THE PRESENT CHALLENGE

Last April marked the seventy-third anniversary of the Turkish government’s successful attempt to exterminate or deport the native inhabitants of Eastern Anatolia. By 1923, the government which had attempted to eradicate the Armenian Question by the occupation of Western Armenia and suppression of its populace, had succeeded to set back this liberation movement for another century. And although the Armenian people emerged from the genocide deeply wounded, it managed to view April 24 not only as a day of remembrance, but also as a day to reaffirm its conviction to pursue the resolution of its just cause. For the past two decades the Armenian people has informed the world on the crime perpetrated against it and has actively demanded the restoration of its national and human rights.

Despite these efforts, the progress of the liberation struggle has been limited in part due to the conditions of the diaspora, and in part by the ineffective utilization of these same conditions for the advancement of the struggle itself. Thus, in some aspects, the proclamations of a renewed struggle have not dared to cross the boundaries of rhetorical speech. This can be seen both on the external, as well as the internal front. On the internal front, the important mission of preservation of the Armenian identity and the politicization of the masses has confronted many obstacles and has produced unsatisfactory results. Meanwhile, on the external front, faced with an uncompromising enemy who enjoys the unquestionable support of one superpower and the sympathy of another, the responses to the just demands of the Armenian people have been limited to the issue of the recognition of the genocide. No doubt, the conditions created by the genocide have not been conducive to the progress of the struggle. Nevertheless, the eventual outcome is directly dependent on the ability to objectively analyze these same conditions, and if necessary, to create (Cont. on pg. 10)
«Զարդ, քայլելիք;»

Արտասեր Գեորգիայի

 Members of the Armenian Youth Federation demonstrating in front of the Turkish Consulate on Sunday, April 24, 1988.

Այս այլ դեկանից, պատմական բնության տակ, բայց այս ժամանակի հետագական էկոնոմիկական պատճառների համար:

«Զարդ, քայլելիք;» կարող է լինում նաև ներդաշնակ հանածության եզրափակիչ: Այս անձնական քայլելիքը զարգացած է այս ժամանակի կարևոր ռուսական հայոց պատմության մեջ: Այս անձնական քայլելիքը կարող է ներդաշնակ հանածության եզրափակիչ լինել:
Statement of the Armenian Youth Federation

Armenian Youth Federation of Western America has gathered here today with the Armenian community of Los Angeles to open a dialogue on the issue of the unresolved Armenian Question.

73 years ago today the Istitadist Young Turk party of Turkey began a premeditated organized effort to eradicate the Armenian people living on their homeland...In all nearly 1.5 million Armenians, from a population of 2 million died. Five sixths of the Armenian homeland is now devoid of Armenians.

To this day the present Turkish government continues to deny this genocide and wages an ongoing campaign to rewrite history.

Armenians are gathered here today to make the following demands:

1— The Turkish government's acceptance of the responsibility for the Armenian Genocide.

2— Reparations for the loss of land, lives and personal properties.

3— The immediate return of the Armenian homeland...

The Armenian Youth Federation has invited the Turkish government’s Consul General to come here today and address these demands. The Armenian people are not to be denied this audience. Members of the AYF are prepared to use all peaceful means at their disposal to carry out their objective.

—April 24, 1988
The Hai Tad Program at Ferrahian

“When every student would be ready to enlist as a soldier of Hai Tad; that would satisfy me...”

Says Mr. Gabriel Injejian during an interview on the Hai Tad program at Ferrahian.

Interview by Anna Adamian

Note: In an effort to offer a more complete picture of the Hai Tad programs at Armenian schools, Haytoug presented an interview with the principal, Hai Tad instructor, and several of the students at Alex Pilotan Armenian school in the last issue. In this issue Haytoug presents the continuation of this effort, through an interview with Mr. Gabriel Injejian, principal of Ferrahian Armenian school, Mr. Garo Bedrossian and Onnik Hayravedian, the instructors of Hai Tad, and seven of the students enrolled in the Hai Tad class. A few questions have been added to the list used in the last issue.

The first part of this interview was conducted with Mr. Gabriel Injejian. Mr. Injejian came to the United States in 1953 to pursue his education. After completing his studies, he taught in public schools from 1957 to 1961. He attended Haigazian College in Lebanon from 1961 to 1964. In 1964, he returned to California to establish the first Armenian day school in the United States with a grant of $10,000.00 and an enrollment of twelve.

HAYTOUG—How long has the Hai Tad class been offered at Ferrahian?

Injejian—Unofficially since Ferrahian has started 24 years ago, but officially as a separate Hai Tad class within the last seven or eight years.

HAYTOUG—How many periods per week are reserved for Hai Tad; to which grades is the course offered to; is the class mandatory?

Injejian—Three to five times per week. It is offered to 10-12th grade classes, and it is a mandatory course.

HAYTOUG—Are there enough current topics on Hai Tad to increase the periods reserved for the program; what do you consider to be the current topics?

Injejian—I presume there are always plenty of issues that could be discussed in the Hai Tad class and if there were additional periods, they could be filled. However, the current number of periods seem to be satisfactory.

The survival of the Armenian community and all the issues that come up with the efforts for the recognition of the genocide, even the Karabagh issue in Armenia, the organization of the Armenian community throughout the diaspora, organization of the schools, the political and cultural groups all constitute a part of Hai Tad.

HAYTOUG—Relative to the other courses on the curriculum, what is the level of importance attached by the administration to the Hai Tad program?

Injejian—All the courses are important, otherwise we wouldn’t be teaching them. Hai Tad courses are as important as any of the Armenian studies courses including the Armenian language, culture and history.

HAYTOUG—What is the purpose of the Hai Tad program at Ferrahian?

Injejian—To ensure that all our students are exposed to the knowledge that’s required to understand the Hai Tad and also to prepare them with a kind of attitude that would make the students want to contribute to the Hai Tad and to become good Armenians.

HAYTOUG—What type of Hai Tad activities do the students engage in outside of the school?

Injejian—Many of them are quite active in different Armenian political groups, whether it’s with the ARF Youth Organization or Homenetmen, and they also participate in many different demonstrations that take place. Also, many of the students keep abreast with all the discussions in the papers about the Hai Tad—it’s part of their daily living. I hope.
The Hai Tad Program at Ferarhian

“...emphasizing so much on the past, takes the importance away form the present...”

Say the students at Ferarhian during an interview with Haytoug.

Note: The following are the responses to some of the questions raised by Haytoug to seven students currently enrolled at the Ferarhian Armenian High School’s Hai Tad class. Haytoug would like to thank Hovig Khoukaz, Sahag Momjian, Viken Tchorbajan, Hovig Tenkerian, Ishkhan Topalian, Cynthia Varjapidian and Arlene Yousephian who took part in this interview.

HAYTOUG—What are your general feelings about the Hai Tad class; how has this class affected you as an individual?

Tenkerian—I personally don’t think the Hai Tad class provides what it should, since more than half of the students are not interested. But on the other hand, if the class was more serious it would bore the students.

Tchorbajan—The Hai Tad class is very important for me, personally. However, when it comes down to grading, the class does not compare with the college-prep courses. If the class is made more serious and tougher like the college prep courses, then I think, it can become important for the students.

Khoukaz—Hai Tad is to be given in this class, but history is also included. What happened in the past, is in the past. If you’re going to have a Hai Tad class let it be what’s going on today. I’m not saying let’s not learn the past, but what’s happening today is more important because we’re living it now. Let them tell us what’s going on in Karabagh today, not how many square feet its area.

Yousephianc—We really don’t take the issues that have to do with Hai Tad today. We don’t really have a Hai Tad class, we have an Armenian language class and an Armenian history class. What we are learning is what happened in 1910. We are not taking much from the present day. I really can’t give an opinion on the Hai Tad class because I have not even taken it yet.

Tchorbajan—I think what all of this sums up to is that emphasizing so much on the past, takes the importance away from the present. If you go into the Hai Tad class and ask who Hampig Sassounian is some people might say “Who? What?” That’s pitiful. Of course history is also important, because if you were asked “You want your lands back? What happened to your lands?” you should have an answer. We have to fight for Hai Tad now, so that people listen to us. We can’t fight for it with our past. We can’t say “it was like this or that,” because they’ll say “times change and so does everything else.” We have to get people to listen to us. That’s Hai Tad.

The bottom line is that it’s too late to start teaching the high school students about history of Hai Tad. You need to start from the 7th grade or even lower so that you have a foundation to build on. You can’t just start from the 10th grade and say this is what’s going on today.

HAYTOUG—Are you interested in Hai Tad more now than before you took the class?

Topalian—It’s the same as it was before. I know as much as when I started the class.

Momjian—(In Armenian) I am interested about Hai Tad but not because of the class. Although what was presented to the class I already knew, but it was not boring for me.

Tenkerian—(In Armenian) It would be better if the Hai Tad class was taught in a discussion form, instead of having to study and take exams. In the case of discussions you could express your opinions and hear new ones. I don’t think the present environment of the class is suitable for that.

HAYTOUG—After you graduate, how will you remain active within the Armenian community and prevent your own assimilation?

HAYTOUG—What type of short- and long-term results would satisfy you in relation to the mission of the Hai Tad program?

Injejikian—When every student would be ready to enlist as a soldier of Hai Tad; that would satisfy me—both in the short- and the long-term.

HAYTOUG—What role can the AYF play within the school’s Hai Tad program?

Injejikian—I presume they could help organize some of these seminars and activities with the students on Hai Tad. They could also organize the AYF chapters so that more students will become members of the AYF. That way they’ll be getting Hai Tad education from both places.

HAYTOUG—Thank you Mr. Injejikian.

Injejikian—Thank you; you’re a very good interviewer.
Yoosephiance—I will remain active. I don’t think I could just assimilate and not care after I’ve attended this school for six years. They keep telling you about the Armenian Cause; you can’t just assimilate and forget all about it. Right now the school is enough to keep me from assimilating, but after I graduate I might join the community groups like the Homenetmen or maybe even the AYF.

Khoukaz—I definitely know that there is no chance for me to assimilate because I plan to remain a member of the AYF and Homenetmen after I graduate. For some, not having time is just an excuse not to join. I’ve had the time for homework, basketball, AYF and Homenetmen; so if the students want to, they can find the time.

HAYTOUQ—If the course was offered as an elective would you still take it? Why?

Yoosephiance—Yes, I would. I know that some students would take it because they’d think it’s easy. I don’t think that would be right. If people are indifferent, why do they bother coming to this school. If you’re going to take the course you should care. I care, and I really do want to learn.

Topalian—I would not take it because it would not be required for college. Although I’d like to stay Armenian, but right now all I care about is college. So, I would not take it.

Khoukaz—As a senior I’ve already been accepted to the university I’m going to go to. The second semester of our senior year is when we have the most free time, so, honestly, I don’t take my classes seriously. I would take the Hai Tad class in the 10th or 11th grade, because it is very important to me.

HAYTOUQ—How can the Hai Tad program at Ferohan be improved?

Varjabedian—I think it can be improved if it didn’t emphasize so much on the history. If we learned about what’s going on today, it would be more interesting and the students would pay more attention. Another thing, I think if the environment of the class was controlled and interest was aroused, then the students would be able to learn more.

Yoosephiance—If the environment of the class is not controlled, then the students take advantage of it no matter what the course is.

Tenkerian—(In Armenian) It would be better if Hai Tad is taught from an earlier age.

Khoukaz—I think we should have papers and pamphlets on current issues and have discussions on them. When you’re exchanging ideas, new views are expressed and sometimes, opinions change. This type of an atmosphere is more beneficial.

Tchorbojan—If a student is not interested about Hai Tad, he’s not going to listen—whatever you do. Some people just don’t have it in them. Why not let the course be an elective so that nobody is forced to take it. At the present, there is this feeling that nobody cares anymore. I just think that the ratio of those who do care to the ones who
don’t is very small. Even if only two people take the class, it
would be worthed. Even the organizations like the AYF
are changing their standards, because they are so anxious
to take new members in and expand. A small number
might be able to do more Hai Tad work than what is being
done right now.

“What was presented
to the class I already
knew, but it was not
boring for me.”
—Sahag Momjian

“If the environment of
the class was
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—Cynthia Varjedjian

“We have to get
people to listen to
us. That’s Hai Tad.”
—Viken Tchorbajian

HAYTOUG—After taking the Hai Tad class would you
be interested enough to join any of the Armenian
organizations which pursue the resolution of the
Armenian Question?
Momjian—In Armenian I’m already in an organization
that pursues Hai Tad. And even before taking the class I
was already in AYF.
Varjedjian—I think it all depends on what background
you get from your Hai Tad class. If it arouses some interest
in you, then of course you’re going to join Armenian organi-
zations, but if it doesn’t leave a big impression on you,
then you won’t be interested.
Yoosephance—I can’t say that it has effected me much
because I really haven’t learned much about the present.
The most that I’ve learned about the present is when the
Karabagh issue was going on. If I was to join any of the
organizations it would be because of something else. I
must also say that I’ve learned some things; now I know
who Krisdapor was. The class is good for the people who
don’t know these things. But that is more of a “hayots
badmoutiane.”
"I know as much as when I started the class."
— Ishkhan Topalian

"I don’t think I could just assimilate and not care after I’ve attended this school for six years."
— Arlene Yooshephiance

"Let them tell us what’s going on in Karabagh today, not how many square feet its area is."
— Hovig Khouchak

"It would be better if Hai Tad is taught from an earlier age."
— Hovig Tenkerian

Topalian—I was in Homunetmen before we took Hai Tad; I was in Homunetmen after we took Hai Tad. I still don’t feel different. It’s all the same.
Tenkerian—(In Armenian) I don’t think the Hai Tad class has much of an effect on people joining the Armenian organizations. There’s not much done to encourage people to join these organizations. I personally think that it would be better if the class had some type of a tie to an Armenian organization.
Khouchak—(In Armenian) The Hai Tad class was more of a review for me. I was an AYF member before I joined the class. I had learned a lot even before I joined the AYF. I’m already in AYF and plan to be a member for the rest of my life!

HAYTOU—You can’t be; you have to join ARF.
Khouchak—Okay.

Tchorkajian—I’m already involved with Hai Tad to the fullest. I already feel Armenian and do my best to maintain and spread my Armenianism. Joining an organization, for many has become a name they carry — so that they can say “I’m an AYF inger” or “I’m a Homunetmen yegebyan, now.” I think that being involved goes farther than that. If I’m going to join an organization it’s going to be because of its purpose. I’ll join an organization when I think I’ll get something out of it.
Ամենասեր սրահը եղել է անտառի մեջ: Պատճառն է, որ առաջին տարիներին դեռևս չի եղել բնակվող մարդում այն պարապտումը, որի սրահը եղել է հատկացուցակային գիտության աշխարհում զգացի դիրքով։

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The process of re-colonization of Western Armenia is slowly but surely taking place—not to mention the fact that the population of Turkey will reach seventy million by the year 2000. Not finding it enough to displace and murder the Armenian people, the oppressive enemy has embarked on an organized scheme to distort not only the facts about the genocide, but to rewrite the 3000-year-old history of the Armenian people—beginning from the "Armenian massacres of Urartu" to the "Armenians as international terrorists."

And while the integrity of the Armenian people is being losted by the racist policies of the Turkish government, the two of the once-flooring Middle-Eastern Armenian communities are faced with the toughest challenges to their existence in history. The Lebanese civil war, the Iran/Iraq conflict, together with the social/economic shortcomings of the region have nearly exhausted both communities and have caused the mass exodus of Armenians towards the West. Undoubtedly, the future course of the national movement will partly depend on the manner by which the Middle Eastern communities face the challenges that threaten their existence.

And here in the capitalists’ free world, the challenges the communities face are numerous and often claimed as impossible to conquer. Despite the relative freedoms enjoyed by these communities and the means available at their disposal, the depoliticization of the youth (a characteristic of North America) and their rapid rate of assimilation remain to be serious challenges which endanger the outcome of the Armenian national liberation struggle.

There is no question in the fact that the act of genocide has created conditions which can be detrimental to the progress of the Armenian struggle.
On Contemporary Turkish Historiography

by Alice Fundukian

Note: The author, Alice Fundukian, received her Bachelor of Arts degree in History at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) in 1986. She is currently completing her graduate work at UCLA in Near Eastern History, specializing in Armenian Studies.

Historiography, in its most basic level, is the writing of history. Generally, the process assumes a "critical examination of sources, the selection of particular from authentic material and the synthesis of particular into a narrative that will stand the test of critical methods." It is at this level that the Armenian Genocide has been a persistent thorn in Turkish historiography since the close of World War I.

Since that time, Turkish historiography has passed through four stages of presentation and sophistication. The first stage opened just after World War I. The number of survivors and eye-witnesses were too wide-spread to attempt absolute denial of genocide, so the Armenians were portrayed as disloyal citizens in a state of rebellion while Turkey, faced with a war on so many fronts, was on the verge of destruction. The emergence of the Republic of Turkey in 1923 brought a new image for the country and led to the second stage of Turkish historiography. With the belief that the "issues" would eventually fade, the past was downplayed and the future—stressed. Renewed Armenian energy toward the Armenian Question with the 50th anniversary of the Genocide also marked the shift to the third phase of study. This period was marked by more active, though amateurish, propaganda campaign by the Turks. The latest phase is concurrent with heightened Armenian awareness and activity on the political arena. Efforts have intensified to generate primary and secondary sources including archival documents, pamphlets, leaflets, advertisements and open textbooks.

This decade marks the most sophisticated level of study and demands more careful analysis. Regardless of the approach, there are a few general themes which are at the basis of Turkish historiographic works. They are as follows:

1. The Armenians and Turks coexisted peacefully for hundreds of years, grievances arose as Western involvement in Ottoman affairs increased.

2. The Armenians never constituted a majority in any of the regions they claim to be a part of their homeland.

3. The number of Armenians lost during World War I has been greatly exaggerated while the comparatively larger number of Turkish casualties has been overlooked.

4. Armenian bands were involved in subversive activity during World War I and constituted a threat to the Ottoman Empire.

5. The deportation of Armenians is more correctly defined as a relocation to regions further removed from the war zone.

To date, the two most impressive and widely used works of Turkish historiography are The Armenian File—Myth of Innocence Exposed by Kamuran Gurun and Armenian Allegations: Myth and Reality.

The Armenian File is the most thorough English presentation of Armenian history—beginning with ethnogenesis and continuing with the diaspora. From the outset, Gurun postulates that nothing about the Armenians can be expressed as historical truths. By casting doubt on the ethnic origin of the Armenians, the author attempts to discredit current Armenian issues. He states: "It is not possible to ascertain whether the inhabitants of Armenia were the ancestors of Armenia today or whether the region inhabited by those ancestors was identical with the region that was called Armenia in early times."

This points to a technique most successfully employed by Gurun. Each passage contains within it some degree of historical truths. This gives the material an impression of veracity and credibility. Though this is automatically discounted by the knowledgeable reader, it introduces controversy to the vast majority of the audience. In other words, once doubts are cast, the entire issue of validity becomes secondary: a 'new' point of view has been introduced.

The focus of Armenian Allegations: Myth and Reality is terrorism and the international political arena. The Armenian terrorist campaign of the first part of this decade is represented as a united effort and is attacked from various theoretical fronts:

a. the alleged Armenian Genocide is at the core of terrorist attacks,

b. the passing of any resolution acknowledging a genocide can only spur more assaults,

c. the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia is representative of all terrorist organizations,

d. such Armenian terrorists consider Armenian SSR as "already liberated,"

e. Armenian territorial claims would be annexed to the Soviet Union and as this is a viral portion of NATO lands, the consequences are unthinkable,

f. Turkish public opinion views the US Congress' support for "genocide resolutions" (HJR 192) as tantamount to its ally and supporting the "territorial dismemberment of Turkey."

Having made these arguments, three reasons are given why HJR 192, the resolution commemorating April 24th as a day of man's inhumanity to man should not be passed—it would damage relations between the United States and Turkey, it would encourage terrorism and it would distort history. The direct link
between Turkish historiography vis-a-vis the Armenian Question and current political issues is thus further emphasized. Contemporary Turkish historiography is not limited to study by Turks alone. Many Americans have come to be known as authorities in the field. Although their emphasis does not center on the discussion of history per se, they do develop arguments in what have become related branches such as demography and terrorism. Foremost among these authors are Heath Lowry, Michael Gunter and Justin McCarthy. Lowry and Gunter tend to concentrate on the Armenian terrorism, while McCarthy examines the population of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire.

McCarthy is cited in all these historiographic works as the authority on the ethnic constitution of the Ottoman Empire. His conclusions place the Armenians as a distinct minority in the area they claim to be their homeland and drastically reduce the number of Armenians killed during World War I. Here the entire gamut of Turkish historiographic sources regarding the Armenian Question converge to state the following: "...if all the Armenian in the world had moved to the six vilayets, Muslims would still have been a majority... On the basis of self-determination, there was no Armenia." The wide variety of materials, methods and approaches employed in modern works reflect a network of research rather than a series of independent studies. Almost all the materials are published by the Turkish government organizations or government affiliations. One can therefore logically conclude that they reflect official party line.

The works also reflect a stable body politic. This, of course, is not an accurate portrayal, as there have been three coup d'etats in approximately the last 2½ decades, there is no viable opposition party, and the country has been surviving on financial aid from Western Powers since the last century. As all of this comes into focus, an intricate post of legitimization of the Turkish government is effected.

Likewise, the works are directed to a Western audience. The materials expose a 'Western' orientation. They are disseminated by an instable country which receives billions of dollars in foreign aid, especially from the US. Some of the money is then channeled back into the US in the form of grants to establishments such as the Insitute of Turkish Studies which is directed by Heath Lowry. It must therefore legitimize certain actions and points of controversy to its supporters. Modern Turkish historiography in its depiction of Armenians during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with its current relevance, is one such means.

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Ատենախոսություն

Ապագարված շարքիի տարօրինակները գրացեյական խմբի հետ զուգահեռ է էմանը հարցազորիչ պատահարների ազդեցությունը, որը նպատակով պատասխանատվության կարգավորման համար է զարգացած և իրավանական պատասխանատվության հիմամուտման վայրում պետք է այն գտնելու հաջողության պահանջները կարգավորել, դասական բարդուժական համակարգերի, իսկպունքերով 

Բարդուժական համակարգեր, իսկպունքերով

Անհրաժեշտ է, որ երկու կանոնականությունները մեկնաբանվի եւ կանոնականությունները միասների սահմանին պատճառ են անհրաժեշտ համախառն լուսաբանություն տեղափոխել, որի պատճառով է անհրաժեշտ կանոնականությունների տեղափոխում: Առաջին կանոնը, որը անձնակերպվում է տարբեր կանոնականությունների միացումից, առաջանում է տարբեր կանոնականությունների տեղափոխման պատճառով: Այս կանոնը տարբեր կանոնականությունների երկրաչափական տեղափոխման պատճառով է անհրաժեշտ կանոնականությունների տեղափոխում: Այս կանոնը տարբեր կանոնականությունների երկրաչափական տեղափոխման պատճառով է անհրաժեշտ կանոնականությունների տեղափոխում: Այս կանոնը տարբեր կանոնականությունների երկրաչափական տեղափոխման պատճառով է անհրաժեշտ կանոնականությունների տեղափոխում: Այս կանոնը տարբեր կանոնականությունների երկրաչափական տեղափոխման պատճառով է անհրաժեշտ կանոնականություն

"The socialist movement, by its range and scope, is both national and international. Intent on liberating man and society from systems in which they are subjected to exploitation, socialist movements and forces in all countries, remaining true to their lofty mission and confident of their eventual victory, must coordinate and blend their efforts and, through organized struggle, advance toward the realization of the new socialist order..."

—ARF Program, 1982

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(Cons. by 11b) (Continued from pg. 10) Whether these conditions aid the loss of identity and the depoliticization of the youth, help the flow of the Armenians to the West, or facilitate the organized schemes of Turkish fascism to once and for all annihilate the Armenian people, they all in their own way do impede our movement. For the Armenian people, the challenge remains to be effective utilization of these same conditions, toward the revolution of its just cause. Although these conditions have given birth to numerous obstacles along our path, it is necessary to effectively reverse these conditions and utilize them for the advancement of our struggle. The ability to optimally achieve this can ultimately determine the future of the diasporan segment of the Armenian people.

The inhuman Beys of Erzurum, Vagif's Yeşilbeyli's mania, then the implementation of the policies of the Motherland Party after its capture of the state, and the nation's economic and social conditions, cannot be neglected. They are among the most significant factors in the current Armenian national movement. They have a profound effect on the development of the national movement, and their influence cannot be underestimated. The Armenians must be aware of these factors in order to effectively utilize them for the advancement of their struggle.

The Erzurum incident is a prime example. The policies of the Motherland Party, the economic and social conditions, and the influence of the Armenian diaspora all contributed to the current Armenian national movement. The Armenians must be aware of these factors in order to effectively utilize them for the advancement of their struggle.

The Armenian national movement is facing numerous obstacles along its path, but it is necessary to effectively reverse these conditions and utilize them for the advancement of our struggle. The ability to optimally achieve this can ultimately determine the future of the diasporan segment of the Armenian people.

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April 24, 1985
Montebello, California

by Ara Oshagan

The sound of the slammed car door pierced the still night air for a brief instant, like a spark in a frenzied escape, and quickly vanished into the darkness—smothered extinguished by the indifferent night. In its aftermath, he was left alone in the silence, alone in the emptiness and solitude of the darkness. His eyes, in a trance, under a hypnosis, followed the grassy blackness that rose like a shadow from his feet and ascended gradually slowly through the obscurity to the height of a shallow hill where the dull moonlight could reflect—an opening of semi-darkness admist the dead black—ascended to a structure, a structure in a mist of shadow that rose alone unchallenged from the surrounding empty darkness—straight erect smooth. His eyes were captured trapped by its strange magnificent solitude. He was gazing at a lone silent mystery, a mystery of what might be beyond the darkness and shadows, beyond the silence, beyond the tall smooth columns of the monument.

Earlier that day, he was here, amidst the loud incessant tumult of commemoration and mourning, standing near this same spot, squinting in the bright glaring sun. He had gathered on that calm, serene morning at the Montebello church—with the hundreds to mourn the loss of seventy years ago. He along with the hundreds—there, more out of a diffused and diluted sense of duty than mourning; there, more due to the sound and image of that one word and those two numbers—April 24, 1915—than what stood in, behind or beyond them. And, under the hot sun, they had turned from the church gate onto the sidewalks, not the streets the sidewalks, of Montebello, the hundred thinning and forming a long slow banal procession past irritated cars, surprised spectators, crowded fast-food places, loud food-markets, bored policemen. And they had turned into the small side-street, walking on the street now, the last few hundred yards, and they had ascended the final slope to the monument's parking lot. There was the monument, finally, loud glaring in the sun, already surrounded by canopies, trucks, vans, lights, cameras and hundreds of restless moving people—standing, sitting, walking, talking, shouting—a huge mass of clutter and sound surrounding, crowding and protecting the monument. And, on the outskirts, were the crying babies and running children; the picnic baskets and covers spread on the grass; the empty McDonald and Burger King wrappers; the crushed Coke cans; the wrinkled paper-cups strewn on the grass; and above it all, just barely able to rise above all that, speaking to it and consecrating it, were the speeches; the speeches of the clergy, the political leaders, the community leaders—the empty unwanted political speeches of the indifferent Deukmejians and Philadelphiaans. He has stood surrounded by this loud, incessant and crowded uproar, astonished at the scene; wondering what connection it had to the tragedy of 70 years ago, to the event that is hanging, somehow somewhere, like a heavy oppressive weight, from every Armenian’s soul; wondering how one can mourn or feel anything in this unrestrained sound and chaos.
Now he stood alone, the only figure solitary in the vast silence and darkness—except the monument. The monument was there—rising out of the darkness unchallenged deaf mute magnificent—\textit{what am I looking for} when his feet pulled compelled drawn moved on the grass and he went swiftly unwavering forward. Then, suddenly, he was only a few feet away, the monument loomed towered over him tall strong unmoving—the smooth calm columns rising in unison, in silent harmony and then turning toward each other, coming together touching at the top, at the apex. He lingered before that first concrete step, lingered between the dark and the semi-dark it must be here...it must then he was inside, in the center surrounded completely by the columns, silent shadows rising straight into the sky. He was still for a long intense moment. He took a few cautious steps to the right and timidly carefully reached toward a dark column. It was silent unmoved under his hand. With a start at first then slowing, walking stealthily slowly from one column to the next, touching feeling searching with his hands eyes, his stare pored each column full-length meticulously intensely—to penetrate, to reach, to pass through. And then he was at the center again \textit{here only here there is no other place} standing still, his eyes now fixed on the obscure tilted plate on top of a square of concrete three feet high, jutting out of the dark ground. With two steps that took an eternity to fall, he stepped forward. An immense black shadow fell across the upper surface of the plate, leaving only a dim fading stripe of moonlight to barely illuminate the lower. “April 21, 1968,” read his voice April 24, 1915 April 21, 1968 April 24, 1983 he reached stretched across the plate with both hands, his fingers barely grasping the edge, then he lifted one foot slowly straining twisting his body partly onto the steep plate, the other foot still on the ground, weighed down by a million and a half ghosts. Then he lifted that too, quickly sharply, to the edge of the plate, straining pulling with all his might, he climbed clawed onto the plate, holding on just barely, his body crouched, his fingers trembling under the strain, his foot tenously on the edge, twisting struggling straining, he lifted one arm up, slowly up into the air straight clear, his fingers outstretched, his shape, one arm extended taut reaching into the air, like a trembling statue about to fly. Then his foot slipped, his ribs crashed against the plate and he fell the endless space of a mere three feet, falling hard on his face on the cold ruthless pitiless ground, the impact like a quick fierce slap unleashed by the indifferent ground, the pain exploding, bitter sharp, invading his mind and he rolled, eyes closed, with a loud groan of pain. He came to a stop at the center of the monument and remained there for a while, gasping for breath, his face in his hands, dull groans of pain escaping through his fingers. Then he got up, one hand on his bruised face, walked past the dark columns, down the concrete steps, across the dark grass and drove away. The monument remained silent, rising alone and unchallenged to the sky through the surrounding darkness.

\begin{center}
\textbf{It Was April Again...}
\end{center}

\textit{The Case of the Monotonous Genocide.}

\begin{center}
\textit{by Ani Boghigian}
\end{center}

\begin{itemize}
\item memorable April 24 day; these so-called popular men claim to speak for the Armenian people being applauded and smiled at, for these innocent people believe that these dignitaries will also cheer and beam back. However, we know by experience that this is not true.
\item We Armenians don't get it do we? There are no more red fiery hearts left in this cold robotic world. People are not concerned with the past, they want a new computer, or maybe a new atomic toy which is able to win the world and turn everyone into a machine that is programmed to only function under the greedy power-seekers. The flames which once burned in the hearts of all Armenians is beginning to fade as the force of interdependence starts to overpower. Everyone is after something that is out of reach, something that they can never have but they would do anything to satisfy their sick needs; and certainly the Armenians or Nicaraguans or Africans or Salvadorans of the past will be forgotten...until an explosion is heard.
\item Why do we need these detonations? Maybe it stimulates curiosity amongst men...But what for?
\item Yes, it was April again and we were gathered together to remember our loss, again clapping, smiling, again, again...
\end{itemize}
Reading the Small Print

Note: The following is a summary of an article which originally appeared in the November/December 1987 issue of MERIP/Middle East Report. The author, John Mepham, visited Turkey last April to inquire about the state of affairs there. John Mepham teaches philosophy in London and is on the coordinating committee of European Nuclear Disarmament (END).

In early April, the president of the banned Turkish Peace Association invited friends from END (European Nuclear Disarmament) and other peace groups across Europe to join him and the TPA executive in Istanbul in celebrating the tenth anniversary of the TPA. They planned to hold a public peace forum and a press conference.

However, after the 1980 military coup the TPA had been systematically suppressed. The Turkish government had made much in recent years about its "Return to Democracy." Here was an opportunity to judge to what extent things really had improved. If it were possible, at this time, to hold a public discussion in Istanbul about nuclear disarmament and NATO, if it were possible for members of the TPA to put other views freely to the press, then some new dimension of democratic activity had opened up in Turkish life.

A few days before I set off for Istanbul, the police banned both the peace forum and the press conference.

Following the coup, the military regime disbanded many organizations including the trade union federation DISK, women's and youth organizations, and political parties as well as the Turkish Peace Association. Officials and members of these organizations were arrested; many of the trials drag on to this day.

I went to Turkey to inquire about the state of affairs there. What I found was not a "return to democracy" but the substitution of a different political model, a system of "authoritarian democracy." The state seeks to subordinate civil society by intimidating all forms of oppositional thinking and activity. The headlines of the 1982 Constitution mouth a democratic discourse, while the small print locks civil society in a vice of authoritarian discipline.

Prison Life

Ali and his friends were in prison for over three years. Ali Taygun had been, before his arrest, director of the State Theater Company of Istanbul. He had worked at the Yale Drama School. He has a standing invitation to work with a theater company in the US, but his passport has been withdrawn. We sit drinking tea in Istanbul's most celebrated hotel, the Pera Palace, the wood and stone embodiment of a certain notion of civilization — this hotel was built in the late 19th century to receive travelers at the end of their journey on the Orient Express. The sense of elegance, of old-fashioned luxury, is overpowering and incongruous as Ali chats peaceably about his experiences as a political prisoner. He explains how, when the verdict of guilty was announced by the military judges, he only realized what had happened when he saw the face of a friend, a British diplomat, go white. "For hours I found it impossible to connect the words of the verdict and the sentence with my own fate."

In prison, he and his comrades rigged up a system for heating water in a dustbin. They made "wire" from silver foil taken from cigarette packets and perforated a metal coathanger into a socket in a wall. The heating element was made from an aluminum fast food container wrapped between pieces of wood. The prisoners had a strict rota for washing and cleaning their quarters. Keeping themselves and their cells scrupulously clean was both a health measure and an element of necessary discipline. They invented ways of making jam out of carefully saved sugar lumps and fruit peels. They learned how to recook their daily ration of chickpeas with a little onion and olive oil to make them palatable.

The men of the TPA executive were lucky; they were together with each other, in a civilian prison. Their one woman colleague Reha Iyvan, was in a military prison where conditions were very much worse. The men were able to read a lot. They also set up classes for some of the young prisoners, many of whom had a very narrow political culture. "They read nothing but Bobby Sands and Che Guevara," Ali explained despairingly. Orhan Taylan, an artist who has just had a successful exhibition in Ankara, taught painting to some of these youths.

The Project of Modernization

Walking in the center of Istanbul, we pass the imposing old Lycee building where, over a century ago, the sultans of the Ottoman Empire imported French education to create an elite that could run a modernized civil service. They took modernization to mean Europeanization — rational law, modern bureaucracy and specialist training based on French positivist thinking. After World War I, Ataturk and his cohorts pushed this concept of modernization further by establishing the Republic of Turkey in 1923. The army has periodically intervened to keep the state on this course.

What was so unprecedented about the 1980 coup was the army's vicious attack on the intellectuals, traditionally their allies in defining the character of the state and the culture. The turmoil before the coup does not explain this frenzy against the intellectuals. People are debating these questions in Istanbul today. What explains the differences between this coup and those of 1960 and 1971? Is the project of Evren and his people different from that of Ozal and the business
wander the shoe shine boys and the beggars. I am reminded that since the coup in 1980 real wages have fallen in Turkey by 37 percent.

In Taksim, a huge banner across the front of the Etil Marmara Hotel announces in both Turkish and English: "The Third Meeting of the Follow-Up Committee of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organization of the Islamic Conference." To whom could this message possibly be addressed?

Against the hotel wall, a ravaged, ill-looking young boy, perhaps 12 year old, is slumped on the pavement. He is in rags and his bare feet poke through wide holes in his shoes. His hand is held out listlessly for alms. A team of three or four other boys creep up on him. They push into his hand some little pieces of newspaper torn to resemble bank notes. For a second the victim cannot believe his luck. The surprise is clearly legible on his face, but so then are the understanding and the fury which succeeded it. The tricksters find it all a really great joke, and fall about laughing.

In the middle of the square, a boy water seller, perhaps 10 years old, with a plastic water container and a single cup, tries to tempt passers-by to a drink. Nobody with a modern sense of hygiene would be willing to take the risk in this sticky heat. The boy is pounced on by two municipal policemen. They roughly snatch away his water container and hurl it to the ground. One of them smashes it under his heel, over and over, grinding it into an unusable mess. He savagely wrenches out the tap and twists it to pieces. Public health regulations sensibly prohibit this kind of water selling. But it is not rational preventive health care that is acted out here. The faces of the policemen are frightening, their violence is intimidating. We all pretend to be paying attention to something else. The boy looks on, speechless with rage and fear, rigid with the effort not to react. "He'll get a beating from his father when he gets home tonight without money and no water bottle," says a friend later when I tell the story. When the police have walked a safe distance away, the boy suddenly hurks his useless cup after them, howls his outrage, then runs away as fast as he can go.

An Authoritarian Constitution

Although there are still a sickening number of political prisoners, and although the history of torture, brutality and arbitrary cruelty has left very deep scars, the focus of immediate complaint among some opponents of the regime has shifted to the 1982 constitution. From an apartment with a stunning panoramic view of the Bosphorus, we look across to Asia. The sun goes down behind us and casts like flashes of fire in the windows of the houses on the hills we face. Soviet ships pass through beneath us, on their way to Odessa, hammer and sickles on their funnels. The apartment is furnished with cosmopolitan good taste, with what may be Parisian fabrics, Italian furniture and a stereo LP stack of impressive proportions. On the walls, varieties of modern European culture, prints and posters of Klimt and Brecht, jostle for space. By their side is the calligraphic seal of some sultan elaborated in complex arabesque.

Here I meet with some people from the medical, academic, business and professional circles. These are confident, wealthy, mildly progressive people. The businessman, who travels the world, whose children have been educated at schools in England and universities in the US, is a thoroughly modern figure. He speaks with real contempt and anger about the destruction of higher education in Turkey since the coup. "Instruction in the universities," he says, "has been reduced to the state of high school drilling or parrot learning. All the universities are firmly in the grip of the state, via the monolithic Higher Education Institute. They have no autonomy. The many academics who lost their jobs after the coup have not been reinstated." The concept of the modern education, of training the scientific and critical intelligence is regarded as a threat and has been destroyed.

The conversation settles on the small print of the constitution. The law of associations simply rejects the liberal idea of civil society as a space of free debate and organization. All associations must register

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with the police. No association is allowed to engage in political campaigns, support political parties and so on. The aim of these regulations is to prevent the formation of bodies like those that used to speak for youth or for women for workers, as well as those such as the TPA.

A perfect illustration of how this works in practice occurs the next day. Two British doctors go off to Ankara to meet with some Turkish medical people who set up a group called Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War some months earlier. One of its aims is to inform the public about the catastrophic effects of nuclear war. They wished to be federated with the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, which had won the Nobel Peace Prize. It has national groups in every European country except Yugoslavia, Albania and Turkey. The next week, the ministry of the interior suspended the activities of the Turkish group. Its application was refused on the grounds that statements about the effects of nuclear war might cause panic among the public. Furthermore, the authorities argued, these functions are already fulfilled by such bodies as the civil defense section of the ministry of the interior and the Atomic Energy Commission, and this duplication could create confusion. The group is therefore banned.

One law makes it illegal to seek to change the social or economic system of the country. Obviously this provision leaves it open for almost any thought or activity to be declared illegal. The martial law prosecutors tend to argue that any protest about the law amounts to treason. A liberal amendment to the law would rule out only attempts to change the system by violence. As things stand, people are liable to be denounced as terrorists simply for arguing for reforms to the constitution.

Under the constitution, President Evren has the power to veto any proposed changes. Any which he does not veto can only be changed by referendum. A referendum on September 6, 1987, removed the ban on political activity by political leaders of the pre-coup years. This removed one of the most absurdly illiberal aspects of the 1982 constitution, yet in fact it only dealt with a marginal issue. I met no one who had any sympathy for the old party leaders or thought that society would gain by their return to political life. Meanwhile, the really absurd restrictions on thought, publication and organization remain in place.

"Mrs. Işvan explains, nobody but the really well-off can afford to buy books, which are very expensive. Teachers, whose standard of living has fallen drastically since 1980, can scarcely afford even to buy newspapers. In provincial towns it would be impossible for a bookseller to stock anything but the most orthodox of texts. The police would certainly take note and revenge if a bookseller stepped out of line. I read of a recent episode in which the brother of a left-wing publisher was beaten to death. It was a case of mistaken identity...."

Reactionary Culture

Reha Işvan is a 60-year-old agriculturalist and educator. She and her husband (also an ex-political prisoner, and ex-mayor of Istanbul) have a successful fruit farm outside Istanbul. She talks about her own dreadful prison experience with tact and dignity. She talks about the resurrection of Islamic culture with scorn. She explains that religious instruction has been reintroduced into the schools, and religious schools which were banned by Atatürk are again permitted. Dress on television is strictly controlled—no sleeveless dresses are allowed. One can even see, in Istanbul itself, among the rush hour commuters queuing to get the ferry back across the Bosphorus after work, a few women in veils. Prayers are recited in state buildings, and people told me that is considered risky to be seen not joining in.

Books provide yet another example of how formal freedoms coexist with real restrictions and intimidation. For one thing, Mrs. Işvan explains, nobody but the really well-off can afford to buy books,
the Encyclopaedia Britannica in Turkish. But what will they do about those maps which mark with a dotted line the boundaries between Greek and Turkish territorial waters in the Aegean Sea? This is not permitted in Turkey; these are disputed areas. Another map labels an area in the east of the country “Kurdistan.” Nomination is a political act; the army will not tolerate the conferring of this name.

“It simply is not possible to have a free and wide-ranging critical discussion of the army and its role in Turkish society. In addition to the Kurds the Armenians are another taboo area. Turkey’s contested history cannot be properly told. This causes problems not only for magazines and newspapers, but also for book publishers. For example, a syndicate is financing the publication of the Encyclopaedia Britannica in Turkish. But what will they do about those maps which mark with a dotted line the boundaries between Greek and Turkish territorial waters in the Aegean Sea?”

The Penguin Map of the World and Map of Europe were seized by the State Security Council of Istanbul on the grounds that they “engaged in separatist propaganda.” The Academic American Encyclopaedia was banned on the grounds that it “undermined national sentiments,” through the seizure order was later withdrawn. A recent summary of book-banning in Turkey reports that 39 tons of books, periodicals and newspapers seized in Istanbul since 1980 were sent on December 18, 1986, to a paper mill to be pulped. They included 126 different books, 80 issues of 56 weekly or monthly political journals, 60 issues of 23 different magazines.

So the official story may be of a free press. But the small print, only legible by those who try to exercise that freedom, says that there are any number of exclusions, prohibited topics and images, and tough sanctions for those who step out of line.

The Trial Goes On
On April 28, just a few days short of five years after the original arrests, the TPA trials reached another turning point: the Second Military Court of Istanbul announced the results of its deliberations. The case against the TPA executive members had been heard for a third time. This trial has now been amalgamated with that known as TPA II, the trial of TPA members.

The court ordered that the Turkish Peace Association be disbanded and that all its assets and publications be seized and confiscated. Some of the verdicts were as follows.

Mahmud Dikerdem and Reha Işvan were each found guilty of belonging to an illegal organization and were sentenced to four years and two months each. Other members of the executive, including the president of the Medical Association, Dr. Atabek, the painter Orhan Taylan, professor Metin Oküz, doctor and psychiatrist, and Aykut Goker, the president of the Engineers Trade Union, were each sentenced to 18 months for “founding within the country an organization which has its roots abroad, without the permission of the government; organizing activities outside of the stated aims of the association; engaging in international activities in violation of the law of association.”

All Taygun and three others are also defendants in another case, in which they and others are charged with being members of the banned Turkish Communist Party. The TPA case against them is left outstanding, awaiting the verdict of that trial.