only legitimate agency to claim Armenian historical lands and to produce unity in Armenian language and history (Ch‘ormisian [1965] 1995, 250-51). He was more accepting of the Ramkavars and Hnchakyans, because for them the "homeland was of more importance, than party affiliations" (*ibid.*, 289). "The homeland," elaborated Ch‘ormisian in his next book, "is not only the reality that provides bread, but also the basis and pedestal of the national existence. The preservation of the nation without the homeland is inconceivable" (Ch‘ormisian 1975, 122). Similar to Kersam Aharonian earlier, Ch‘ormisian also believed that the preservation of Armenian identity in the diaspora was very much dependent on the homeland. Reflecting on Dashnak policies towards the homeland in the 1920s, Ch‘ormisian (1975, 123) wrote in retrospection:

> The intention to govern Armenia from outside is meaningless and ridiculous, indeed. Was it possible to run the Homeland [affairs] from Paris, New York, Cairo, Beirut? If not, what was the meaning of the national policy pursued by Armenians abroad? One of its two irreconcilable reflections - the opposition, the struggle against the Homeland government - could have no justification either practically or ideologically.

Although Ch‘ormisian was overall critical of the Communists and the UCFAF as well, he admitted that the UCFAF enjoyed the "sympathy and support of the Association for the Cultural Ties with the Diaspora" (*ibid.*, 225-6).

Increasingly reassured by the improving Soviet Armenia-diaspora relations, the pro-Soviets, gathered around *Achkhar,* the JAF and the UCFAF, actively constructed their discourse against the Dashnaktsutyun. Often exaggerating and idealizing positive things in Soviet Armenia, similar to Ch‘ormisian, they spent much effort on emphasizing the centrality of Soviet Armenia as the "homeland of all Armenians" (*Amenayn hayots‘ hayrenik‘*[383]), juxtaposing it to the Dashnak

[383] Avedis Alixanian ended one of his editorials in *Achkhar* by declaring Soviet Armenia the "Homeland of All Armenians" (*Achkhar*. October 1, 1966).

“anti-homeland” policies. Despite the temporary unity around the commemorations of the genocide, anti-Dashnak criticism prevailed in the pages of *Achkhar* in the 1960s and 1970s. Closer to the sixtieth anniversary of the Genocide commemoration in 1975, *Achkhar* and the JAF condemned the Dashnaktsutyun for using the occasion to strengthen their influence over Armenian communities. Several weeks after the joint commemorations of the sixtieth anniversary, on June 6, 1975, the Dashnak CDCA gathered a large crowd of Armenians in one of the convention centers in Paris to discuss the future steps in the pursuit of the Armenian Cause. An article in *Achkhar* published on October 28, 1975, rebuked the Dashnaktsutyun and the CDCA for not mentioning a word about the thousands of peoples in the homeland (Soviet Armenia), who participated in the commemorations at the Genocide Monument in Yerevan. A JAF press release, issued on March 17, 1976 condemned the CDCA for attempting to take the lead and organize separate demonstrations. The statement called the Dashnaks and the CDCA to remain faithful to the “Call of Ējmiatsin, which had allowed from the fiftieth anniversary of the Massacres” to reassemble the entire Armenian community (*Achkhar*, March 27, 1976).

Discourses produced by Hnchakyan, Ramkavar and other pro-Soviet circles, often independently from each other in the Middle East, France, the United States and elsewhere, produced a transnational homeland-centered paradigm, which emphasized the priority of the homeland (Soviet Armenia) over the diaspora, and envisioned the role of Soviet Armenia as instrumental in the continuation of the diaspora. Soviet Armenia was “abstracted and idealized,” to borrow Libaridian's (1999, 124) description, yet at the same time it remained actual and tangible through the reestablished active relations with the diaspora.

The Dashnaktsutyun and the Dashnak affiliated circles, however, had developed a different perception of the homeland and of its role in the diaspora since. The controversy around Hovhannes K‘ajaznuni's pamphlet within the party, resolved in favor of the anti-Soviet stand of Vrats‘ian and others at the party’s Tenth World Congress in 1924-1925, determined the Dashnaktsutyun’s orientation towards the affairs in the diaspora (see chapter 3). By the mid-1950s, such an orientation produced a widely shared conviction among the party members and sympathizers that the party had symbolized “the Armenian national consciousness” and that they represented the “true Armenians” in the diaspora. Soviet Armenia had no place in this discourse, except as a small part of the greater homeland, which needed to be liberated on the road to the creation of the “Free, Independent and United Armenia.” Even if the anti-Soviet rhetoric of the leaders had significantly softened by the mid-1970s, the leadership was not going to, and, even if they wanted, they would hardly be able to uproot certain values firmly embedded in Dashnak identities and in the party’s organizational culture. In other words, if the Dashnak leaders eventually were able to redirect the party's energy from the anti-Soviet to the anti-Turkish struggle by toning down the anti-Soviet and intensifying the anti-Turkish rhetoric, certain symbols that had constituted the core of the Dashnak identity could not be challenged or changed. For many decades Dashnak identity had been constructed through an absolute loyalty to the goal of a “Free, Independent and United” Armenia and to the symbolism of the Republic of Armenia - the tricolor flag, the national anthem and emblem, and the celebration of May 28. As inalienable parts of Dashnak identity, these value-symbols were fundamentally incompatible with November 29 or the symbolism of Soviet Armenia. The adoption of a more pro-Soviet orientation, therefore, in the case of the Dashnaktsutyun could not extend beyond certain limits. The institutionalized organizational culture predetermined that a more diaspora-, rather than

Soviet Armenia-oriented paradigm had been forged and favored by active and former members of the Dashnaktsutyun, and by periodicals directly or indirectly representing the Dashnak perspectives.

By the 1970s, the *Hairenik Monthly* and *The Armenian Review* in Boston had mostly lost their leading role in outlining and shaping the Dashnak discourse and policies transnationally. The *Hairenik Monthly* became more like a literary journal in the 1960s, and due to the declining numbers of the Armenophone readership and subscribers in the US, it was turned into a quarterly in 1968 and altogether ceased publication in 1970.[384] The *Armenian Review* became a more scholarly journal in the 1970s addressing various aspects of Armenian culture, history, language, religion and the Armenian Cause.[385] With the decline of *Hairenik Monthly* and, then, *Quarterly,* the other Dashnak affiliated papers from the United States to the Middle East began to provide scattered alternative spaces for the production of the Dashnak discourse. The advancements of the age and improved communication systems made this discourse transnational. Articles from the Beirut-based *Aztag* daily appeared more frequently in Boston's *Hairenik Weekly* and vice

[384] In his last editorial published in the second issue of the *Hairenik Quarterly* in 1968 Reuben Darbinian had mostly retreated from his former beliefs and even praised the achievements in Soviet Armenia. Despite being "not free and not independent," Darbinian thought Soviet Armenia still carried the legacy of the Republic of Armenia. "Every Armenian can admit today with satisfaction," concluded Darbinian, "that contrary to the cruel Bolshevik regime, but due to the relatively peaceful conditions created by them, and particularly due to the well-known constructive spirit and work capacity (*ashkhatunakut'yun*) of the Armenian people, Soviet Armenia had strengthened so much economically and militarily during the past 50 years, that she is already able to take the fate of the freedom-desiring (*azatatench'*) Armenian people into her hands, if only the mighty Russia for any reason leaves our mother homeland to [determine] her own fate" (Darbinian 1968, 3). The events happening in Soviet Armenia in the 1960s certainly impressed Darbinian and for a while many other Dashnaks, but the former Republican official in an advanced age and much deteriorated health could no longer shape a new discourse. Darbinian passed away on June 6, 1968, and shortly after his death the *Hairenik Quarterly* also came to an end.

[385] The journal became fully scholarly in 1982, when Gerard Libaridian assumed the editorship (author's personal correspondence with Gerard Libaridian, February 5, 2015).

versa. *Haratch*[386] in France, also occasionally copied editorials and articles from both *Aztag* and *Hairenik.*

In the 1970s, many editorials and analytical articles began appearing in *Haratch* focusing predominantly on the problems of the diaspora. The coverage of Soviet Armenian issues did not go beyond occasional news of apolitical nature under the rubric "Yerevan-Paris Teletype." In analytical pieces and editorials, Soviet Armenia, if figured, was usually presented in critical light. Hrant Samuel(ian)'s editorial-report on conditions in the homeland and the diaspora in 1973, published on January 8, 1974, stood for this kind of approach, where Soviet Armenia was criticized and the diaspora given a more important role. While referring to Soviet Armenia as the homeland, he criticized the *Diaspora Committee* because of its discriminatory approach towards Armenian organizations in the diaspora (*Haratch*, January 8, 1974). If the pro-Soviet organizations benefited greatly, the Dashnaktsutyun was usually left out of any assistance. For Samuelian, therefore, in the course of 1973, the *Diaspora Committee* had widened the gap between the two factions in the diaspora. If this was the case, that is, if the homeland was reluctant to provide the Dashnaktsutyun with support, as it did with others, what would the party do now? As the former president of the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia, Samuelian believed that Soviet Armenia had no capacity to pursue the Armenian Cause, and the matter was left on the shoulders of Diaspora Armenians. The devoted Dashnak believed that his party had a particular role in the pursuit of the Armenian Cause, as it had been the "native reflector of the Armenian political and national demands." "The leaders of the homeland (*hayrenik'i varich'nerě*)" declared Samuelian, "do not have the right to be interested in the Armenian Cause.

[386] After the expulsion of its editor, Arpig Missakian, from the Dashnaktsutyun, *Haratch* became more independent, but continued to represent the Dashnak perspective with most of its contributors being active or former members or sympathizers of the party (Author's personal correspondence with Gerard Libaridian, February 5, 2015).

Armenia is not independent and is obliged to follow Moscow's policy in all spheres, and that policy is in total contradiction to the essential interests of the Armenian people" (*ibid.*). While referring to Soviet Armenia as the homeland, Samuelian refused to recognize the legitimacy of its "administrators," as the homeland was not independent. Consequently, there could be no horizontal political relations between the homeland and the diaspora. Instead of focusing on the prospect of homeland-diaspora relations, Samuelian suggested to focus on the diaspora (and particularly the Dashnaktsutyun), as the diaspora (and particularly the Dashnaktsutyun) remained the only legitimate pursuer of the Armenian Cause.

Along much similar lines, on February 12, 1974, *Haratch* reprinted an editorial from *Hairenik* (Boston). "Diaspora is a Strength and Value," as the piece was entitled, drew on Krikor Zorhab's late 19th century article on "Russian Armenian Literature," in which Zorhab argued: "The chauvinists of the Caucasus [Russian Armenians - V.S.] kept forgetting that Polis [Constantinople - V.S.] was the center of the cultivation of Armenian thought; and with sharp and bold views on every subject, they looked down on us with contemptuous disrespect." The author of the article suggested replacing the words "Caucasus" and "Polis" with "Homeland" and "Diaspora" to argue that the rest of Zohrab's worlds were quite relevant in the 1970s. The only thing that the Diaspora lacked was organization. The author concluded:

> The Armenians abroad (*haykakan artasahmanĕ*) are in need of organization, extra travail and means of self-protection. Nobody should neglect our weaknesses or be content with what we have. But to bend or retreat thinking that [the current situation] is an impossible struggle, is a desertion, if not suicide.
> Diaspora is strength; Diaspora is value. Let's not allow that the well-known concerns turn into the inferiority complex among the exiled masses (*Haratch*. February 2, 1974).

The focus on the diaspora rather than on the homeland was in perfect harmony with the abandonment of the anti-Soviet orientation of the Dashnaktsutyun. The Dashnak retreat from the

anti-Soviet propaganda yielded a more neutral, but not necessarily a positive orientation towards Soviet Armenia. If the anti-Soviet rhetoric was significantly toned down, the party organs, as well as affiliate newspapers, remained critical of Soviet Armenia and began emphasizing the organization of the diaspora as a way to balance the growing influence of Soviet Armenia in the diaspora. In an article published in *Haratch* on July 25, 1974, A. Surdukian suggested organizing the diaspora by creating pan-diasporic political, economic and educational councils. The author believed that better organization and the coordination of diaspora activities could potentially yield more tangible results for the Armenian people.[387] Diaspora Armenians, "who did not have a state and a flag," Surdukian thought, had "equal rights to be part of the universe as had the Great Duchy of Luxembourg (area 2,586 sq. km, population 393,484)" (*ibid.*). Contrasting the diaspora to a nation-state, such as Luxembourg, and implicitly to Soviet Armenia, in the author's imagination, the diaspora simply and merely lacked a better organization to be able to earn its place in the "universe" of nation-states.

The focus on the diaspora and the emphasis on its organization were reflected in many articles published in *Haratch* during 1974-1975. These addressed various problems the Armenians faced in the diaspora: the decline of the Armenian language, the prevalence of mixed marriages; assimilation; and the need for better Armenian schools and instruction. The fight against

[387] Some of the ideas expressed in this article, particularly regarding the necessity of pan-diasporic councils, were similar to ideas expressed in *Eritasard Hay* (Young Armenian) weekly in Beirut earlier. *Eritasard Hay* was founded by some young individuals in 1969 to provide an alternative venue to the established partisan periodical presses. The founders were inspired of the Palestinian movement after 1965 and the events of 1968 in France. Representing different political and confessional backgrounds, but united around the belief that alternative approaches were needed in the diaspora against the prevailing views of the older generations, the founders of *Yeridassart Hai* especially stressed the importance of unity in the diaspora (cf. Terzian 1981, 72, 88). In one of the articles published in 1969, one of the contributors expressed a belief that there was a need to create "an Economic Center of the Diaspora, an Educational Center of the Diaspora, a Journalistic Center of the Diaspora." Based on these three, the author proposed to create a Political National body, which would oversee the activities of those centers. The author thought this could be realized through the joint efforts of the Armenian political parties (Terzian 1981, 75).

assimilation and the pursuit of the Armenian Cause were of utmost importance requiring a better-organized diaspora. This was highlighted by Papgen Papazian (Babken P'ap'azian) in a July 1975 article in *Haratch* entitled "No Armenian Community Has the Right to Navigate Aimlessly." The prominent leader of the Dashnak party emphatically insisted on the need to mobilize the Armenian communities worldwide in order to halt assimilation and uproot apathy in the diaspora. Uppermost in his mind were those who, "while preserving the Armenian language lost Armenian traits." As examples, he referred to Armenophone parents, who sent their children to non-Armenian schools and spoke with them in a foreign language; to Armenophone, who married 'foreigners'; to Armenophone immigrants from the Middle East, who disowned their Armenian identity once in the West. The ubiquitous threat of assimilation would destroy the diaspora inevitably:

> The life of Armenians in the Diaspora is currently in such a stage that a very serious examination of our realities throughout the worldwide diaspora and of the state of Armenianness, with its retreats and transformations, as well as achievements, is of sharp necessity. [Such an examination is necessary] in order to exit the current route of peaceful navigation which, despite its appearances, leads the Diaspora Armenian vessel laden with rich cargo to shipwreck (*Haratch*, July 28, 1975).

Papazian called on the intellectuals, teachers, religious and lay leaders of the diaspora to embark on a new mission of defining the "spiritual centers" of the Armenian diaspora.

> It is time that the members of every community constituting the Diaspora, especially those who are in leading positions, ask themselves and those surrounding them, ask publicly, if needed, without fearing self-criticism, where is the spiritual center of Diaspora Armenians? What is it that can become this center? And what should be done so that [such] a spiritual center is [created] in every single community, in every single unit? …
> The aimless navigation for the preservation of a passive existence must come to an end. Every single community must rise within itself, first of all for its own sake, but always bearing in mind the Wholeness of Armenianness (*hayut'yan amboghjut'yunĕ*) and the spiritual center of that whole…
> All colonies of the diaspora should consider themselves as a "center" for Armenianness, which must place itself in a single whole with all other colonies [*sic*]. This center is Armenianness as a national unit, which provides that whole with a possibility to rediscover its spiritual center, [and its] spiritual trait, which is different from the traits provided by customs, the perceptions of current life, the adopted and clichéd explanations (*ibid.*).

Papazian did not elaborate on his own particular understanding of a "spiritual center" and left its fashioning to local communal intellectuals and leaders; they were to define, create and lead such centers. In this sort of a decentralized centralization of the diaspora, as Papazian imagined it, Soviet Armenia had no role at all. While also critical of the Dashnaktsutyun and the communities in the Middle East, Papazian favored and implicitly expected the Dashnaktsutyun with its leaders and sympathizers to lead the effort in every single Armenian community.

The need for better organization, expressed by the proponents of this diaspora-oriented paradigm, found its resonance in the Dashnak press worldwide. In a series of articles in August-September 1976, Khachig Tölölyan, who was born and raised in a Dashnak milieu in the Middle East and had ultimate familiarity with the diaspora and the party, offered an incursive analysis of the possibilities of the organization of the "Armenian colony in North America." Contrary to Papazian, who had averred that aimless navigation would inevitably lead to the demise of the diaspora, Tölölyan proceeded from the premise that the phenomenon of diaspora was durable, even permanent. He believed that there was some consensus in the diaspora on the "credo and dream" of the "united, free and independent Armenia," but that even if the "united, free and independent Armenia" were to materialize in the near future, not all Armenians would spontaneously return to the homeland. Drawing parallels with the Jewish case, Tölölyan had this to say to his readers:

> *Diasporic* [emphasis in original] reality is one of the bedrocks of the identity of many people, and will continue to be, especially in a universe, in which countries are both separated due to political realities, and are closer to each other than in the past due to speedy traffic. We are much fortunate than the Jewish diaspora in the past, and our Diaspora should have much more durability. They didn't even have a piece of homeland for nineteen centuries…, while we have part of our dismembered homeland, and every year 15-20 thousand Armenian tourists from abroad visit that piece of the homeland… Therefore, the Diaspora (or a Diaspora) is the continued reality of our future regardless of what happens in Armenia. All our organizations, be they political, cultural, church or other, should proceed from this reality (quoted in Tölölyan 1980, 13-4).

Theoretically, because the Jewish diaspora survived for many centuries and because "diasporic reality" constituted part of the identity of many peoples, Tölölyan seemed to suggest that there was no need to fear for the eventual assimilation and disappearance of the Armenian diaspora. In practice, however, Tölölyan shared the conviction that the Armenian diaspora needed better organization. Tölölyan realized that the fate of a diaspora was significantly affected by the social milieu in host countries. Therefore, instead of "ghettoes," Tölölyan suggested to organize the communities as "active units" and learn how to self-reflexively "adapt" to the conditions in host countries (Tölölyan 1980, 14-5). He attributed a special role to the diasporic organizations and institutions in the process of adaptation, especially within civic societies in the West and North America (*ibid.,* 16). He then, in the same vein, addressed the weaknesses of the Armenian organizations and made suggestions as to how to be better organized politically, economically, and internally. Both in theory and practice, Tölölyan envisioned no role for the homeland in the organization or perpetuation of the diaspora.

Tölölyan developed the premise of his argument, i.e. the permanence of the diaspora, in *Harach'*s literary supplement "Mitk' ew aruest" (Thought and Art):

> I think our current existence has reached a point when even our oldest, believers longing for Erkir ["the country" or homeland - V.S.] and dreaming visionaries admit (whether consciously or unconsciously) that we will not return to Mets Hayk'[388] in the near future. Our future is a Diasporic future and destiny; our society will be an ethnic one, especially in the Untied States and Canada, where state institutions now encourage the organizational efforts of some ethnic minorities. But everywhere, however, in France, South America, etc., our future fate of an almost everlasting Diaspora is the same (Tölölyan 1980, 166).

[388] Greater Armenia. In many Armenian history textbooks, the term refers to ancient and medieval Armenian kingdoms, symbolizing the historical Armenian homeland.

Tölölyan hoped to take this discussion in "Mitk' ew aruest" to a more open-minded intellectual level, beyond exclusivist and often narrow-minded partisan debates. And then, he posed the question of the return again (perhaps having the anti-Dashnak faction in mind):

> If the Soviet Union tomorrow miraculously doubled the territory of Armenia and announced repatriation, how many Diaspora Armenians would respond? "Ten to twenty percent of the Armenians abroad" would respond the most optimist among us. No, the Diaspora is a durable phenomenon and the problem is to make it successfully durable, to draw and create an Armenian profile in it (*ibid.*, 166).

First and foremost, this statement was thrown at the proponents of the homeland, Soviet Armenia, who ascribed the reluctance to return to Soviet Armenia to the limited territorial capabilities of the country. Tölölyan confidently countered that return was no longer part of the diasporic existence and focused instead on its durability, and he invited the intellectuals to come together and ponder how "to make it successfully durable." In a nutshell, "...a church, a school, an association…," Tölölyan argued, "should be the means and methods, the units of larger structures, whose purpose is to perpetuate the diaspora with all its subdiasporas and communities" (Tölölyan 1980, 165). He maintained that the "Mitk' ew aruest" supplement of *Haratch* was ideal for launching such a theoretical discussion, for "only a newspaper printed in Europe," far from the "suffocating" atmosphere in Beirut or the "obscure - indifferent" atmosphere in the United States, could provide a forum for launching theoretical "reconsideration" of Armenian diasporic life. A "reconsideration" such as this, according to him, could not happen within the confines of existing Armenian organizations, because it needed an honest exchange of opinions in an absolutely free environment (*ibid.*, 155). Tölölyan proposed to create a "sp'yurk'yan namakani" (Letters from diaspora) section in "Mitk' ew aruest," to publish and discuss theoretical and practical articles on various aspects of the Armenian diasporic experience. Two years later he regretfully noted that the section never really got off the ground (*ibid.,* 156, 160-61).

While *Haratch* distanced itself from the Dashnaktsutyun, the opponents of the Dashnaks, it seems, could not observe much of a political course change, as the paper continued representing the Dashnak perspectives in many regards. The diaspora-centered discussion, promoted by *Haratch* and proposed by Tölölyan, therefore could hardly attract the opponents of the Dashnaks. The homeland-centered paradigm produced by the anti-Dashnak envisioned the active involvement of the homeland in the solution of the problem of the preservation of Armenian identity in the diaspora. Tölölyan, on the other hand, suggested to forget the homeland and focus exclusively on diaspora matters. Not surprisingly, the Dashnak-leaning faction became more involved in such a diaspora-centered discussions proposed by Tölölyan, albeit not in the format he envisioned.

Discourses produced by various former and active Dashnak intellectuals and periodicals, thus, produced a more diaspora-centered transnational paradigm, which emphasized the durability of the diaspora and emphasized the need for its better organization. The proponents of the diaspora-centered paradigm, much like the homeland-centered one, had some variations in their individual discourses, yet the primary emphasis on the diaspora created the common ground. For more politically oriented and passionate Dashnak leaders, such as Hrant Samuelian, the primary mission of the diaspora was the pursuit of the Armenian Cause and the creation of the "free, independent and united" Armenia. For some representatives of this line of thought, the restoration of the homeland in Turkey would eventually mean a return to the homeland and the end of diasporic existence. More theory oriented leaders and intellectuals, who in the 1970s realized that the restoration of the homeland was not achievable in the near future, emphasized

the very existence and perpetuation of the diaspora as a matter of immediate priority. The supporters of this line of thought, such as Papgen Papazian or Khachig Tölölyan, did not reject the Armenian Cause as a matter of policy; rather, they attached a far greater attention to the perpetuation of the diaspora. If Papazian was more pessimistic on the future of diaspora's "aimless navigation," Tölölyan was more optimistic believing that diaspora could be durable. Both urged, however, that it had to be fashioned through pubic intellectual discussions and required better organization.

Despite these varying approaches, the proponents of the diaspora-centered paradigm shared the following common principal points. First and foremost, the diaspora was to be the point of departure. Most even began writing the word "diaspora" with a capital "D" to signify that it was something more than just a dispersed population. Contrary to the homeland-centered paradigm, the homeland, Soviet Armenia, had little or no role at all in the pursuit of the Armenian Cause or in the solution of problems in the diaspora. For Tölölyan, the diaspora represented a self-sufficient phenomenon, capable of producing durability and permanence. Secondly, regardless of whether they prioritized the realization of the Armenian Cause, the creation of "spiritual centers" or fashioning a durable diaspora, they all emphasized the need for a better organization of the diaspora. Some Dashnak-leaning intellectuals, such as Surdukian discussed above, or Levon Marashlian, even proposed to establish diaspora-wide councils, coordinated by a single "political" or "national" all-diaspora body.[389] The common ground, which the proponents of the

[389] At a conference in San Francisco, Levon Marashlian argued for the necessity to create a diaspora-wide "national body," which would be formed of elected representatives from among Armenian diasporic organizations and independent Armenians. Marashlian was born in the Middle East, but moved with his parents to the United States at a very young age, when he was 11. He had a PhD in History and was teaching at Glendale College at the time. Khachig Tölölyan reported on Marashlian's presentation in *Haratch* (January 10, 1982) expressing skepticism for the proposal. For Tölölyan, it was a "healthy dream," because the diaspora, especially in the United States, was not capable of producing such a "national body" at the time.

diaspora-centered paradigm shared, had been shaped by identical patterns of socialization within the same political faction. They had been part and product of and often active participants of the party's "diaspora-style nation-building" efforts, which had largely been constructed in opposition to Soviet Armenia. As Khachig Tölölyan recalled in one of his later articles,

> The ruling assumptions of my diasporan youth were that intellectuals especially and all people, ideally, owed allegiance both to their nation and to a wished-for, worldwide brotherhood of peoples which, we hoped, would one day be guided by socialist ideals. The Armenian nation existed both on a fragment of its homeland and in diaspora. A portion of the homeland endured as the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, one of the fifteen national republics of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. As a party of nationalist and socialist intellectuals, the Dashnaks were rhetorically ardent in their opposition to Soviet perversions of socialism and cynical manipulations of nationalism, yet my generation of young diasporan Armenians were educated not simply as the citizens of the many states in which we lived, but also as the diasporan wing of the Armenian nation.... In diaspora, we were the heterogeneous and hyphenated Armenians who lived in or aspired to live in bourgeois democracies; they [Armenians in Soviet Armenia - V.S.] were the unhyphenated, "pure" Armenians of a homeland that resented communist rule, lived officially as Soviet citizens, but as even their internal passports stated on the line devoted to nationality, were "Armenian." Our diasporan task was to develop and maintain an alternative view of Armenian nationhood, one which aspired to an independent national homeland and understood that the diaspora would both support and help to reshape that homeland by financial, intellectual and cultural resources (Tölölyan 1996b, 7)

Rather than focusing on an actual, albeit not independent, Soviet Armenia, the socialization within the Dashnak milieu instilled in the youth an aspiration for an ideal, even if imaginary, "independent national homeland." Rather than focusing on ways to connect the diaspora youth with that of Soviet Armenia, the diaspora was to produce an "alternative view of Armenian nationhood." In a *Haratch* editorial of July 27, 1983, entitled "Sp'iwṙk'i hay azgĕ" [The Armenian Nation of the Diaspora], G.H.[390] (Garo Hovsepian), having observed that the diaspora under foreign skies had internalized "the mentality of the people in their host countries and adapted to their environments," went on to conclude that "…the organizational life of the communities - a church, school, periodical press, national and cultural centers, political party - [and] the consciousness and engagement of the youth, as an army for the Armenian national

[390] After the death of Hrant Samuelian in 1977, Garo Hovsepian assumed the co-editorship of *Haratch* with Arpig Missakian, who continued as the editor in chief. In 1975-85, *Haratch* only occasionally published editorials, some of which were written by Hovsepian.

struggle, form the Armenian Nation of the Diaspora." The belief that Armenians constituted a diasporic nation was widely shared especially among the Dashnak-oriented generations.

The homeland-centered and diaspora-centered paradigms were more sharply defined through youth-oriented programs run by the respective political factions. The proponents of the former approach instilled a sense of loyalty to Soviet Armenia, as the only surviving stretch of Armenian land, as well as encouraged personal and organizational involvement with Soviet Armenia. The relaxations in the Soviet Union and Soviet Armenia in the 1960s and the increasing direct public contacts made the homeland-centered paradigm emerge as real and plausible. The Dashnak proponents had a much harder task of promoting the diaspora-centered paradigm for an imaginary, "spiritual" homeland, the "idealized Armenia ... that did not exist" (Libaridian 1999, 135). The party used all the *azgayin* (national) structures under its influence - church trustees, assemblies and schools, as well as party-affiliated clubs, youth, scout and athletic organizations and camps, as agencies to produce loyalties to the "free, united and independent" Armenia, to the symbols of the 1918-1920 Republic of Armenia, and to its nation in the diaspora. Often blurring the boundaries between the partisan and the national, the Dashnak style nation-building brought up generations with the conviction that Armenia was lost to the Soviet Union and Turkey, and had to be (re)created by the immediate efforts of the diaspora.[391] Even after the gradual change of its political course in the 1970s, the Dashnaktsutyun continued emphasizing and instructing its youth with the idea of a "free and untied" Armenia.[392] The

[391] One of the interviewees of Jenny Phillips, who grew up within a Dashnak milieu in Iran, recalled: "We took part in events like the Commemoration of May 28th, April 24th, and February 18th [anniversary of Armenian revolt against Soviet regime in Armenia - 1921 - J. Ph.], but we never felt these were Tashnak events. To us they were just Armenian events" (Phillips 1989, 260).

[392] For the construction of the "spiritual" Armenia-homeland, the Dashnak affiliated schools in the Middle East almost always used maps of greater Armenia. The tricolor flag materialized the image of a "free Armenia" and symbolized absolute loyalty to it. Children born into Dashnak families were exposed to the tricolor from a very

excerpt below from an interview Jenny Phillips conducted with an AYF leader, provides a glimpse of the kind of instruction the younger generation received at Camp Hayastan in Franklin, MA in the mid-1970s:

> To teach kids history, you need to fire them up….It's very difficult for these American kids to comprehend what it means when you say "Free Armenia." What is Armenia to them? To make the land more immediate, we laid out the camp so it would geographically conform to the provinces of Armenia. Then we took them on a tour of "Armenia." When we went to Kars [in modern Turkey - V.S.], which means "rock" in Armenian, it was a rocky area in the camp (Phillips, 1989, 266).

If the discourses of the pro-Soviet '*patriots*' and the anti-Soviet '*true Armenians*' of the 1950s constructed their identities by excluding their political opponents, the paradigms crystallizing after the fiftieth anniversary of the Genocide in 1965 significantly refrained from such mutual exclusion. From the 1960s, this exclusionary vocabulary began to subside, and expressions like Armenia, Armenian territories, homeland, diaspora, return, preservation of Armenianness, Armenian Cause were widely promoted by the proponents of both paradigms. The radicalized and often exclusive perceptions of the Armenian homeland from the 1920s until the 1950s were also replaced by more moderate viewpoints. The proponents of the homeland-centered paradigm accentuated the role of Soviet Armenia as the homeland, but never rejected the Armenian Cause, the struggle for Armenian lands and the demand for the restoration of a larger homeland. The proponents of the diaspora-centered paradigm envisioned the creation of a "free Armenia" in some future time, but from the late 1960s, they also significantly softened their criticism of Soviet Armenia, and some even began referring to it as the homeland.

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young age. The tricolor was erected in Dashnak affiliated churches, schools, clubs, and unfurled abundantly during celebrations. The tricolor was used much more frequently, than the official red flag of the Dashnak party. To the contrary, the flag of "free Armenia" was overlooked and dismissed as an old flag, irrelevant to contemporary Armenia, by the children growing up in the non-Dashnak milieu.

Conclusion

Dynamic processes in the Armenian diaspora in the 1970s and 1980s revealed its enormous diversity on institutional, communal, and individual levels. The 1965 joint commemorations of the Armenian Genocide seemed to have the potential for reconciling the formerly hostile Armenian political camps in the diaspora. Moreover, the Armenian Cause, vaguely defined by all the Armenian factions as the recognition of the Armenian Genocide and claims for Armenian lands created some common ground among them. The initial success, but the ultimate failure, of the Armenian Assembly to bring together the institutionally divided Armenian camps in the United States, paralleled by a decade-long transnational struggle and rivalry between the ASALA and the Dashnak-supported JCAG/ARA, revealed that the Armenian Cause could also be a separating factor as much as it had the potential to create a common ground. While the genocide had become the common denominator of Armenianness in the diaspora and, by the second half of the 1980s, Armenians of all affiliations had come to agree on more peaceful means in the pursuit of the Armenian Cause, unity among the institutionally divided communities was achieved only occasionally, usually around the joint commemorations of the Armenian Genocide, or over some other local matters of concern for all Armenians, like the civil war in Lebanon.

On communal and individual levels, in the 1980s the Armenian diaspora represented a mosaic of identities, subethnic groupings, communities and organizations, and this became especially pronounced in the West. Due to intensified East-West migration flows, while the Armenian communities in the Middle East decreased in number, communities in France and the United States grew with the influx of new Armenian immigrants. If in the Middle Eastern countries Armenian identity was defined first of all by a person's affiliation with an Armenian church at birth, by ascription rather than attainment, in France and the United States, Armenian identity was defined first of all by descent and self-identification, and both Armenian identity and involvement in the Armenian churches and organizations was a matter of choice rather than ascription at birth. The diversity of individual and collective identities in the diaspora came to the fore with the growing numbers of Armenians from Syria and Lebanon, and also from Iran and Turkey, in France and the United States, resulting in generalizations and stereotyping, clash of different perceptions of Armenianness and exclusions. Despite these exclusions, Armenians originating from different countries, often identified with their hyphenated identities, as Beirut/Lebanese-, Aleppo/Syrian-, Istanbul-, Iranian/Persian-, American-, or French-Armenian, continued to staff and represent different institutions and organizations, as well as continued individual or organizational involvement with the homeland or in Armenian matters in the diaspora.

Affiliations with the Armenian church, political parties or other Armenian transnational institutions often transcended these individual and communal identities, bringing together individuals and groups originating from different countries and providing yet another level of diasporic belongings. Unwilling to give up their spheres of influence, the political factions

continued promoting different perceptions of the homeland, setting different goals and offering different perspectives on matters of common concern in the diaspora. The exclusive self-perceptions of the *'patriots'* and *'true Armenians'* of the formerly pro- and anti-Soviet camps had been replaced by more moderate discourses by the 1980s, but, on the institutional level, the prevailing orientations towards the actual homeland, Soviet Armenia, or the ideal homeland, the projected "United" Armenia, produced more homeland- or diaspora-centered transnational paradigms, identities and belongings.

These paradigms continued shaping diasporic identities and belongings transnationally up until the independence of Armenia in 1991. In many diasporic communities, however, some elements of these paradigms are still being reproduced, as the active and direct involvements of Armenia in the matters of the diaspora and the Armenian diasporic political parties in Armenia have not reversed the institutionalized divisions in the post-genocide Armenian diaspora.

Conclusion and Closing Remarks

Theoretical works in diaspora studies have mostly treated the Armenian diaspora from a comparative perspective, describing it as one of the 'archetypal' (Armstrong, 1976; Safran, 1991), 'stateless' (Sheffer, 2003) or 'victim' (Cohen, 2008) diasporas. Such 'ideal type' generalizations sometimes are helpful in developing comparative frameworks, but most often provide lip service to the discipline. While stressing on the diversity of diasporic identities and the phenomenon of a diaspora in general, the 'ideal type' generalizations, as well recognized by Cohen (2008, 159), often exaggerate and downplay the enormous diversity of the same diasporas. Instead of adopting any of these paradigms, this study followed in part Kim Butler's (2001) framework by focusing on relations of the dispersed Armenians with the homeland, their relations with the respective host-countries, and interrelationships within the various communities of the diaspora. It also followed the recent trend in diaspora studies, as identified by Khachig Tölölyan (2007, 648-51), by examining the conditions and the process of the transformation of the Armenian dispersion into a diaspora. Building on Tölölyan's (2000) argument on the role of elites and institutions, this dissertation argued that while elites and institutions are also important agents in the formation of diasporas and diasporic identities, their ideologies and policies, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of diasporic institutions locally and transnationally, are shaped by and often change in response to dynamic international, host-country conditions and the policies of a homeland-state, if such a state exists.

This dissertation has arrived to these conclusions by focusing on three post-genocide Armenian diaspora communities in countries, where Armenians have maintained a significant presence since their settlement and throughout the twentieth century, namely in the United States, France and Lebanon. Based on an extensive study of primary accounts by the elites representing various Armenian institutions in more than two dozen periodicals, as well as in many pamphlets from the 1920s until the 1980s, as well as the author's interviews with many notable Armenian activists in these countries, this dissertation analyzes changing international and host-country conditions, the rivalry among Armenian elites and political parties in their relations with and orientations towards Soviet Armenia, as well as diasporic discourses and debates, all of which transformed the dispersion of genocide survivor refugees into a transnational diaspora.

This study lends support to one, original observation, lacking in general frameworks in diaspora theories: the bifurcated self-perception the Armenians developed in the course of much of the twentieth century, a dichotomy that separated the Armenians who accepted Soviet Armenia as the homeland and those who envisioned a more abstract homeland to be attained in future. In this regard, Armenians in the course of the twentieth century developed characteristics of both a state-linked and a stateless diaspora. The conflicting interests and efforts of the Armenian elites and institutions replaced commitments to ancestral villages in the Ottoman Empire of the first generations with competing allegiances to Soviet Armenia or to a more abstract, spiritual Armenia. Different perceptions of the Armenian homeland coexisted and clashed, giving birth to often incompatible self-perceptions in the diaspora and producing mutually exclusive diasporic discourses and identities. The struggles of the elites and institutions for representing the

Armenians in the respective host-countries, the conflicting perceptions of the Armenian homeland and national symbolism, the policies of the host-countries directly or indirectly encouraging or discouraging certain orientations and transnational loyalties, as well as the international political circumstances, eventually led to a transnational schism in the Armenian Church and the post-genocide Armenian diaspora. Although the elites and organizations were able to put aside hostilities and occasionally unite their efforts to commemorate the Armenian genocide after 1965, institutionalized divisions continued to prevail, reproducing conflicting identifications and identities, policies and programs, discourses and disunities.

This work also reveals that from the beginning of the post-genocide dispersion, through four generations in the twentieth century, the diaspora Armenians have represented diverse cohorts of self-identification groups and institutional, organizational loyalties. Religious, political, educational and other institutions and organizations have been essential in the production and reproduction of Armenian diasporic cultures and identities. But it was under the more favorable sociopolitical conditions in Lebanon that the efforts of the Armenian elites and institutions forged a more homogeneous Armenian identity out of the many, initially diverse Armenian refugee groups. It also argues that institutions can often become agencies of exclusion as well. The transnational network of Armenian political parties eventually made a certain type of Armenian identity dominant in the diaspora, thereby often excluding alternative expressions of Armenian diasporic identities.

Another theme, that this dissertation extensively addressed, but will need further elaboration when revising this dissertation for publication as a book, is related to diasporic identities.

Diasporic identities, as this study showed, may evolve both under the influences of diasporic elites, institutions and often of a homeland state, and also in spite of the activities of elites and various institutions, through family stories and memory, through self-identifications, and eventual involvement with the homeland or the diaspora. This suggests that diasporic identities are about descent, self-identification and involvement in diasporic initiatives, institutions or other homeland or diaspora related activities. In this sense, unlike national or ethnic identities, diasporic identities represent a choice, rather than ascription, and this is more so especially in the West. The emancipatory social movements of the 1960s in Europe and the Untied States, as this work has demonstrated, created conditions in which many of the assimilated descendants of Armenians in France or the United States (re)discovered their ethnic roots and chose to embark on individual or collective projects by getting directly or indirectly, formally or informally involved in homeland-related or diaspora-oriented activity. Regardless of traditional or symbolic identities, therefore, in the case of Armenians, all the descendants of the Armenian refugees and immigrants can be considered potentially diasporic. It seems, whether diaspora-born generations will develop a more traditional (ethnic) Armenian identity or an affinity with their ancestors and ethnic group symbolically will depend on certain family conditions, host-country contexts, as well as the proximity and efforts of Armenian diasporic institutions. In any case, these identities may or may not materialize in diasporic involvement, activism and production, and become overtly diasporic. The question, particularly, which will need further investigation, is around this paradox of how exactly ethnic identities, on the one hand, necessary, as they after all define (ethnic) diasporas, such as the *Armenian*, become, at the same time, not as much defining in the diaspora. And if this is so, what is the role of ethnic schools and ethnic instruction in the diaspora, if learning the ethnic language or knowing the ethnic history is not the integral

component of diasporic identities? In addressing these questions, I would like to further explore the role of Armenian schools especially in the West, their goals and actual accomplishments, as well as to look into other cases of ethnic educational programs and schools in the diaspora.

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