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Memory and the Politics of Construction of the Armenian Homeland

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I dedicate this dissertation to
my mother Fatma Tuncel and
my father Bekir Hikmet Tuncel

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Abstract

Establishment of the independent Republic of Armenia in 1991 has been a turning point in the Armenian history; except for the existence of an independent Armenian republic between 1918 and 1920, by the dissolution of the USSR, Armenians gained an independent state after more than six hundred years. The transition of the Soviet Armenia to an independent republic stimulated not only the radical dislocation of the established economic, political and socio-cultural structures in Armenia, but also transformed the routine in the Armenian diaspora communities. In this process, aiding the frail and infant independent Armenian republic became a paramount ethno-national cause among the diaspora communities and, by extension, one of the principal ethno-national binders, as well as a chief cause of controversies. Overall, the post-1991 era has witnessed the re-territorialization of the de-territorialized Armenian political imagination in the diaspora. This facilitated the post-1991 trans-state Armenian ethno-national re-construction along the Armenia-diaspora nexus. A parallel process to that has been the construction of the social reality of the post-1991 Armenia.

This dissertation examines the construction of the Armenian ethno-national social reality of the post-1991 Armenia through the discursive social practices of the Armenian state, new generation diaspora organizations and the diasporic individuals within the communicative space formed along the Armenia-diaspora nexus. The examination demonstrates that concerns over the physical and cultural survival of the Armenian ethno-nation expressed in different ways are the main considerations that eventually result in the construction of the post-1991 Armenia as the guardian and the soil of the Armenianness. From an abstract point of view, the actual agent of discourses that speaks through the Armenian state, new generation diaspora organizations and the diasporic individuals is the “anxious Armenian” who searches stability and security, reclaims her ethno-national identity, and is concerned about the cultural survival of the Armenian ethno-nation. Besides all, she is the one who “remembers” the genocide. This “anxious Armenian”, instead, is the person that the social memory of the genocide speaks itself through. As such, genocide is not only the “defining and founding moment” of the contemporary Armenian identity, but also the “defining and founding moment” of the post-1991 Armenia.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research: Establishment of the Republic of Armenia and the Armenia-Diaspora Nexus

Establishment of the third Armenian Republic, the Republic of Armenia, by the collapse of the Soviet Union opened up a new phase in the Armenian history; except for the existence of an independent Armenian republic between 1918 and 1920, Armenians gained an independent state after more than six hundred years¹. Independence caused an expected thrill among Armenians. Yet, not long after, the collapse of the Soviet socio-political and political order and a sequence of unfortunate events such as the devastating earthquake in 1988, the armed conflict over Karabakh that evolved into a war with the neighboring Azerbaijan, and the inefficiency of the national leadership to deal with the deprecatory situation dramatically disrupted the lives in Armenia. This transformed the early ecstasy of independence to grief for the many, which, among other things, is manifested by the emigration of approximately the one-third of the population to Russia, Europe and North America after 1991². The turbulence of independence, however, was not confined within the borders of Armenia. Although not comparable with the turmoil in Armenia, the emergence of the independent statehood dislocated many of the established structures, mode of conduct and thinking in the Armenian diaspora communities as it transformed centuries old “stateless” Armenian diaspora to a state-linked diaspora³. Besides particular changes and transformations in Armenia and diaspora, the

1 The last sovereign Armenian state before 1918 was the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia that lasted between 1199 and 1375.

In this dissertation, the Republic of Armenia is sometimes referred to as the third Armenian republic for the following reason: After the fall of the Kingdom of Cilicia, the first independent Armenian state was established in May 1918 approximately on the territory of the present-day Republic of Armenia with the official name Democratic Republic of Armenia. Democratic Republic of Armenia, however, lived short until its sovietization in December 1920. After the sovietization, the former Democratic Republic of Armenia became a constituent of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic (TSFSR) in 1922 with Azerbaijan and Georgia. The TSFSR was dissolved in 1936 and each constituent republic became a single soviet republic within the USSR. The Armenian SSR, the second Armenian republic, was disestablished in 1991 and the Republic of Armenia as the successor of the Armenian SSR appeared on the stage of history as the third Armenian republic. For the geographical location and the maps of the “Greater Armenia”, Kingdom of Cilicia, Western (Ottoman) Armenia, Armenian SSR, Republic of Armenia, Karabakh and the United Armenia according to the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, see Appendix 1.

2 Emigration after 1991 has been one of the paramount problems of the country. According to some, post-independence emigration reached to a level so to become even a threat to national security. Even, the Republic of Armenia National Security Strategy (2007) identifies emigration as an internal threat. For several reports and studies on post-independence emigration see, footnote 129 in Chapter 2.

3 Sheffer (2003) distinguishes diasporas into two categories with respect to the political status of their homelands as stateless and state-linked diasporas. In his words,

The stateless diasporas are those dispersed segments of nations that have been unable to establish their own independent states. The state-linked diasporas are those groups that are

establishment of the Republic of Armenia induced also a new mode of conduct between Armenia and diaspora.

The literature on diasporas identifies both idealistic and instrumental reasons of the homelands and the diasporas as factors of the formation and transformation of the relationships between the two⁴. Ethno-nationalist ideology and, as regards to the diasporas, romantic fidelity to the homeland and diasporic long-distance nationalism are diagnosed as the idealistic reasons⁵. The idealistic reasons of the diasporas become more salient when life conditions are arduous and social problems such as discrimination and exclusion are faced in the host country and diasporic actors perceive a security threat to the homeland (see, Shain and Barth 2003, 454-457)⁶. Furthermore, most often than not, diasporic elite perceive mobilization of the diaspora communities around the homeland related matters as an effective

in host countries but are connected to societies of their own ethnic origin that constitute a majority in established states (Sheffer 2003, 73).

Sheffer's also employs the age of the diasporas as another criterion for categorization of the diasporas. According to this categorization, diasporas are grouped into three as ancient, modern and incipient diasporas. Bringing the two criteria together, the following table can be composed as an illustration of the ways in which Sheffer groups diasporas.

	State-linked	Stateless
Ancient	Jewish (after 1948), Armenian (after 1991), Greek	Jewish (before 1948)
Modern	Italian, Irish, Polish	African
Incipient	Turkish	Kurdish, Palestinian, Sikh

Although this classification provides an analytical tool to better comprehend diasporas, as regards to the Armenian diaspora it partially fails for the fact that before 1991 there was an Armenian state, the Armenian SSR, as a constituent republic of the Soviet Union. Therefore, labeling the pre-1991 Armenian diaspora as a stateless diaspora and grouping it with, for example, the pre-1948 Jewish diaspora analytically is not adequate. Yet, it is also true that the Armenian SSR was far away from the ideal nation-state form. As such, 1920-1991 Armenian diaspora together with the diasporas of other soviet republics had constituted a unique category with respect to Sheffer's classification.

4 For a review of the literature on diasporas see, Appendix 2. For few studies on homelands and diasporas see, Brubaker (2000: 1995), Cressey (2006), Hammer (2005), King and Melvin (1999-2000), Levy and Weingrod (2005), Macri (2011), O'Donnell et al. (2008), Winland (2001).

5 For some studies on diasporic long-distance nationalism see, Anderson (1992), Bock-Luna (2008), Callahan (2003), Djuric (2003), Fuglerud (1999), Gal et al. (2010), Oh (2006), Lie (2001), Schulz (2003), Shain (1991), Shani (2008), Skrbis (1999), Waterbury (2010), Wise (2004),

6 Brubaker (2005, 12) argues that "we should think of diaspora not in substantialist terms as a bounded entity, but rather as an idiom, a stance, a claim. We should think of diaspora in the first instance as a category of practice". He maintains: "...rather than speak of 'a diaspora' or 'the diaspora' as an entity, a bounded group, an ethnodemographic or ethnocultural fact, it may be more fruitful, and certainly more precise, to speak of diasporic stances, projects, claims, idioms, practices, and so on" (13). Following Brubaker's approach, this dissertation maintains that rather than the substantialization of the ethnic Armenians in diaspora as a bounded group, it is needed to be attentive to the self-perceptions and individual loyalties of the individual Armenians in diaspora. For that, this dissertation employs the term "diasporic" instead of "diasporan" or any other term that implies an objectivist outlook that overlooks to the factor of subjectivity in the formation of diasporic communities.

way to keep the diaspora communities intact (see, Shain 2002, 279). The prospect of the utilization of the economic, social and political capitals of their kin-diasporas are identified as the instrumental reasons of the will of the homelands to build and strengthen linkages with their kin-diasporas (see, for instance, Basch et al., 1994). On the other hand, the conviction of the diasporas that homelands' policies affect interests of all the constituent elements of the ethno-nation both in and outside of the homeland motivate them to find ways to have an influence on their homelands (Shain and Barth 2003, 454-457, see also Patterson 2006). Particular interests and political agendas of the diasporic actors, and the intention to gain an economic "ethnic advantage" in the homeland that motivate diasporic actors to make economic investments in the homeland, which, in return, result in a deeper engagement with extra-economic homeland affairs are the other instrumental reasons (Gillespie et. al. 1999; Shain and Barth 2003). Last but not least, the literature on international migration reveals that sub-ethno-national kinship and family networks constructed on the bases of both psycho-social and instrumental motivations may become another factor of the diaspora-homeland connections (see Schiller & Fouron 1998; Smart&Smart 1998). In the re-formation of the post-1991 Armenia-Armenian diaspora relationships, all these idealistic and instrumental factors played a role in varying degrees. However, as regards to the initiatives coming from the diaspora side, arguably, humanitarian concerns mostly as a manifestation of a sense of ethno-national belonging and solidarity have been the decisive factor, whereas for the Armenia side, need for economic and political aid has been the main motivation to take action. Consequently, despite numerous disagreements, misunderstandings and problems between Armenia and different diaspora organizations that were particularly evident until 1998, there have been plentiful *de jure* and some *de facto* attempts to establish relations between Armenia and diaspora by the initiatives of State of Armenia, Armenian civil society, and diaspora organizations. Notably, whereas until the late 1980s Soviet Armenia had been perceived as the party that sustain and support diaspora, after 1988, diaspora was encumbered to support the young Republic of Armenia economically and politically (Policy Forum Armenia 2010). As such, while the Armenian establishment came to perceive diaspora as an economic and political asset for its developmental and political objectives, diaspora not only regarded itself so but also claimed a status as a legitimate actor in social and political spheres in Armenia.

As early as 1992, Hayastan All-Armenian Fund was established by the initiation of the Republic of Armenia to ensure, sustain, and regulate diaspora's financial aid as the earliest *de*

jure attempt to institutionalize the Armenia-diaspora relationship. Invitation of several diasporans to Armenia to hold important political posts was another important initiation of this kind⁷. However, these early attempts did not bring further *de jure* initiatives and an apparent progress in Armenia-diaspora nexus. Until 1998, relations remained prickly, to say the least, because of the unpreparedness of the diaspora to develop an eloquent mode of thinking and comprehension and conduct vis-à-vis Armenia, the unfavorable social, economic and political situation in Armenia as a young and inexperienced post-soviet country that not only had to struggle with the post-soviet tremors but also for Karabakh against Azerbaijan, and the ideological approach and the political practice of the elite that ruled Armenia until 1998. Consequently, between late 1980s and 1998, in addition to the individual ventures, the initiatives of the Armenian General Benevolence Union (AGBU) had been the only notable institutional initiatives along the Armenia-diaspora nexus. Only after 1998, Armenia-diaspora relations began to improve. On the side of the Republic of Armenia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized various Pan-Armenian events including Armenia-Diaspora Conferences in 1999, 2002, 2006 to strengthen and prosecute relations with the diaspora⁸. To promote intellectual and academic exchanges between diaspora and Armenia, Department of Armenian Diaspora and Communities was founded within the Institute of History at the National Academy of Sciences in Yerevan⁹. Moreover, events such as Pan-Homenetmen Games and Pan-Armenian Games began to be organized in Armenia. Years helped the diaspora to gradually better comprehend and adopt itself to the reality of the Republic of Armenia that facilitated the development of a better conduct between the two, as well. Within such post-1998 aura, by 2007-2008, Armenia-diaspora relationship began to evolve into a more advanced phase of legalization, formalization and institutionalization by the Dual Citizenship Legislation in 2007 and the establishment of the Ministry of Diaspora in 2008¹⁰.

7 Among those who were invited to Armenia the United States, the followings are the most renowned personals, who held the most important positions in Armenia: Gerard Libaridian (adviser and then senior adviser to the former President of Armenia, Levon Ter-Petrossian, 1991-1997; first Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1993-1994), Raffi Hovanissian (repatriate; first Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1991-1992; since 2005 chairman of the Heritage Party in Armenia), Sebouh Tashjian (State Minister of Energy, 1993-1995), Vardan Oskanian (Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1998-2008, founder of the Civilitas Foundation in Yerevan).

8 As an important note, Libaridian during a private conversation on February 9, 2012 argued, it was, in fact, Ter-Petrosyan who first began the preparations of the Armenia-Diaspora Conferences. However, after his forced resignation in 1998, the first conference was launched by his successor Robert Kocharyan.

9 The roots of the Department of Armenian Diaspora and Communities go back to the Department of History of the USSR and the Republics of People Democracy that was founded in 1959. Later the name of the department was changed to the Department of Armenian Diaspora and Historical Relations. Finally, the recent name was adopted.

10 Dual Citizenship legislation was signed into law in February 2007. According to this legislation, individuals of Armenian descent aged eighteen and higher, who have inhabited permanently in Armenia for three years, speak Armenian, and are familiar with the constitution are eligible for obtaining the citizenship of the Republic

All these initiatives target establishing solid ties between the Armenian diaspora and the Republic of Armenia mainly to canalize the economic and political support of the diaspora to Armenia. Yet, as an effect, these initiatives also strengthen the sense of ethno-national belonging of the Armenians worldwide and help the emergence of a sense of adjoined future for the Armenians in diaspora, Karabakh and Armenia. Therefore, these initiatives are also the practices of the re-construction of the extra-territorial trans-state Armenian ethno-nation along the Armenia-diaspora nexus. In that sense, virtual territorialization of the Armenian diaspora is a prime factor of the post-1991 re-construction of the extra-territorial trans-state Armenian ethno-nation. As such, the re-construction of the extra-territorial trans-state Armenian ethno-nation along the Armenia-diaspora nexus rests to a great extent on the objective of contributing to the construction of Armenia.

1.2 Objective of the Research: Understanding the Construction of the Ethno-national Social Reality of Post-1991 Armenia

Construction of the Republic of Armenia is a four-dimensional process. Establishment of the independent statehood, configuration of the Armenian polity and the consolidation of the Armenian state as an actor in the international domain, in other words, construction of Armenia as a political entity as an independent state is one dimension. Transition from the Soviet economy to liberal free-market economy is the second dimension of the construction of the Republic of Armenia. The third and the fourth dimensions are, to use Lefebvre's (1991, 37) term, the "production of the space" of Armenia, that is, the construction of Armenia as a country. Re-construction of the built environment, that is, roads, cities, infrastructure and so on, as one aspect of the production of the space of Armenia is the third dimension. Finally, the fourth dimension is the social construction of Armenia by ascribing the delimited and marked geographic space and the political territory of Armenia a meaning, hence an identity. As such, the fourth dimension of the construction of Armenia is the construction of the social reality of Armenia.

The notion of the construction of the social reality of Armenia does not mean to ignore the material existence of Armenia, a point that can be grasped by reviewing the three ontological

of Armenia. Voting rights, military service, and taxation are the most controversial aspects of this legislation. Although Dual Citizenship legislation was put to force with hopes to attract diaspora's economic, political and human capital to Armenia, until now there have been no sign of fulfillment of these expectations. Moreover, the relevant regulations for application to the Dual Citizenship have not yet been made clear by the Republic of Armenia. Prior to the establishment of the Ministry of Diaspora Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs was in charge of the relations with diaspora.

paradigms on reality. The realist paradigm sustains that things exist independent of our senses and/or perceptions. Idealism, on the opposite, denies the truth/reality independent of our senses/perceptions and maintains that the former is essentially the construct of the latter. Between the realist and the idealist paradigms, social constructionist paradigm admits the existence of things independent of the mind, yet refutes that things have substantive meanings and identities in-themselves. Rather, social constructionist paradigm maintains that things obtain social reality or realities only after commonsense(s) about those things emerge from the interactions of the subjectivities of the individuals within intersubjective fields. Therefore, according to the social constructionist paradigm, Armenia achieves a meaning, hence a social reality only as a corollary to its social construction.

Because social reality of things is an outcome of the interaction of subjectivities, interaction of different subjectivities results in different constructions of social reality. This allows multiple social realities of the same entity concurrently. Therefore, within the social constructionist paradigm it is not vain to ask “social reality of whom”. This holds true for Armenia, as well. For example, for the Azeri nationalists Armenia may signify the enemy that occupied a part of the Azerbaijani territory. For the Turks the same Armenia may signify a plague that seeks to stalemate Turkey by the “deceit of genocide” and for the Japanese nothing more than a country among others somewhere out there. Certainly, Armenia may have different social realities for different sub-national groups, too. Furthermore, as subjectivities change over time, the interaction the same agents at different times results in different social realities in different times. Therefore, the social reality of an entity for a specific group may differ throughout the time. Following this theoretical framework, this dissertation addresses the post 1991 socially reality of Armenia resultant of the emergent commonsense within the intersubjective field along the Armenia-diaspora nexus. In other words, it tracks what can be called the post-1991 Armenian ethno-national social reality of Armenia.

The social reality of things reflects the subjectivities of interacting agents. In fact, social reality of the things can be approached as the aggregate epitome of the identities of the interacting agents. For the Armenians, the 1915 tragedy had been an ultimate ethno-national lever. Armenians at the height of their renaissance, by the 1880s found themselves in the midst of a catastrophe. In this dramatic period, the terrible events of 1915, the Armenian Genocide according to Armenians and majority of international scholars, and inter-communal

strife and the relocation of Armenians according to Turkish establishment and a considerable portion of the Turks, resulted in the tragic loss of hundreds of thousands souls and left so many families broken and children orphaned. In addition to this myriad calamity, the exile of the great majority of the Armenians from Anatolia stripped the Armenians off from their native towns and villages. As such, the years between 1880s and 1923 determined the destiny not only of the entire generation which lived through these catastrophic years eradicating all the class, status and other social differences, but also of the latter generations. Notably, the 1915 tragedy has also been the constitutive moment of the contemporary Armenian “victimhood”¹¹.

Vamik Volkan, an emeritus professor of psychiatry at the University of Virginia defines the concept chosen trauma as “the mental representation of an event that has caused a large group to face drastic losses, feel helpless and victimized by another group, and share a humiliating injury”. He adds:

[Chosen trauma] reflects a group's unconscious "choice" to add a past generation's mental representation of an event to its own identity. A chosen trauma is linked to the past generation's inability to mourn losses after experiencing a shared traumatic event, and indicates the group's failure to reverse narcissistic injury and humiliation (Volkan, 1991, 1992, 1997; Volkan & Itzkowitz 1993, 1994). Although each individual in a traumatized large group has his or her own unique identity and personal reaction to trauma, all members share the mental representations of the tragedies that have befallen the group. Their injured self-images associated with the mental representation of the shared traumatic event are "deposited" into the developing self-representation of children in the next generation as if these children will be able to mourn the loss or reverse the humiliation. Such depositing constitutes an intergenerational transmission of trauma. If the children cannot deal with what is deposited in them, they, as adults, will in turn pass the mental representation of the event to the next generation (Volkan 1999, 46).

Even a brief survey of the Armenian literature, internet websites, newspapers, journals, academic publications reveals that the tragedy of 1915 has been the “chosen trauma” of the

11 Cohen (2008) classifies diasporas as regards to the cause of their diasporization as victim diasporas (e.g. Jews, Africans, Armenians), labour diasporas (indentured Indians), imperial diasporas (e.g. British), trade diasporas (e.g. Lebanese, Chinese), and deterritorialized diaspora (e.g. Caribbean peoples, Sindhis, Parsis) and groups the Armenian diaspora as a victim diaspora.

As a matter of fact, the number of casualties during the 1915 events is one of the points of dispute between the Armenian and Turkish historians. Whereas the Armenian historians utter the 1.500.000 and sometimes even 2.000.000 recently, the number that the Turkish historians give is several hundred thousand. Alas, this debate is hardly a scholarly one based on facts and rather a part of the struggle between the Armenian and Turkish nationalisms. For a rare scholarly study on the number of casualties see, Fuat Dunder's *Crime of Numbers: The Role of Statistics in the Armenian Question (1878-1918)* (2010).

Armenian people¹². This resulted in what Panossian (2006b, 242) explains as: “the genocide itself (including its denial) became the defining moment – the founding ‘moment’ – of contemporary Armenian identity. Post-1915 Armenians, particularly in the diaspora, saw themselves as ‘the first Christian nation’ and ‘the first victims of genocide in the twentieth century’”. As such the 1915 tragedy has not only been the objective condition that shaped the existence of the Armenians in the twentieth century, but also its subjective factor and the major component of the Armenian identity. Analytically, subjective condition of the emergence of the contemporary Armenian diasporic identity and its culmination in the collective memory, can be divided into two constituent components; “the loss of the people” and “the loss of the homeland”. Consequently, the collective memory of the 1915 tragedy, diverse from that of the Jewish Holocaust for example, has always had a constituent component of “the lost homeland”. For example, during an interview, as a part of the a field research that the author of this dissertation conducted in Yerevan between 16 September-1 October 2008, Tigran Mkrtychyan, then an analyst and staff of the European Stability initiative comparing the Armenian and the Jewish stated: “We lost our forefathers and also fatherland. Jews only lost people in Europe and after Holocaust they returned to homeland. We lost everything”. The effect of “the loss of the homeland” as a component of the 1915 tragedy is the fixation of the “old country” that remains within the borders of the Republic of Turkey. What Artsvi Bakhcinyan, a well-known figure among the Armenian intellectual-artistic community said during an interview during the same field research well illustrates the fixation of the “the lost homeland”.

I cannot visit Western Armenia. I am not ready for that. This would be an emotional shock for me...even if my ancestors are from there and I have always dreamed about Van... Akhtamar...I have been thinking about Lake Van since my childhood. I have always wanted to have a Van cat. I have always wanted to own a house by the Lake Van. But I am not ready emotionally. I cannot stand seeing the portrait of Mustafa Kemal at Akhtamar...Going to a place that you know everything about...Seeing no trace of the Armenian culture...being in my country and being a foreigner there...Seeing Armenian converts there would wound me.

For that, this dissertation hoped also to uncover the reflections of the genocide in the post-1991 Armenian ethno-national social reality of the post-1991 Armenia, yet without hypothesizing for its inductive methodological approach explained below.

12 For example, Lorne Shirinian (1996-1997; 1992; 1990) through an analysis of the Armenian-North American literature argues that Genocide is the common theme in this literature.

1.3 Discursive Social Practices and the Construction of the Ethno-national Social Reality of the Post-1991 Armenia within the Trans-state Communicative Spaces

Subjectivities of the individuals interact in many different ways and within many different media. Therefore, the emergence of the commonsense, hence the construction of social reality, is a blend of multi-dimensional and ongoing processes that involve mediated and unmediated deliberate social practices of different sorts and *ipso-facto* happenings with their both direct and indirect consequences within a certain historical and socio-political context. Thus, examining the construction of the social reality in its entirety requires tracking multiple social practices that have different logics and modes of conduct, which require different tools to be observed and their very complex interactions. Rather than just representational or communication tool, discourse is a “meaning making tool” (Howarth 1998, 274) that gives the material world its identity, hence creates and changes the world (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002) by establishing “systems of relations between different objects and practices, while providing (subject) positions with which social agents can identify” (Howard and Stavrakakis 2000, 3). By and of itself, discourse is a material force that structures the social world of meanings through communication. Among social practices of different natures, discursive social practices are arguably the major inputs in the construction of social reality as the circulation of stories, myths and other narratives is the primary and most direct factor in the generation of the common sense. Departing from this perspective, this dissertation leaves aside other social practices and focuses only on discursive social practices for the investigation of the Armenian ethno-national social reality of Armenia. Accordingly, it focuses its gaze on the Armenian ethno-national communicative space formed along the Armenia-diaspora nexus where discourses are (re)produced, interact and form a communicative intersubjective field.

Sociology as a science developed at about the same time with the emergence and consolidation of the modern nation-states. As modern nation states and the international system matured on the doctrine of the nation-state sovereignty based on the principles of territoriality and non-interference of the external actors in domestic affairs that found its classical expression in Weber’s definition of the state as “a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory”, sociology conceived societies mostly as national societies (see Pries 1999, 17-18). As Pries (1999, 16) rightly argues “sociology as a whole was determined for a long time by the view that geographic and social space were congruent, and society was conceived as a territorial unity, usually constituted as a nation state”. Therefore, Pries adds, “for a very long

time and with the exception of a very vague and emphatic concept of “human society” *per se* the mainstream sociology focused on society only as national society within the geographic boundaries of nation-states” and until recently sociology remained a “place-bound” science. Consequently, territories of the nation-state became the spatial units of reference and analysis of societies as the social spaces created through cultural, economic, political practices and set of relations and networks of the “individual and collective actors” that re-produce the identities within it (see, Faist 2004, 4; Leander 1999). However, since the last couple of decades as the split between the geographic and the social spaces became more noticeable consequent to the developments in communication and transportation technologies, a new awareness has installed among sociologists and sociology has evolved into a less a place-bound science. As a result, contemporary sociological research has gradually overcome the idea of embeddedness of the geographic space (place) defined by the nation-state territory and social space and studies on trans-state social spaces as a part of the growing literature on transnationalism and diasporas began to occupy larger space within the sociological literature¹³. Parallel to this perspective, this dissertation focuses on the trans-state space formed along the Armenia-diaspora nexus.

Social spaces as “a set of relations produced by persons with symbolic and material means” (see Leander 1999, 9) is by definition composed of sub-spaces such as cultural-spaces, economic-spaces, political-spaces and so on. The same is also true for the trans-state social spaces. For example, whereas the flow of remittances and other goods across borders form the trans-state economic spaces, exchange of the cultural products constitute the trans-state cultural spaces. Likewise, through cross-border communications, trans-state communicative spaces are built as sub-spaces of the trans-state social spaces¹⁴.

13 In this literature, however, for the translocal nature of diasporas, the term diaspora is often used interchangeably with the term transnationalism. This is a gross terminological mistake for fact that transnationalism is a term that is generated by adding the prefix “trans” that means “across”, “over”, “beyond” or “on the opposite” in front of the word “nationalism”. Therefore, transnationalism refers to an entity that is over and beyond the nation. However, as detailed in Appendix 2 diaspora is ultimately an ethno-national category. Although transnationalism is the most frequently used term in the literature, there are also other terms used to define the same phenomenon such as transnational social field (Schiller et al. 1992), transnational social space (Pries 1999), transnational village (Levitt 2001), translocality (Appadurai 1995), transnational migrant circuit (Rouse 1991), transnational community (Georges 1990; Kearney and Nagengast 1989), global ethnoscape (Appadurai 1991). For a review, see Vertovec (2001).

14 The idea of sub-spaces of trans-state social spaces in this dissertation is inspired by Arjun Appaduria’s widely referred idea of five scapes that he outlined in his essay *Modernity at Large* (1996). Appadurai identifies ethnoscapas, mediascapas, technoscapas, financescapas and ideoscapas as fluid and constantly changing dimensions of the global exchange of ideas and information.

Trans-state communicative spaces are formed upon various media. Couriers, mail post, telegraph, telephone are some of the old media that contributes to the formation of a trans-state communicative space. Although these old media are still relevant to the formation of the trans-state communicative spaces, their significance is declining. What renders the trans-state communicative fields more germane today is the high-tech and media revolution of the 1990s that created new media manifested in and by the voluminous literature that focuses on transnational migration, transnationalism, diasporas and the new communicative technologies¹⁵. Among the new media, internet proved to be the most important medium that facilitated the most dramatic qualitative differences in communicative social practices and facilitated the growth of the trans-state communicative spaces.

Despite its hitches resultant of regional inequalities in terms of technological and infrastructural developments, technological illiteracy especially for the elderly and state censorship, internet brings about sober advancements in the sphere of communication. First, the internet facilitates cheaper and instant long-distance communication that overcomes the physical distance as an obstacle to communication; the only distance-wise physical limitation remains the reach of the fiber cables. By enabling instant messaging, internet communication also eliminates the temporal limitations in opposition to some of the old media such as mail post which requires considerably longer delivery time. Furthermore, digitalization of the traditional hard-copy materials such as dailies enables the access to these materials much effortless and costless; through internet, say, a housewife in Moscow and a businessman in New Delhi get the opportunity to access to the same material, for example, the Washington Post Daily, at the same time mostly without paying anything. Third, different from mail post, telegram, phone calls and other traditional communication tools, which principally enable private messaging between individuals, internet enables public communication that random individuals may not only observe but also actively participate through email lists, internet forums and so on. By this way, the internet facilitates the growth of a relatively equalitarian, interactional and public communicative space. Fourth, the internet swiftly turns into an archive as progressively more things ranging from academic books to forum discussions are broadcasted and stored in different websites, which also enables retrospective access to these

15 For few examples of this literature among the numerous other see, Allonso and Arzoz (2010), Bernal (2006), Brinkerhoff (2009), Hiller and Franz (2004), Parham (2004).

materials. This renders the internet an ample external memory¹⁶. As such, as Gane (2005, 475 cited in Cavanagh 2007, 10) argues:

...Internet-related technologies *have* directly altered the patterning of everyday life, including the way we work, access and exchange information, shop, meet people, and maintain and organize existing social ties. These technologies have done more than 'add on' to existing social arrangements; they have radically altered the three main spheres of social life, the spheres of production, consumption and communication. This is why it is possible to talk of a qualitatively new field of sociological analysis that might be called 'the information age'.

Through the exile poetry of the 13th and 14th centuries, the personal letters connecting merchants from Iran to Madras to Venice, journals and newspapers circulated around different Armenian diaspora communities and homeland, messages carried by the secret couriers of Armenian revolutionary parties, letters sent to dear ones, external phone calls to family members and other communications an Armenian ethno-national trans-local communicative space has long been formed that resulted in the emergence of sense, reality and the term *Ayots Ashkharh*; the Armenian world. However, as the above discussion indicates among other communication tools internet has been the most revolutionary and influential means of extra-territorial communication, hence a means for the growth and maintenance of the contemporary *Ayots Ashkharh*. Therefore, in order to reveal the ethno-national social reality of the post-1991 Armenia along the Armenia-diaspora nexus, this dissertation focuses on the discursive social practices in the virtual space of the world wide web.

1.4 The Agents and the Socio-political Context of Discourse

Contemporary discourse theories can be grouped into two as regards to their standing vis-à-vis the question of actor/agency. Post-structuralist and post-marxist discourse theories typically conceptualize individuals as simply subjects of discourse. Schools such as critical discourse theory and discursive psychology, on the other hand, perceive individual as both the

¹⁶The term external memory is developed by Egyptologist Jan Assmann. According to Assmann, transmission of the self-knowledges of societies both in time and space is the prerequisite of societies' unity, particularity and identity. However, as societies expand, they pass a critical threshold and personal face-to-face communication falls short to enable such transmission. At that point, a need for an external intermediate memory to record, store, conserve and retrieve society's self-knowledge emerges. In other words, when the self-knowledge of the society cannot be carried and transmitted by members of the society, a necessity for an "artificial" memory emerges. The emergence of such external mediate artificial memory that objectifies society's self knowledge is what renders the talk about 'cultural memory' possible. In fact, the term 'cultural memory' in Assmann's terminology stands for that externalized, mediated, artificialized, and objectified nature of the self-knowledge of the society. Assmann sustains it is the 'cultural memory' that enables the existence of societies (see, Assmann 2001 and 1995). As a huge external memory, therefore, internet is one of the means of the reproduction of the contemporary societies and nations.

product and the producer of the discourse “in specific contexts of interaction” (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002 7). Similar to overlooking the relative autonomy of social actors as agents of discourse, poststructuralist and post-marxist discourse theories also often neglect the socio-economic context as a factor of the formation of the discourse in opposition to other discourse theories that are attentive to the context of discourse. Eventually, poststructuralist and post-marxist theories employ the notion of discourse as a mysteriously omnipotent and sovereign power in its own. This understanding logically results in a conception of discourse that Kvale (1992: 36, in Jørgensen and Phillips 2002, 14) formulates as “the self no longer uses language to express itself; rather language speaks through the person. The individual self becomes a medium for the culture and its language”, just like Foucault’s claim that ‘discourse is not the majestically unfolding manifestation of a thinking, knowing, speaking subject’ (Foucault 1972: 55, in Jørgensen and Phillips 2002, 14).

This dissertation rejects the premises of the poststructuralist and post-marxist discourse theories and maintains that both social actors and the context are important factors in the formation of the discourse. However, it also refuses voluntarism that perceives social actors as radically autonomous agents. Rather, this dissertation acknowledges the dialectical relationship between the discourse and the social actors and conceptualizes the latter as both the “masters and slaves of language” (Barthes 1982, in Jørgensen and Phillips 2002, 17), which is well explained by Jørgensen and Phillips’ (2002, 17) as follows:

Through producing new discourses in this way, people function as agents of discursive and cultural change. As the critical discourse analyst, Fairclough, expresses it, ‘Individual creative acts cumulatively establish restructured orders of discourse’ (1989: 172). However, even in those approaches in which the subject’s agency and role in social change are brought to the foreground, discourses are seen as frameworks that limit the subject’s scope for action and possibilities for innovation.

As regards to the relationship between the discourse and the context, Torfing (2005, 9) argues that the discourse theory “should focus on the conditions of possibility for our perceptions, utterances, and actions, rather than on the factual immediacy or hidden meaning of the social world”. Following this argument, he insists to be attentive to “the historical formation of the discursive conditions of social being” (10) that implies the contextual and dynamic nature of discursive formations. Similarly, Howarth (1998, 281) argues that “the work of discursive analysis is to discover those rules and conventions which structure the *production of meaning*

in particular contexts; investigating why and how these systems of meaning change; and how social agents come to identify themselves in discursive terms (emphasis added). As such, both scholars identify discourse as a context-dependent constitutive force and recognize the importance of the structural factors in the formation, endurance and the transformation of the discourses, and by extension the socially constructed reality as the outcome of the interaction of discursive and other social practices.

Although contextual factors in the formation of discourse must not be overlooked, attention must be paid not to take the relationship between the context and the discourse as one of determinacy. Rather, this relationship has to be understood as a contingency; contextual changes dislocate the sedimented discourses as the existing discourse becomes insufficient to provide meaning. It is this dislocation of the sedimented discourses that opens up the way to renewed interactions and hegemonic struggles among different social and political actors to institute a commonsense the result of which is not precisely predictable as hegemonic actors “weave together different strands of discourse in an effort to dominate or organize the field of meaning so as to fix the identities of objects and practices in a particular way” (Howarth and Stavrakakis. 2000, 3). Following this track, this dissertation maintains, in addition to different actors, specific socio-economic and contexts are factors in the structuring of the discourses, yet by rejecting historical materialist determinism.

As shall be detailed in the following chapter, the short history of the Republic of Armenia can be divided into two eras: 1) the late 1980s-1998, and 2) the post-1998 era. In the late-1980s-1998 era, economic and political foundations of the third Armenian republic were laid despite the immense socio-political problems as a consequence of the collapse of the Soviet economic and social order, and the inability of the ruling elite to find quick solutions. The electoral victory of Robert Kocharyan in the 1998 presidential elections actuated the next era of the economic, political and ideological consolidation. In the post-1998, socio-economic conditions in Armenia improved, although this improvement remained scant for the absence of economically meaningful natural resources, corruption and the handover of the existing economic and strategic assets of the country to foreign establishments, predominantly to Russia. Notably, scholars such as Papazian (2006) and Payaslian (2011) argue that there had been continuity rather rupture between pre-1998 and post-1998 eras. Papazian maintains there had not been drastic changes in the foreign policy of Armenia in practice, whereas Payaslian claims hostilities and conflictual domestic politics, authoritarian tendencies and corruption

institutionalized during Ter Petrosyan years and continued to be the realities of Armenia after him. According to Payaslian there has not been much difference between the governments of Ter Petrosyan and his successors. Although, these are correct observations, what those argue for continuity between pre-1998 and post-1998 eras overlook is the ideological discontinuity between the two eras. In the ideological domain, the late 1980s-1998 era had witnessed an innovative search for a new interpretation of the Armenian history and political thinking that grew of the idea that the existing Armenian historiography and political thinking were impaired by an over-idealistic approach raised upon the belief of the uniqueness and superiority of the Armenian history and people. Accordingly, the search for a new interpretation of history and politics that found its expression in the “New Thinking” of the Armenian National Movement (ANM) led by the first president Levon Ter Petrosyan maintained that the idea of “normalcy” of the Armenian history and the people, in opposition to uniqueness and superiority, should be the chief point that would lead to a realistic understanding of history and politics. The reflection of this perspective in the politics had been the “realist and pragmatist” approach. However, “New Thinking” that radically antagonized the constants of the long-established traditional and hegemonic perspective of the “National Ideology” faced a stern objection of the latter. By the electoral victory of Robert Kocharyan in the 1998 presidential elections, “National Ideology” triumph over the “New Thinking” and re-established itself as the dominant mode of thinking in Armenian politics and society. In fact, the victory of the “National Ideology” over the “New Thinking” has been the moment of rupture between pre-1998 and post-1998 eras.

Moreover, challenging the continuity thesis, consequent to the paradigm change, political rhetoric of the second president Kocharyan, and the relative relief of the post-soviet heavy socio-economic situation in Armenia, as well as the diaspora’s relative adaptation to the post-1991 realities, in the post-1998 era, stormy encounters between Armenia and the diaspora relatively smothered and a more productive conduct between the two began to develop. The post-1998 trend was consolidated by 2007-2008, when the dual citizenship legislation was passed and the Ministry of Diaspora was established that marked the opening of a new stage of Armenia-diaspora relations that might be labeled as the legalization, formalization and institutionalization of Armenia-Diaspora relations. After 2007-2008, Armenia-diaspora relations attained a more stable pattern and began to lean towards further development and institutionalization. For this, this dissertation focuses on the period between 2007 and 2012, in which the post-1998 era. Secondly, it addresses diasporic actors as agents in the social

construction of Armenia along the Armenia-diaspora nexus next to the State of the Republic of Armenia.

1.5 Methodology of the Research

To sum, this dissertation departs from the designation that since the late 1980s construction of the independent Republic of Armenia, in addition to the will for the recognition of the 1915 events as genocide, has been the chief cause that gathers Armenians in Armenia and the diaspora around a common purpose, hence one of the two main factors of the post-1991 reconstruction of the extra-territorial Armenian ethno-nation. Construction of the Republic of Armenia is a four-dimensional process: political construction, economic construction, construction of the built environment and re-construction of the social reality of Armenia. The objective of this dissertation is to explore the re-construction of social reality of Armenia along the Armenia-diaspora nexus. To this end, it focuses on discursive social practices within the Armenian trans-state ethno-national communicative space formed within the World Wide Web.

1.5.1 The Data

To investigate the emergent ethno-national social reality of Armenia along the Armenia-diaspora nexus this dissertation examines the discourses of three different actors that are circulated on the internet: 1) the discourse of the State of the Republic of Armenia, 2) the discourses of the diaspora community organizations, 3) the discourses of the ethnic Armenian individuals in the diaspora.

1.5.1.1 Agents of the Discourse of the State of the Republic of Armenia

Armenians around the world acclaim independent Armenia and statehood not simply as a socio-political reality or as an apparatus to pursue national goals. Much more than that, independent Armenia and statehood are praised as the symbols of the ethno-national rebirth, collective victory and hope. For this reason, in addition to idealistic and instrumental reasons mentioned above, most of the Armenians in diaspora are concerned with social, economic and political matters in Armenia and its policies in the international domain.

The most concerned sections of the diaspora are perceptive and even party to different social, economic and political standpoints of different political parties and the civil society actors in Armenia. Even, as discussed in Chapter 2, traditional Armenian diaspora political parties are

registered political parties in Armenia. However, for the average Armenian in diaspora it is the State of the Republic of Armenia that represents the “whole” as the highest organizational form and the only legally recognized representative of the Armenian nation in the international arena. Therefore, rather than the political parties or civil society actors, they first and foremost attend to the discourse and actions of the Armenian state. Therefore, within the trans-state Armenian ethno-national communicative space, the discourse of the Armenian state is met with great attention. As such, in the emergence of the common sense about Armenia, hence in the construction of the social reality of Armenia within this space, the discourse of the Armenian state becomes an important input.

The state of the Republic of Armenia consists of various organs. Hypothetically, these organs may reproduce and circulate different discourses. Therefore, in order to examine the input of the Armenian state discourse in the construction of the social reality of Armenia along the Armenia-diaspora nexus, first it is needed to decide which state organs to focus on as the agents of the discourse of the State of the Republic of Armenia and then abstract the discourse of the State of the Republic of Armenia as the cumulative of these discourses. Armenia is ruled by semi-presidential system. In this system, the president appears as the most chief political figure that represents the country. This renders the presidential discourse one of the main pillars of the discourse of the State of the Republic of Armenia. Because this dissertation addresses the 2007/2008-2012 period as the era of legalization, formalization and institutionalization of Armenia-Diaspora relations, it focuses on the statements of the third President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan, who assumed the presidential office on April 9, 2008 and in the presidential election of February 18, 2013 secured his office for another five years. The Ministry of Diaspora is the highest state organ that is responsible of developing, implementing and improving the Armenian state policy on development of the Armenia-Diaspora partnership and coordination of the activities of the state bodies, hence the most important organ of the Armenian state along the Armenia-diaspora nexus. Therefore, discourse of the Minister Hranush Hakopyan as the head and the spoke-person of the ministry is another pillar of the discourse of the State of the Republic of Armenia. Accordingly, next to the statements of Serzh Sargsyan, this dissertation addresses the speeches of the Minister Hranush Hakopyan as the next set of discourse. Since October 10, 2009, the Ministry of Diaspora has been publishing the electronic daily *Hayern Aysor* (Armenians Today) as the main communicative tool of the Republic of Armenia with the Armenians abroad, which until the present is the longest lasting project of the Ministry of Diaspora. Utilizing the internet as

the medium of publication, *Hayern Aysor* overcomes the physical distance as well as the age, economic situation and professional status related barriers in reaching out its prospective audience. As such, *Hayern Aysor* is the most accessible and inclusive project of the Ministry of Diaspora to connect with the Armenians all over the world. In view of that, *Hayern Aysor* electronic daily is taken as the third agent of the discourse of the Armenian state.

1.5.1.2 The U.S. based New Generation Diaspora Organizations

The Armenian diaspora is a complex entity that has been formed throughout centuries in different parts of the world. To achieve an analytical understanding of this complex entity, the Armenian diaspora needs to be distinguished into layers in terms of the period of diasporization, and into sections in terms of the country of residence. In terms of the period of diasporization, the Armenian diaspora can be separated into three layers as pre-modern, modern and late-modern¹⁷. Pre-modern diasporization of Armenians traces back to the downfall of the Bagratuni Dynasty in the 11th century that was followed by the scattering of the Armenians to present-day Ukraine, Moldova, Poland and Cilicia region in Turkey. Among those setting, Cilicia gained a special status for the establishment of the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia lasted between 1198-1375, in Tololyan's (2001) words, as the "diasporic, reterritorialized Armenian state"¹⁸. In the pre-modern period, Istanbul became a center of the Armenian world after 1461, when the Ottoman Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror relocated the Armenian Patriarch in Bursa to Istanbul after its conquest in 1453. After 1603-1605, Persian Shah Abbas relocated several hundred thousand Armenians to Isfahan (New Julfa), where another vibrant Armenian community flourished (see Kouymjian 1997). Via Persia, Armenian merchants reached Madras and Calcutta in India and established small but vibrant communities that played an important role in the birth of Armenian nationalism. The settlement of the Armenians in Rostov, Russia in 1770s set the seeds of the Armenian diaspora in Russia (Payaslian 2007,109). The modern diasporization of the Armenian Diaspora began by the second half of the 19th century, when Armenians began to seek their fortune in western countries as the socio-political chaos in the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire reached a critical level, although the chief moment of the modern diasporization of the Armenians was the 1915 tragedy. By the end of the World War I, there

17 Note that this grouping corresponds to Sheffer's categorization of diasporas with respect to their ages. See, footnote 3.

18 As a matter of fact, today Cilicia that is mostly referred to as lesser Armenia is considered also as a part of the Armenian homeland and the "Greater Armenia". This is truer for the Armenians of Cilicia.

were Armenian communities in North and South Americas, the Middle East and some European countries. In the twentieth century, France, Lebanon and the United States hosted the most important sections of the Armenian diaspora. The establishment of the independent Armenia in 1991 triggered the birth of the incipient late-modern diaspora following the emigration of hundreds of thousands to Russia, other ex-Soviet countries, Europe and North America. Importantly, although classification of the Armenian diaspora with respect its layers provides an analytical advantage, different layers of the Armenian diaspora often fuse into each other in a single diasporic setting as a result of continual processes of diasporization and re-diasporization. Today, it is not always possible to demarcate different layers in a certain setting in definite terms, except for the most recent migrants from the independent Armenia.

As regards to its sections, the Armenian Diaspora has been truly widespread; there have been large and small, mature and incipient, vibrant and stagnant Armenian communities all around the world¹⁹. Aghanian (2007, 5) groups the contemporary Armenian diaspora communities into three: 1) those in the post-Ottoman pre-dominantly Muslim Middle Eastern countries in which the traces of the Ottoman millet system as a model of governmentality are still manifest, 2) those in secular democratic liberal western countries, and 3) those in the ex-Soviet countries. Although it remains obscure where Aghanian places the Armenian diaspora communities in South American countries, this classification helps to achieve an analytical understanding of the contemporary Armenian diaspora by calling to attention to the political,

19 Tololyan (2001) states “sun never sets on the Armenian diaspora” as a nice expression of the wide-spreadness of the Armenian diaspora. For the studies on Armenian communities in different countries see the below list: For Armenian in Asian countries Atamian (1981), Ferrier (1973), Khalidi (2006), Wright (2003), Zenian (2001); in Canada Aprahamian (2003), Boudjikianian and Marois (1992-1993), Chichekian (1987), Kaprielian (1989; 1987; 1985), Kaprielian-Churchill (1994); in the European countries An (2009), Bjorklund (2003), Conlin (2010), Dashkevych (1979-1980), Dedeyan (2009), Hadjidemetrou (2009), Hassiotis (1997), Kasbarian (2009), Maksoudian (1997), Maxoudian (1975), Pattie (2009; 2001), Sökefeld and Schwalgin (2000), Talai (1986), Terzian (1974), Ter Oganian (1981), Trjiarski (1987), Zavrian 1951a;1951b;1951c), Zenian (2000); in the Middle Eastern countries Adalian (1980), Bedoyan (1979), Berberian (2005), Bournatioan (1971; 1972), Chaqueri (1988), Corbin (1975-1976), Der Karabedian and Melikian (1975), Geukjian (2009), Haigazian University (2009), Haytayan (2011), Hourani (2007), Hovanissian (1974), Kouymjian (1979); Memis (2007), Neely (2009; 2008), Sanassarian (1995), Sanjian (2001), Suleiman (1967), Zarifian (2008); in Russia Onol (2009), Oussatcheva (2002.); in South America Boulgourdjian-Toufeksian (1998-199[2000]; 1992-1993), Grun (1996), Hekimian (1990), Matiossian (2001-2002[2003]); In Turkey Altinay (2005), Artinian (1981), Bal (2006), Bosbach (2007), Dennis (2008), Gol (2005), Imirzian (1990), Kandil (2003), Komsuoglu and Ors (2009), McCarthy (1984), Muratyan (2011), Ors and Komsuoglu (2007), Ozdogan and Kilicdagi (2012); in the USA, (Alexander (2008; 2005), Alexander (2007), Atamian (1955), Bryson (1976), Cherdt (1959), Don Minasian (1972a; 1072b), Grigorian (1971), Hagopian (1982); Hagopian (1988), Hewsan (1963), Hoogasian and Gardner (1944), Jendian (2009; 2008; 2007), Kooshian (2002), Magarian (1975), Mirak (1997; 1977), Der Mugrdechian (1994), O’Grady (1981; 1979), Okoomian (2002), Peroomian (1992-1993), Philips (1978), Piotrowski (1977), Rustigian (1981), Sesetyan (2009), Shirinian (1996-1997[1999]),Tashjian (1975; 1970), Wertsman (1978), Yaralian et al. (2009). For general studies on the Armenian diaspora see, Bouldoukian (2007); Dekmejian (1997), Levy (2000); Oshagan (1985), Tabibian (1983), Shirinian (1992).

economic, cultural and social context of the societies that host Armenian communities and the resultant differences among these communities.

In the twentieth century until 1970s, Armenian diaspora in the Middle East, particularly the Armenian community in Lebanon, had been the most established section of the Armenian diaspora. However, the rise of the Arab nationalism and socialist currents by the 1950s, and later radical Islamism, deepening socio-political problems and the ongoing conflicts and wars brought the end of the opportunate conditions and forced many Armenians to seek their fortune in the Western countries. Eventually, by the mid-1980s the Armenian diaspora communities in Lebanon and the Middle East lost their political and cultural preeminence in the Armenian world. Contemporarily, the Armenian diaspora communities in the Russian Federation and Europe are proliferating in size and cultural, economic, and political significance particularly as a consequence of the post-independence emigration from Armenia. However, except for the Armenian-French community, the formation of which goes back to late nineteenth-early twentieth centuries, the Armenian diaspora communities in Russia and European countries are still young and/or not particularly salient for the particular social and political characteristics of these countries. Likewise, the Armenian diaspora in South America is still yet to become an important actor, except for Argentina.

At the present, Armenian diaspora in the United States is the second largest and the most powerful section of the Armenian diaspora for several reasons.²⁰ First, the Armenian presence in the United States dates back to as early as 1830s. Since then, Armenian-Americans have built strong communal organizations and accumulated experience in lobbying and other socio-political activities despite the problems that shall be discussed in Chapter 2. Second, whereas early establishment of the Armenian communities in the USA helped consolidation of the Armenian community in the USA, the inflow of the Armenians from the Middle East starting from the 1960s and the post-1991 migration from Armenia helped the reproduction of the community, despite the conflicts between the old-timers and the new comers²¹. Third, unlike some countries that host sizable Armenian communities such

20 The largest Armenian community is in Russia. For the estimated country-wise population of the world-wide Armenian communities see, Appendix 3.

21 Migration of the Armenians in new diaspora setting causes both opportunities and challenges for the already established Armenians in those countries. Cultural differences between the old-timers and the new comers, integration problems of the new comers in the host-society, concerns of the established Armenians for possible damages to their image in the society for the problems related to the new comers are some of the challenges that migration of the fellow Armenians causes. For example, Bulbulian (2000, 133-149) narrates the problems with

as Russia, the political system in the USA up to a certain extent allows ethnic lobby influences in the foreign policies of the USA. This transforms the U.S. based Armenian diaspora to an important political actor and an asset for the Republic of Armenia. Last but not least, all these coupled with the fact that the USA is the super power in the world, the political significance of the Armenian diaspora in the USA multiplies. Therefore, this study addresses the Armenian diaspora in the USA as the most dynamic, vocal and influential section of the contemporary Armenian diaspora²².

As briefly mentioned above and shall be detailed in the Chapter 2, upheavals in Soviet Armenia by the late 1980s did not only trembled Armenia, but also the traditional social hierarchies, mode of thinking and conduct in the diaspora communities. These dislocations triggered the rise of new activists in diaspora, who became the pioneers of the new generation diaspora organizations that began to flourish by the late 1980s, a trend that accelerated by the late 1990s and 2000s. The new generation diaspora organizations with their youthful activism seek not only to remain over unproductive partisan controversies, but to pursue a renewed agenda by renewed methods not in the sense of abandoning the traditional objectives such as community preservation and recognition of 1915 as genocide, but in the sense of incorporating new goals and developing new strategies compatible with the post-soviet socio-political realities. Thus, both for idealistic and instrumental reasons, new generation diaspora organizations direct their gaze and partially labor to Armenia; they identify establishing emotional, ideological and real ties between diaspora and Armenia as one of their main goals to reach their wider objectives. This dissertation focuses on four U.S. based new generation diaspora organizations, namely, Birthright Armenia, Armenian Volunteer Corps, Christian Youth Mission to Armenia and Land and Culture Organization that organize Armenia trips particularly for the diasporic youth to indoctrinate the youth, assure the communal survival of the diaspora communities, establish strong linkages between Armenia and the diaspora,

respect to the integration of the Armenian immigrants from Iran, Lebanon and Armenia to the existing Armenian-American communities for the cultural and linguistic differences between the two, as well as different political outlooks. He reports, in particular, political extremism of the Lebanese-Armenians had caused schism among the Armenian-Americans and that new comers chose to form mini-communities instead of sharing common spaces with the old timers, whom they perceived as assimilated and lesser Armenians. On the other hand, Bulbulian points out to the other side of the coin, as well. He argues new comers revitalize the established communities and maintains the importance of the incoming Armenians for the preservation of the Armenian identity in the USA (see also, Avakian 1977, 81-82). Mesrobian (2000, 183) is another author, who recounts the problems that Armenians from Armenia brought to the Armenian-American Community in Syracuse for the cultural differences and the greediness of the former.

²² See, Appendix 4 for the formation of the Armenian diaspora in the USA between 1834 and 1970s.

facilitate the development of Armenia and contribute to the construction of the extra-territorial Armenian ethno-nation²³.

1.5.1.3 The Diasporic Youth

Along the State of the Republic of Armenian and the U.S. based new generation diaspora organizations, as the third set of data, this dissertation focuses on the discourses of the diasporic Armenians. Yet, this is easier said than done. There are approximately seven-million ethnic Armenians living in different corners of the world. These individuals differ from each other with respect to their socio-economic, cultural and political characteristics. This natural diversity among the Armenians in diaspora necessitates a careful and reasonable selection. Because this dissertation aims to reveal the construction of the social reality of Armenian within the Armenian ethno-national trans-state communicative space, first, it eliminates those who are not agents of discourse in this space. In other words, this dissertation focuses on the Armenians in diaspora who are active participants of the Armenian ethno-national trans-state communicative space. However, there are countless bloggers, internet forum participants, contributors to various online publications. Therefore, a further election is needed among the actors in the virtual space. This dissertation focuses particularly on the travelogues and blogs of the participants of the Armenia trips of the above-mentioned new generation diaspora organizations that are broadcast in websites of these organizations for two reasons. First, as the discourses of the first-hand observers of Armenia, they may have a greater influence within the Armenian ethno-national trans-state communicative space as the messages from and about the homeland. Secondly, analyzing these texts, which are mostly composed of college students or fresh graduates in their early twenties, is also likely to provide insights on the relationship of the Armenian diasporic youth as the prospective communal leaders of the diaspora with Armenia. Furthermore, as a side benefit, analyzing the discourses of the

23 Contemporarily, what is referred to as heritage tourism is a popularizing phenomenon, which can be thought as an effect of the wider late-modern phenomenon of search for identity. Homeland tourism is a form of heritage tourism. Therefore, Armenia trips of Birthright Armenia, Armenian Volunteer Corps, Christian Youth Mission to Armenia and Land and Culture Organization are compatible initiations with the wider global trends. This shows that the new generation Armenian diaspora organizations have not only adapted themselves to the post-1991 reality of the independent Armenia but also to the *Zeitgeist*. For some studies on heritage tourism see, Basu (2007: 2004), Boniface and Fowler (1993), Chhabra (2010), Coles (2004), Conlin and Jolliffe (2010), Henderson and Weisgrau (2007), Timothy and Nyaupane (2009). Notably, Birthright Armenia was inspired by Taglit-Birthright Israel initiated in 1994 and both organizations seek the same end despite the differences of forms of homeland trips of these two organizations. For information about the Taglit-Birthright Israel visit organization's official website at <http://www.birthrightisrael.com/Pages/Default.aspx> (latest access, 02.06.2014). For a study on Israeli birthright tourism see Kelner (2010). For a Master's thesis that investigates "how "Armenianness" is being redefined and rebranded through diaspora tourism programs" using Birthright Armenia as a case see, Crowley (2013).

organizations and their participants that is the target group of the former reveals similarities and dissimilarities between the two that provides clues on the level of success of the organizations in pursuing their goals.

To sum, this dissertation addresses on 1) the statements and messages of the President Serzh Sargsyan, speeches of the Minister of Diaspora Hranush Hakopyan and the *Hayern Aysor* electronic daily of the Ministry of Diaspora to explore the discourse of the Armenian State, 2) the official websites of Birthright Armenia, Armenian Volunteer Corps, Christian Youth Mission to Armenia, and Land and Culture organization to disclose the organizational discourses of the U.S. based new generation diaspora organizations, and 3) the travelogues and blogs of the participants of these organizations to unearth the individual discourses of the diasporic youth. With the analyses of these data, similarities and differences among the discourses at the state, civil society and individual levels will also be revealed.

1.5.1.4 Open-access and Non-reactive Data

Table 1 below demonstrates Howarth’s (2005, 335) classification of social research data.

	Linguistic	Non-Linguistic
Reactive	Interviews	Participant observation, action research
Non-Reactive	Documents	Images, constructs, architectures

Table 1) Howarth’s categorization of social research data

According to this classification, the data used in this dissertation is linguistic non-reactive. In addition, it is open-data that is available to everyone who has access to the internet. Using open linguistic non-reactive data provides several advantages compared to reactive and non-public data. First, reactive data potentially includes bias as the researcher may direct the subjects to a certain direction. Interviewees or the observed, on the other hand, may tend to utter politically correct statements or behave so by themselves. Non-reactive data that is mostly generated *ipso facto* prior to the research is free of such potential biases. Secondly, open-data, and specific to this dissertation, texts available on the internet, provides the reader with the opportunity to access the raw data and compare researcher’s interpretations of the data with her own.

All the texts examined in this dissertation are the original texts in English available in the official websites of the President of the Republic of Armenia, *Hayern Aysor* electronic daily and the new generation diaspora organizations examined in this dissertation. The only exceptions are the speeches of the Minister Hranush Hakopyan and some travelogues and blogs of the Armenia trip participants. Although the official website of the Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia has official Eastern Armenian, Western Armenian, English, Russian and Spanish versions, speeches of Minister Hakopyan are broadcast in Armenian except for one or two sentences long abstracts that are written in the language of the website. These speeches were translated into English by a native Armenian speaker who was born and raised in Yerevan, gained her undergraduate degree from the Russian-Armenian (Slavonic) University in Yerevan and master's degree from the Sanford School of Public Policy at Duke University, then began her professional career at the Freedom House in Wahington, D.C. The translations of the texts were checked by several native Armenian speakers with university degrees and professional careers. Likewise, the travelogues and blogs written in languages other than English were translated into English by the native speakers of these languages who were undergraduate or graduate students in the University of Trento between 2009 and 2011.

1.5.2 Method of Analysis

Howarth (1998, 288) rightly argues that rather than seeking a universal discourse analytic method, the discourse analyst needs to come to terms with the singularity of each reading for the fact that there is no one universal discourse analytic method. In other words, each discourse analytic research has to develop its own discourse analytic method and this method shall be developed with respect to the data and the problematic of the research (see also, Wodak et al. 2009, 30). This is the challenge that discourse analysts have to encounter.

As mentioned above, the data of this dissertation is composed of different types of texts, namely, statements, speeches, content of a newspaper, and websites, blogs and travelogues that have particular characteristics. This diversity of the data dictates inevitable differences in their analyses. Each one of the analytic chapters 3, 4 and 5 in this dissertation provides explain of the particular method of analysis used that chapter. On the other hand, despite the differences of the method of analysis imposed by the data, all analyses are based on a

common approach, that is, all the analyses are performed following the same “background logic” set by the premises of the Grounded Theory Method.

The basics of the Grounded Theory were set in 1967 by Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss in their co-authored book *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. In this book, authors explain their dissatisfaction with the traditional logically deduced theories and the “theory-driven” research that begins from the theory and uses the data to verify or disprove the former. As an alternative, Glaser and Strauss insist that explaining the data is possible only if concepts and explanatory theories are constructed from within the data. In other words, Glaser and Strauss advocate an inductive method as the central idea of the Grounded Theory Method.

According to the Grounded Theory Method, the first step after the initial contact with the data, that is, its simple reading several times until the researcher is acquainted with the text is open coding, which means identifying and naming the phenomena that exist in the data by using adjectives and adverbs by asking the questions “what is the data about?” “what are being referred in the data?”, “what are the key points in the data?”. Open coding is followed by generating concepts that bring groups of codes under a common conceptual construct. Through this analytical process grounded theorist breaks up the data into groups. The third step is building the categories, that is, grouping similar concepts under a common label. After generating the categories, a core category/categories has/have to be generated which is/are capable of representing the main phenomenon/phenomena relying in the data. After, generating the core category/categories, the grounded theorist constructs her theory around this/these core category/categories, which simply means explaining and framing the generic relations around the core category.

An important point for the precise the application of the grounded theory method is to follow a spiral instead of a linear path; as grounded theory researcher proceeds in coding, conceptualizing and categorizing, she needs to turn back and re-evaluate the data with respect to the concepts and categories she constructs. For that, for instance, selective coding is done after founding the (tentative) core category in order to better reveal the relations exist in the data. Codes, as well, are generated posteriori with the same purpose of combining the theory by intertwining the splintered concepts.

Following this line, in this dissertation the data was explored through multiple and comparative readings that were extended over almost three years. Through successive and comparative readings codes and categories were abstracted, revised and developed into their final forms until tentative core categories that enable comprehending the texts began to emerge. In the final stage of the research, after discovering the tentative core categories, the data was re-evaluated for the last time in the guidance of the tentative core categories to decide the final core categories and the relations exist in the data better.

As regards to the methodology of this dissertation one last point shall be clarified. Just like the need to come to terms with the absence of a universal discourse analytic method and singularity of each reading, it is also needed to accept reflexivity in qualitative research. That is, the researcher has to be aware of the fact that “in the social sciences, there is only interpretation. “Nothing speaks for itself” (Denzin 1994) and “knowledge cannot be separated from the knower” (Steedman 1991). Accordingly, the researcher has to acknowledge her “situatedness”, that is, she is a subjective and interested actor rather than an impartial or detached observer vis-à-vis her research subject and the subjectivity of her findings (see, for instance, Hammersley 2000; Plummer 1983; Stanley and Wise 1993) and make this clear to the reader. This dissertation is no exception. The readings in this research inevitably carry the traces of the subjectivity of the researcher. It is for this reason in the analytical chapters extensive and sometimes long quotations were made in order to demonstrate the reader the raw data upon the interpretation of which the researcher arrived at conclusions.

1.6 Composition of the Chapters

The following chapter provides an overview of the short history of the post-1991 Armenia with a particular focus on the formation and transformation of the relations between Armenia and diaspora. This overview demonstrates that until 1998 Armenia-diaspora relations followed a difficult pattern because of the intellectual and organizational unpreparedness of the elite in both Armenia and diaspora and, the socio-economic difficulties in post-1991 Armenia. After 1998, by the relative relieve of the socio-economic conditions in Armenia, the culmination of the new generation diasporic elite and better adaptation to the post-1991 realities, and the consolidation of the “National Thinking” as the dominant ideology in Armenia and the consequent transformations in the discourse and practice of the elite in Armenia initiated the improvement of the Armenia-diaspora relations. In this era, the 2005 constitutional and the 2007 legal amendments, and the establishment of the Ministry of

Diaspora in 2008 triggered the legalization, formalization and institutionalization of the Armenia-diaspora relations. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 are the analytical chapters. In Chapter 3, the discourse of the Armenian state is addressed by examining the statements and speeches of the President Serzh Sargsyan and the Minister of Diaspora Hranush Hakopyan and the discourse of the electronic *Hayern Aysor* daily. In Chapter 4, discourses of the four U.S. based new generation organizations, namely, Birthright Armenia, Armenian Volunteer Corps, Christian Youth Mission to Armenia and Land and Culture Organization are examined. Following that, in Chapter 5 the travelogues and the blogs of the participants of Armenia trips organized by Birthright Armenia, Armenian Volunteer Corps, and Christian Youth Mission to Armenia are analyzed. The final chapter is reserved for the summary and the discussion of the results of analyses.

This dissertation includes eighteen appendixes that are intended to provide factual information, brief theoretical discussion and historical overviews, some original documents and examples of speeches and the results of the content analysis of the *Hayern Aysor* to help the better comprehension of some points in the analyses.

Appendix 1 includes the maps of the “Greater Armenia”, Kingdom of Cilicia, Western (Ottoman) Armenia, Armenian SSR, Republic of Armenia, Karabakh and the United Armenia according to the Armenian Revolutionary Federation. Appendix 3 shows the estimated country-wise population of the world-wide Armenian communities. Appendix 10 demonstrates the vote percentages in the presidential elections in Armenia between 1991 and 2013. Appendix 17 contains the list of the texts analyzed in Chapter 5.

Appendix 2 provides an overview of the literature on diasporas and discusses the two main schools in this literature. This overview reveals the centrality of the idea and social memory of the homeland for the formation of diasporas as distinct sociological forms.

Appendixes 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9 are brief reviews of the Armenian diaspora in the USA between 1834 and 1970s, traditional Armenian diaspora political parties, Armenian Apostolic, Protestant and Catholic Churches, Armenian militant nationalist radicalism between 1975 and 1985, and waves of repatriation to Soviet Armenia in the twentieth century.

Appendix 8 includes the text of the Armenian Declaration on Independence. “Our Values” of the Republican Party of Armenia is replicated in Appendix 11. Appendix 12 and Appendix 13 show the projects of the Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012, and provides brief information on the name-fathers of the medals of the Ministry of Diaspora. Appendix 16 quotes the Birthright Armenia Guiding Principles. Appendix 15 is reserved for the examples from the speeches of the Minister of Disapora of the Republic of Armenia Hranush Hakopyan. Appendix 18 presents the blog of the Christian Youth Mission to Armenia (CYMA) participant Sarah Mergerian.

Appendix 14 consists of tables that demonstrate the results of the content analysis of the Hayern Aysor.

CHAPTER 2

THE OVERVIEW OF THE ARMENIA-DIASPORA RELATIONS FROM 1987 TO THE PRESENT

2.1 Early Armenia-Diaspora Contacts in the Final Years of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic (1987-1991)

2.1.1 Beginning of the Political Upheavals in the USSR and the Re-emergence of the Karabakh Conflict

On 26 April 1986, a fire broke out following an explosion at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in the then Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. Soviet authorities declared thirty-one casualties. However, the actual result of the accident was much more tremendous, far-reaching, long lasting and consequential. Following the explosion and fire, radioactive contamination was discharged into the atmosphere and radioactive clouds travelled hundreds of kilometers by the wind disseminating radioactive particles all over the Black Sea region and Europe except the Iberian Peninsula. Soviet authorities failed to take necessary steps and this induced the expansion of the disaster, as well. Within the USSR, the Ukrainian SSR was one of the republics that produced agricultural, meat and milk products for the whole Union. After the Chernobyl accident, Soviet authorities did not suspend distribution of Ukrainian food products to other Soviet republics. This caused the elongation of the range of the long-term deadly effects of the nuclear disaster. Overall, Chernobyl is recorded as a major catastrophe and labeled as "the world's worst nuclear accident" that International Nuclear Event Scale classified as a level 7 event. In the history, only the Fukushima incident in Japan has reached so far²⁴. However, Chernobyl did not have only environmental and humanitarian results. It had been one of the pioneer shocks of the ultimate political earthquake that eventually wiped the USSR off the map.

The failure of the Soviet authorities to contend with the Chernobyl disaster effectively deepened the already existing discontent of the Soviet people. In different Soviet republics, enraged people protested the incompetence of the Soviet authorities to clean up the aftermaths of the disaster in different ways including demonstrations. In the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic (Armenian SSR)²⁵ people refused to consume food products on the shelves of the

24 See, Black (2011).

25 For few descriptive studies on Armenian SSR see, Mason (2005), Matossian (1962), Sarkinsyanz (1975), Shaginyan (1954), Suny (1997), Vertanes (1947). For nationalism, politics, ideology and education in Soviet Armenia see, Chorbajian (1989), Dadrian (1977), Dekmejian (1968), Grigorian (1972), Lehmann (2011), Suny (1989; 1983a).

state-owned shops as they were not sure of their origin²⁶. The anxiety that grew after the Chernobyl accident triggered the anxiety about the possibility of another accident of the same sort in Armenia prompted three-hundred and fifty Armenian intellectuals to raise their voice to urge Moscow to close down the Metsamor nuclear power plant located thirty kilometers west of Yerevan in March 1986. This initiative did not result in any success²⁷. Approximately twenty months later, in October 1987, those who were disquieted by the environmental problems in Armenia held two demonstrations in Yerevan to protest the poisonous chemical industry located in Yerevan. Demonstrators also expressed their concerns about the environmental damage at Lake Sevan due to the ill-planned engineering projects in the region²⁸. However, this time environmental demands were not spoken out within an entirely environmental discourse. On the contrary, parallel to the tendency in other Soviet republics, demonstrators in Armenia framed their demands about environmental problems as a national right and expressed their concerns from within a discourse of national rights with a patriotic rhetoric (Suny 1993b, 196)²⁹.

Libaridian (2001, 47) argues that demonstrators did not achieve any significant result as regards to their environmental demands. However, he adds, these demonstrations had a very significant result; they proved the people that they could organize mass demonstrations, take

26 Private conversation with Arsen Saparov on April 10, 2012. Saparov earned his Ph.D. in International Relations from the London School of Economics in 2007. At the time of the conversation, he was a Manoogian Simone Foundation Post-doctoral Fellow in the Armenian Studies Program in the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. His research focuses on the formation of the borders in the Caucasus in the early twentieth century.

For a brief report on the continuing effects of the Chernobyl disaster almost ten-years after see, Grigorian (2006).
27 Metsamor nuclear power plant was closed after the devastating earthquake in 1988. However, it was resumed in 1995 to overcome the energy crisis in the country. Currently, Metamasor nuclear plant produces 30-40% of the total power produced in Armenia. However, because of its old Soviet technology and the fact that it lies on an earthquake-prone terra, Metsamor nuclear power plant constitutes a danger not only to Armenia but to whole region. For this reason, for example, in 2003 the EU offered Armenia 200 million Euro loan to finance Metsamor's shutdown. The EU made the same appeal again in 2013. It is reported that there are plans to replace Metsamor with a new nuclear power plant after 2016. See, Hurriyet Daily News (2013), Lavelle and Garthwaite (2011), World Nuclear Association (2013) for commentaries on Metsamor nuclear power plant among many other similar ones

28 Lake Sevan is a popular holiday resort and the largest lake in the Caucasus located sixty kilometers north of Yerevan at 1,916.20 meters above the sea level with 1,416 kilometer-square surface area. Besides, like Mount Ararat and the ancient city of Ani, Lake Sevan is an ethno-national symbol of the Armenians. Interestingly, Ararat is an Armenian male name, Ani is an Armenian female name and Sevan is an androgynous name, a fact that discloses the symbolism of these places.

29 Platz (1996, 95) notes, in the Baltic Republics independence movements grew out of environmental movements. Geukjian (2007, 235) states, "from an Armenian perspective, the industrial plants built in Armenia during the Soviet era were polluting the air, depleting the mineral resources of the republic, and fostering economic dependence on Moscow". He, quoting his personal interview with Kevork Yazejian, an Armenian intellectual and activist, adds, air pollution was perceived as "another type of genocide committed by the Soviets against the Armenian nation". Gerard Libaridian, an Armenian-American professor of history and one of the main figures in Armenia from 1991 to 1997 as will be mentioned below, during a personal conversation on April 3, 2012 claimed, today in Armenia nationalist rhetoric is still a characteristic of the environmental activism.

the streets and shout their demands, which meant the emergence of a new channel for the people to express their discontent and will beyond the Soviet state and party structures. In fact, environmentalist demonstrations in Armenia were the rehearsals of much bigger demonstrations four months later or so, yet that time not for environmental demands but for another concern: Karabakh.

Karabakh³⁰ is a 4400 kilometers-square mountainous and forested region incorporated to Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic in 1923 that housed a substantial Armenian majority and an Azeri minority. In the early twentieth century, competing claims of ownership of this small landlocked territory evolved to major political dispute between Armenians and Azeris³¹. The first round of the long struggle over Karabakh was finalized in 7 July 1923, when this region was made an autonomous administrative division within the Azerbaijani SSR. However, Armenians in Karabakh and Armenia perceived this resolution as the partition of the Armenians in Karabakh from Armenia (Geukjian 2007, 234). The dissatisfaction of the Armenians rendered the 1923 resolution flawed that hardly served the “Leninist friendship of the peoples”. On the contrary, in subsequent decades the 1923 solution became another factor of the consolidation of the already existing prejudices between Armenians and Azeris that developed along the ethnic, religious and class lines, probably more so among the Armenians as the losers of the 1923 (Suny 1993b, 199-200; Libaridian 1988)³². After the death of Stalin, by the 1960s with the relative relief of the Stalinist repression and the corollary ascending

30 In the English literature Karabakh is also referred to as Karabagh, Nagorno-Karabagh, Nagorno-Karabakh. The word Nagorno comes from Russian word Nagorny that means highland/mountainous. The word Karabakh comes from the combination of the Turkish words kara (black, dark) and bağ (garden, grape garden). Notably, although until recently Armenians used the names Karabakh or Lernayin Karabakh (Lernayin means mountainous in Armenian), the name Artsakh, an Armenian name, has begun to be used popularly more often to prove the Armenianness of this land. This is, in fact, an interesting example of what I call politics of rhetoric that is the instrumentalization of language to pursue political goals.

31 For the historical background of the Karabakh conflict see, Dash (1989), Geukjian (2012), Hunter (2006), Murinson (2004), Saparov (2012), Simonian (2005). For studies on different aspects of this conflict see, Conciliation Resources (2011), Cornell (2001; 1999; 1998), De Waal (2003), Dragadze (1989), Fraser et al. (1990), Kruger (2010), Leckie (2005), LINKS (n.d.), Melander (2001), Migdalovitz (2003), Saideman and Ayres (2008) Simao (2010), Sirin (2007), Zurcher (2007, 152-185).

32 Geukjian (2007, 234), exemplifying the Armenian perspective, argues, autonomy was never put into effect and Karabakh Armenians were discriminated against and subordinated to the titular Azeri nation in Karabakh. He adds Karabakh Armenians consider this a direct threat to their national identity. Geukjian (2007, 233) notably argues:

For the Armenians, air pollution was ecological genocide, and cultural discrimination against Karabakh Armenians was cultural genocide. The Armenians associated ecological and cultural genocides with the 1915 genocide committed by the Ottoman Empire against the Armenian nation.

Geukjian’s argument, indeed, reveals the significance of the historical memories and narratives in the escalation of the Karabakh conflict, as well as the centrality of the 1915 events in the Armenian thinking and socio-political imagination that often impedes the Armenian elite to come up with realist socio-political evaluations.

nationalism in the Armenian SSR, Armenians began voicing their grievance about the status of Karabakh. There had been protests in different forms, such as sending protest letters and demonstrations. In those campaigns, Armenians alleged cultural and economic discrimination of the Armenians in Karabakh by the Azerbaijani authorities (see Suny 1993b 194-196; Libaridian 2004 29-30; Geukjian 2007) as this was the only legitimate argument to demand from the central authority in Moscow a new regulation for Karabakh to unite it with the Armenian SSR. The Karabakh issue persisted in different intensities in the 1970s and the 1980s.

Finally, the interconnected reform movements of *glasnosts*, *perestroika* and *demokratizatsiya* convinced Armenians first in Karabakh then in the Armenian SSR that it was the right time to push once again for the unification of Karabakh with Armenia. Notwithstanding the tendency of the recent Armenian historiography to present the mobilization of the Armenians around the Karabakh issue as an anti-systemic “social revolt” that led the collapse of the Soviet Union, Armenians did not intend to challenge the central authority in Moscow³³. On the contrary, Armenians believed that their demands were coherent with the *Zeitgeist* of the second half of the 1980s in the USSR (Suny 1993b, 193; Geukjian 2007, 234)³⁴. This belief further encouraged the Armenians and brought them closer to the “national cause”, however caused drastic frustration when Moscow opposed Armenian demands. Eventually, as Geukjian (2007, 233) states, the Karabakh movement, which did not have political goals “transformed to a nationalist movement with a political and ecological agenda”.

2.1.2 Transformation of the Karabakh Movement into an Independence Movement

From November 1987 to February 1988, three different Armenian delegations from Karabakh visited Moscow to lobby for the transfer of Karabakh to Armenia. Following the earlier

33 Explaining the mobilization around the Karabakh issue as a “social revolt” is indeed one of the basis of the claim of the birth of the new Armenian as the defender and victor corollary to the birth of the independent Armenian statehood in opposition to the pre-1991 Armenian the victim. As such, the post-1991 construction of the Armenian ethno-national identity carries the tension resultant of the coexistence of the victimhood and the victor-hood as the two defining features of the Armenian ethno-national identity. Yet, if weighted, victimhood weighs heavier than victor-hood. This is so also for the use-value of the victimhood for the political goals of the Armenian elite.

34 For example, Geukjian (2007, 234) argues Karabakh movement was instead of being an exception in the USSR, was a part of national awakening of the Soviet people. Former Deputy Speaker of the Armenian Parliament Ara Sahakyan in an interview that was published in *Demokratizatsiya* in 2006 by Gerard Libaridian (2006) states that the spirit of Gorbachev’s reforms had triggered Armenian intellectuals to formulate and pursue demands, although the rift between the plans of the central Soviet authorities and the expectations of the people surfaced not so long after. However, in his retrospective telling, Sahakyan falsely claims that from the beginning Soviet people had centrifugal and separatist intentions.

strategy, lobbyists emphasized “linguistic self-determination” in their appeal. In January 1988, tens of thousands of Karabakh Armenians signed a petition asking from Moscow a referendum to re-determine the political status of Karabakh (Geukjian 2007, 236). A month later, there were demonstrations in Karabakh’s capital Stepanakert and Yerevan. On 20 February 1988, the Soviet of the People’s Deputies in Karabakh voted with a great majority, 110 to 17, to request the transfer of Karabakh to Armenia³⁵. This was followed by mass demonstrations in Yerevan and several other events well documented in previous studies (see, Geukjian 2007, 240-241) that Libaridian (2001) designates as the earliest examples of the popular movements in the USSR³⁶. In the end of the same month, on 28 February, the incidents that are referred to as Sumgait events, Sumgait pogroms, Sumgait massacres or February events erupted.

2.1.2.1 The February 1988 Sumgait Events

Sumgait is an Azerbaijani industrial city housing oil refineries located on the Caspian Sea just thirty kilometers north of the Azeri capital, Baku. According to the Armenian historiography, on February 28, 1988 Azeri mobs in Sumgait launched a pogrom against Armenian residents of the city. In few days before the military intervened, according to the official statistics, twenty-six Armenians and six Azeris died. Following Sumgait, in May 1988, Armenians and Azeris clashed in Ararat town in Armenia. On May 19, 1988 in Yerevan, one of the leaders of the Armenian nationalist movement, Igor Muradyan, was urging the crowds to arm themselves with iron rods and molotov cocktails to defend the Armenian interests and for an eye-to-eye revenge (Malkasian 1996, 72). These were the manifestations of the rapidly increasing ethnic tension between Armenians and Azeris.

The underlying intend and the orchestrators of the Sumgait events remain obscure, although Armenians believe and propagate that the Azeri establishment planned the pogrom and the local officials willingly shut their eyes to the violence (see, Suny 1993b, 199)³⁷. Beside these

35 For this resolution and other important texts and agreements on the Karabakh conflict see, Conciliation Resoures (2005).

36 In addition to the nationalist mobilization in the Armenian SSR and Karabakh, in Ukraine, Belorussia, and Georgia informal nationalist groups were formed. In January 1988 Armenian, Georgian and the Ukranian groups established the International Committee in Defense of Political Prisoners and held its first meeting in Yerevan in January 1988 (Geukjian 2007, 240).

37 Arsen Saparov, on the other hand, draws attention to another important factor that is not mentioned so often and explicitly, that is Moscow. Saparov says, Sumgait events took place when the USSR was still alive, although seriously ill and happening of such an event was unlikely at least without the consent of the central Soviet authorities. With this caution, Saparov points out the likely finger of Moscow in Sumgait to further its interests

questions, Suny (1993b, 199-200) points out historical-psychological factors coupled with social class conflicts as causal factors of Sumgait events and the escalation of the conflict in the South Caucasus. Briefly, Suny claims, a sense of social inferiority among the Azeris, who once were the rulers of the region before they lost their status after the Russian advance in the South Caucasus in the early nineteenth century, grew a strong prejudice and hatred to Armenians. The memories of 1905 clashes and the “March Days” in 1918 in Baku strengthen these feelings³⁸. Furthermore, according to him, the belief that Armenians had close relation with Moscow increased the anxiety of the Azeris about an Armenian plot. Armenians on the other hand, remembered their dominant social status in Baku, which was lost in years and had a sense of superiority over the Azeris, whom they believed to be savage and primitive.

The effect of the Sumgait events besides its humanitarian results was the resurgence of the memory of the 1915 that signifies the terror of the attempt of the total extermination of the Armenians; for Armenians, Sumgait events were the revival of the brutal nature of the “bloodthirsty Turk”³⁹ (Barseghyan 2007, 290), verification of the immutability of the hostility of the Turk and repeatability of the history. As such, besides the questions of its historical, psychological, political, sociological and economical reasons, almost all the scholars agree that Sumgait was a turning point in the course of the Karabakh conflict, radicalization of the Karabakh movement and its transformation into an independence movement⁴⁰. As Suny

in the South Caucasus (Personal conversation with Arsen Saparov on April 10, 2012). Saparov’s warning, although yet to be verified, is at least logical given Moscow’s fear of the independence movements in the USSR in its final stages. Moscow might have thought to give Armenians a lesson by giving consent or having a finger in the orchestration of the Sumgait events.

38 In February 1905, there had been clashes between Armenians and Azeris, which were followed by other clashes in the other parts of the Caucasus including that took place in Shusha in August 1905. According to the Armenian historiography in September 1918 Armenians in Baku were massacred by the troops led by Enver Pasha and the local Azeri leaders, according to some, as retribution of the massacre of the Azeris by the ARF and Bolsheviks in March 1918.

39 It is an important fact that the hegemonic Armenian lexicon often, but not always, conflates Turkish and Azeri people and use the name Turk to refer to both nations. Although, this terminological mistake has socio-historical ground given the linguistic similarity between Turkish and Azeri languages both of which are Turkic languages, the fact that, for example, Armenian lexicon rightly distinguishes Turkish and Turkmen people of Turkmenistan or Uzbek people of Uzbekistan, who are also Turkic peoples, reveals conflation of Turkish and Azeri people is more of a purposeful political construction.

40 Ara Sahakyan (see, footnote 34) says:

A few factors contributed to the radicalization of the views of its participants: the distortion of the character of the movement and the attempts by the Soviet propaganda machine to discredit it, the escalation of hatred toward Armenians in Azerbaijan, the bestial murder of about thirty Armenians in the Azerbaijani city of Sumgait, the criminal attacks on Armenian villages in Karabakh, and the practical acts undertaken to change the demographic situation in that territory. The rekindled historical memory reminded Armenians that they would be incapable of defending their national interests by remaining within the USSR without state sovereignty, that it would be impossible to secure the lives and properties of Armenians, and that they are threatened by the real danger of deportation and ethnic cleansing. That is, they may suffer the

(1993b, 200) argues, Sumgait events had been the end of the prospect for a peaceful solution to Karabakh problem and the beginning of a new stage of a harsher struggle between Armenia and Azerbaijan characterized by strikes, rallies, hunger strikes mostly organized by the Armenians. Moreover, because of its such consequential politico-psychological after-effects Sumgait events left a permanent mark in the collective consciousness of the Armenians and have become one of the major elements of the hegemonic Armenian narrative that alarms the Armenians about the never fading aggression of the “Turk enemy”. In this process, state propaganda and the nationalist elite played a central role as memory-makers as they tell and re-tell those events in a way that aestheticize the violence, the victimhood of the Armenians and the “evil nature” of the Turk.

2.1.2.2 The Karabakh Committees in Karabakh and Armenia and the Escalation of the Karabakh Conflict

In Karabakh, the group called *Krunk* (Crane) led the secessionist movement under the leadership of Robert Kocharyan, later to become the second president of the Republic of Armenia⁴¹. The *Krunk* committee was banned on March 23, 1988. The *Miatsum* (Unification) committee again under the leadership of Robert Kocharyan succeeded the *Krunk* committee. Serzh Sargsyan, the third president of the Republic of Armenia after of Kocharyan⁴², was also a member of the *Miatsum* committee. In the Armenian SSR, on the other hand, the First Karabakh Committee was established on 23 February 1988. It was composed of Igor Muradyan (an economist born in Baku), Silva Kaputikyan (a famous nationalist poetess from Armenia), Zori Balayan (a journalist from Karabakh known for his extreme nationalist views)⁴³, Manvel Sargsyan and Gagik Safarian. With slogans such as “one nation one republic”, “no fraternity without justice”, “miatsum” (unification), “struggle struggle to the end”, the First Karabakh Committee put emphasis on unification of Karabkah with the

same fate as their western Armenian brothers who were subjected to genocide in the Ottoman Empire at the start of the century (Libaridian 2006, 3).

41 Robert Kocharyan, born in Stepanakert, Karabakh on 31 August 1954, started his career as the head of the Communist Party organization in the silk factory in Stepanakert. After becoming one of the leaders of the secessionist movement in Karabakh, he became head of the Nagorno-Karabakh State Defense Committee and in 1994 the president of the unrecognized de facto Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. In 1997, he moved to Armenia and became the prime minister (see, International Crisis Group 2004, 9).

42 Serzh Sargsyan, born in Stepanakert, Karabakh on 30 June 1954, started his career as the Komsomol first secretary in Stepanakert. During the Karabakh War, he commanded the Armenian armed forces. In 1993, Sargsyan became the Armenian defense minister, in 1995 the head of Armenian state Security Department, and in 1996 minister of national security. He held important posts during Kocharyan’s presidency, as well. In 2007, he became the prime minister of Armenia and in 2008, the third president of the Republic of Armenia (see, International Crisis Group 2004, 9).

43 For Balayan’s recount of the “national liberation struggle of Artsakh” see his book *Between Hell and Heaven: the Struggle for Karabakh* (1997).

Armenian SSR and purposefully did not raise any other social, economic or political issues other than the protection of the Armenian identity and the “Pan-Turkist threat”⁴⁴ (see Geukjian 2007, 241; Malkasian 1996, 42; 74). The members of the *Krunk* and *Miatsum* committees in Karabakh were all Communist Party members, governmental officials, and factory managers. Likewise, members of the Karabakh committee in Armenia were close to Moscow, which may partially explain their reluctance to raise issues other than Karabakh. Even, as the political climate was getting heated increasingly, Kaputikian and Balayan, objected the continuation of the demonstrations, likely because they feared losing the control of the masses, which, however, was objected by some other members of the committee.

On 19 May 1988, the Second Karabakh Committee was formed under the leadership of Levon Ter Petrosyan, the first president of the Republic of Armenia⁴⁵. Antithetically to the First Karabakh Committee, most of the members of the Second Karabakh Committee were anti or non-communists and had a wider agenda that was not limited solely with the Karabakh issue (Harutyunyan 2009, 154; Gakavian 1997⁴⁶). In fact, formation of the Second Karabakh

44 Pan-Turkism is one of the constants of the post-genocide hegemonic Armenian narrative that is designated as one of the reasons of the genocide and presented as the perpetual ideological basis of the Turkish foreign policy. Briefly, Pan-Turkism is a political ideology and movement emerged first among the Tatar intellectuals in the Russian Empire in the last decades of the nineteenth century as a movement for cultural and political unification of the Turkic people. In the Ottoman Empire, Pan-Turkism gained some piquancy among the nationalist elite. However, for social and political realities, Pan Turkism had been a short-lived movement. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Kemalist rulers of the new Republic of Turkey stick to the principle of territoriality and rejected all forms of Pan Turkism. However, the Kemalist historiography that aimed to minimize the significance of the Ottoman past replaced it by emphasizing the “Central Asiatic roots of the Turkish people”. This helped to create a sense of racial unity between the Turkish people and the Turkic people of Central Asia among the former. When the USSR collapsed, a kind of Pan Turkist fever emerged in Turkey. However, this did not last long as soon it was seen that, first, Turkey with its own socio-economic and political problems was not able to afford Pan Turkist projects, second Central Asian republics were less than willing to replace one elder brother, namely, Russia, with another, namely, Turkey, and finally, Russia was more than determined not to have Central Asia snatched to anyone.

45 Levon Ter Petrosyan was born in Aleppo, Syria on 9 January 1945 to an Armenian family that immigrated to the Armenian SSR in 1946. Ter Petrosyan is a historian and philologist by education and fluent in seven languages. Before joining the Karabakh Committee in 1988, he was a senior researcher at the Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts (Matenadaran). As shall be discussed below, he became the leader of the nationalist movement in Armenia and the first president of Republic of Armenia in 1991.

Other members of this committee were Vazgen Manukyan, Babken Ararksyan, Hambartzum Glastyan, Rafael Gazaryan, Ashot Manucaryan, Vano Siradeghyan, Davit Vardanyan, Samvel Gevorkyan, Samson Ghazaryan and Aleksan Hakopyan. Vazgen Manukyan, born in Leninakan (present-day Gyumri) in the Armenian SSR on 13 February 1946, holds a PhD. in physical sciences and mathematics. Between 1972 and 1995 he was a professor at Yerevan State University. Between August 1990 and September 1991, he was the prime minister of the Republic of Armenia and between 1992 and 1993 the Minister of Defense of the Republic of Armenia. After parting his way from Ter Petrosyan he became the leader of the The National Democratic Union that was established in 1991

46 The research of Gakavian that is referred to in this study is Dr.Gakavian’s unpublished PhD dissertation. When the author of this dissertation contacted Dr.Gakavian via email and asked his dissertation, Dr.Gakavian kindly sent the copies of the chapters of his dissertation in separate word documents. Therefore, the page

Committee under the leadership of Levon Ter Petrosyan was the moment when the Karabakh movement evolved into an independence movement. This can be seen most clearly in the Program of the Karabakh Movement issued on August 19, 1989 that will be examined below, which also declared the birth of the Armenian National Movement.

As the conflict escalated, on 22 March 1988 the Soviet army entered Yerevan to prevent the demonstration planned for 26 March. On the same day, the Armenian Supreme Soviet outlawed the Karabakh Committee. Likewise in Azerbaijan, *Krunk* Committee was outlawed by the Azeri authorities (Geukjian 2007, 244). On 18 July 1988 the presidium of USSR Supreme Soviet held a meeting after which Armenian appeal to incorporate Karabakh to Armenia was rejected (Suny 1993b, 202-204; see also Geukjian 2007, 243). According to Suny (1993b, 204) this conclusion marked the closure of the “constitutional phase” of the Karabakh problem. After July 1988, communist authorities began to lose control in Armenia and the Karabakh Committee gradually filled the power vacuum. Meanwhile, the rhetoric of the Karabakh Committee got harsher against the Soviets. As the chaos deepened, Armenians and Azerbaijanis began to flee to Azerbaijani and Armenian territories, respectively in November and December 1988 and became refugees in their “homelands” (Libaridian 2001, 25; Suny 1993b, 209).

2.1.2.3 The Joint Declaration of the Traditional Diaspora Political Parties

In October 1988, Armenian Revolutionary Federation-Dashnaksutyun (ARF), Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (ADLP) and Social Democratic Hunchakian Party (SDHP), the three traditional Armenian diaspora political parties, that had long been rivals, issued a joint declaration on Karabakh issue⁴⁷ (see, Libaridian 1991, 127-129). This declaration had been one of the earliest and most important hallmarks of the newly emerging relations between the soon-to-be independent Armenia and diaspora.

With this declaration, the ARF, the ADLP and the SDHP expressed their solidarity with the Armenians in Karabakh and Armenia, and affirmed their support to the Karabakh cause. However, instead of the Armenians in Armenia and Karabakh, they directed their gaze,

numbers of the PDF and Word documents of Dr. Gakavian's dissertation might be different. In this dissertation the page numbers of the word document are given.

⁴⁷ See, Appendix 5 for the Armenian traditional diaspora parties. For the entire text of this declaration see, Libaridian (1991, 127-129).

appreciation and petition to the Soviet authorities. In Libaridian's (1991, 128 footnote 5) words:

Long after the movement had become a drive toward democracy and raised substantial questions on the legitimacy and credibility of the government, diaspora parties were determining that the masses were wrong and the discredited Communist Party could regain legitimacy if it only adopted a pro-Karabagh position.

As Libaridian (1991, 128) rightly points out, this declaration was an evidence of the incapacity of the traditional diaspora political parties to comprehend the socio-political situation in the USSR and the South Caucasus and to decipher the direction of the flow of history. Yet, the truly shocking part of the declaration was its final paragraph that was as follows:

We also call upon our valiant brethren in Armenia and Karabagh to forgo such extreme acts as work stoppages, student strikes, and some radical calls and expressions that unsettle law and order in public life in the homeland; that subject to heavy losses the economic, productive, educational, and cultural life; that [harm seriously] the good standing of our nation in its relations with the higher Soviet bodies and other Soviet republics. These zealous attitudes also provide for the ulterior motives of the enemies of our people.

With this appeal, traditional diaspora political parties identified the popular movement in Armenia and Karabakh as illegitimate, deviant and subversive. The recommendation of the signatories was the termination of the "zealous" movement and restoring the status of the Armenians as the "loyal people" to the Soviet authority.

The effect of the joint declaration was much different and much bigger than anticipated. Libaridian⁴⁸ (1991, 130) argues the disappointment with the joint declaration moved people in

48 Gerard Libaridian, born in Beirut, Lebanon in July 1945, is a neutralized Armenian-American professor of history specialized in Armenia/Modern Caucasus, Modern Europe, Near East/Islam, Sub-Saharan Africa. From 1997 until his resignation in May 2012, he served as the Alex Manougian Chair in Modern Armenian History in the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Libaridian joined the ranks of the ARF in Lebanon at age eighteen and after his emigration to the USA in the second half of the 1960s served as the editor of the ARF's West-coast paper *Asbarez* and the academic journal *Armenian Review* published by the ARF circles. He co-founded the Zoryan Institute for Contemporary Research and Documentation in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1982 as an academic and scholarly center for "devoted to the documentation, study, and dissemination of material related to Human rights and genocide studies, diaspora studies & homeland, in particular, Armenia" (Zoryan Institute 2012) and taught in several American universities. Between 1991 and 1997, Libaridian served at the critical posts in Armenia. The initial assignment of Libaridian was to found and direct the Department for Research and Analysis of the Parliament of the Armenian SSR. Then, from November 1991 to September 1994, he served as

Armenia to reconsider their perception of diaspora as an asset⁴⁹ and led to the “disabuse” of the Armenians of themselves “of certain myths regarding diaspora organizations”. He adds, the “most poignant and perceptive” response to the joint statement was that of the National Self-Determination Group (NSDG) led by Paruyr Hayrikyan⁵⁰ titled “The Fatherland and the Diaspora”.

“Your silence was insulting; but your words are even more so”. “The Fatherland and the Diaspora” begins with these words. After few lines, it calls out: “as if our pain wasn’t enough, now you have become a pain yourself”. These words were bold expressions of the NSDG disappointment with the signatories of the declaration. However, the NSDG was most disappointed with the ARF as the champion of the “Armenian Cause”⁵¹ and staunch enemy of the USSR until mid-1970s.

the advisor to the Levon Ter-Petrosyan. Between March 1993 and September 1994, Libaridian was the First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, and from October 1994 to September 1997, the Senior Advisor to the President of the Republic for foreign and security policies and Ambassador-at-Large with rank of Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador, Special negotiator Secretary and Member, Security Council of the Republic of Armenia. Importantly, Libaridian has remained a loyal comrade of Ter Petrosyan and the defender of the need of the “new thinking” even after his resignation from his posts in Armenia in 1997 until the day. After more than twenty-five years of ARF, Libaridian became an ardent critique of the traditional diaspora organizations, particularly the ARF, a process that led to his resignation from this party.

49 However, it is apparent that this reconsideration hardly challenged the perception of diaspora as an asset that Libaridian implies. As shall be demonstrated below, the program of the Armenian National Movement that was formed in June 1989 as the successor of the Karabakh Committee referred to the diaspora as such.

50 Paruyr Hayrikyan, born in Yerevan on 5 July 1949, is an Armenian nationalist politician and a former Soviet dissident, who had an adventurous life. As a student in the Armenian SSR, he established the nationalist Union of Armenian Youth. In 1967, he was detained for a short time. Later, he became a member of the underground dissident National United Party (NUP) founded in April 1966. Within the NUP, he founded the Shant youth organization. After the arrest of the leaders of the NUP in July 1968, Hayrikyan became the leader of the NUP and published the *Erkounk* newspaper the motto of which was “Free Armenia or Death!”. On March 29, 1969, Hayrikyan was arrested and sentenced to four years in prison. In 1974, he was again arrested and sentenced to seven years prison and three years exile. In the trial he said “I am very fond of life. I love it even more than one can imagine. But while Armenia is not free and while I am alive, prison will be my place of residence... I do not pin any hopes on the court, but I am going to defend my Homeland and fair demands of my people with the last drop of my blood... Long live Armenia's sacred right to independence!”. While Hayrikyan was in prison, the NUP became a chapter of an international organization in the USSR composed of Ukrainians, Jewish, Russians and other dissidents from other Soviet nationalities. In 1984, after 14 years of imprisonment, Hayrikyan was exiled to Irkutsk region in Siberia. In 1987, he returned to Yerevan and established the Union for National Self-Determination (UNSD). In March 1988, Hayrikyan went to Moscow, where he was arrested and brought to Yerevan. He remained under custody for four months. He was stripped of Soviet citizenship and exiled to Ethiopia. The US State Department offered him political asylum and Hayrikyan went the USA via Italy, France, Germany. While he was in exile, in 1990 Hayrikyan was elected a member of the Armenian Supreme Council. By the pressure of the USA, his Soviet citizenship was restored in November 1990 and he returned to Armenia. In October 1991, Hayrikyan became a presidential candidate, yet he lost the election to Ter Petrosyan. On July 5, 1995, Hayrikyan was elected to the Armenian Parliament (Hayrikyan 2001-2014). See, also footnote 131 for the attempt murder of Hayrikyan in 2012. For Soviet nationality policy and the ethnic dissent in the USSR see, Beissinger (2009), Brudny (1998), Gecys (1953), Hamm (2009), Hirsch (2000), Johnston (2011), Pohl (1999), Polian (2004), Reynolds (1929), Roeder (1991), Sergeev (1991), Suny (1993a), Suny and Martin (2001), Tilly (1991), Walker (1991), Zisserman-Brodsky (2003).

51 The ARF has managed to secure a special place in Armenian national narrative as the hard-line defender of the “Armenian Cause”. The rigorous rhetoric of the ARF and its place in the Armenian historiography as the

2.1.2.4 The 1988 Earthquake

Then, on 7 December 1988 a great calamity happened. Contrary to usual, this time the calamity was not manmade⁵². That day, twenty minutes to noon, northern region of the Armenian SSR was hit by an earthquake with a magnitude of 6.9. The earthquake damaged twenty cities and three-hundred and fifty-eight villages fatally. Fifty-eight villages were totally destroyed. The earthquake claimed at least twenty-five thousand souls and left behind hundreds of thousands of homeless people, orphaned children and families without a choice other than emigration. Overall, the earthquake affected forty-percent of the country and sixty-five-percent of the population with an economic cost of fourteen billion US dollars (Libaridian 2001, 189). Besides the tragic human and economic costs, which after more than twenty years still have not been totally healed⁵³, the earthquake also had very significant socio-political consequences that can be classified into three groups as those related to Moscow-Yerevan relations, Armenia-Diaspora relations and the diaspora specific dynamics.

The catastrophe was so enormous that for the first time in history, Moscow accepted external relief assistance and many countries from Far East Asia to North West Europe, from South America to South Africa extended their helping hand to Armenia (see, Verluise 1995; Libaridian 2001, 189-191; Gakavian 1997, 217) Even, Gorbachev formally requested humanitarian help from the United States. This request, however, was perceived as a manifestation of the vulnerability of the USSR. Secondly, in the aftermath of the earthquake the rift between Moscow and Yerevan widened. According to Libaridian (1989, 59-60), from a pro-Armenian defensive position, Moscow used the earthquake to weaken the Armenian demands on Karabakh. As an important event, Libaridian (1989) and Suny (1993b, 210) mention also the “orphans affair”; after the earthquake rumors spread that orphaned children would be sent to other parts of the USSR to be adopted by non-Armenian Soviet citizens. Libaridian (1989, 59), argues this alleged plan revealed Moscow was “at least insensitive to the insensitive to the trauma induced by the earthquake and the prior Armenian experience

party that became the major organization after the early weakening of the SDHP within the Armenian independence movement in the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century against the Ottoman state and as the ruling party of the short-lived first Armenian republic between 1918 and 1920 has been factors in the construction of the strong image of the ARF. Still today, in Armenia souvenir shops decorate their windows with the ARF flags and symbols. This reveals the symbolic capital of the ARF which no other party or organization could have gained so far.

52 Certainly, the poorly constructed buildings and infrastructure caused more dead than could have been prevented.

53 As a confirmation of this, a number of travelogues and blogs of the Armenia trip participants analyzed in Chapter 5 refer to the still visible ruins of the 1988 earthquake.

with trauma—the Genocide—in immediately soliciting or welcoming applications for the adoption of Armenian children from non-Armenian Soviet citizens in other parts of the USSR”. Suny (1993b, 210) makes a similar comment that the “deep-seated fear among Armenians about the loss of their orphans, a fear located in memories of the loss of children to Turks, Kurds, and Arabs during the genocidal marches of 1915”. He (1993, 210) reports hundreds of women protested the prospective plan on 10 December 1988. In any case, the “orphans affair had been another factor widening the schism between Moscow and the Yerevan⁵⁴.

Following the earthquake Karabakh Committee initiated its own aid campaign from its headquarter in the Writers’ Union in Yerevan as a parallel authority (Suny 1993b, 210; Libaridian 2001, 25-26; 1989 59; Gakavian 1997, 217). However, Soviet authorities declared martial law and arrested the members of the Karabakh Committee on 11 December 1988 on the charges of impeding the humanitarian aid from the Azerbaijani SSR⁵⁵. The custody did not last long and the committee members were released at the end of May 1989. Before the arrest of its members, however, the Karabakh Committee plead prominent diaspora Armenians like Charles Aznavour⁵⁶ and George Deukmejian⁵⁷ for humanitarian help (Suny 1993b) as one of the very first instances of the quasi-official contacts between the prospective leaders of the independent Armenia and the diaspora in the late-Soviet era. As an important fact, as shall be mentioned below, the earthquake stimulated the emergence of new elite in diaspora who had been relatively dormant with respect to community affairs. Therefore, the reach of the early contacts between the diaspora and Armenia was not limited with the traditional elite, but included the new elite that would become the leaders of the new generation diaspora organizations. In any case, these encounters were the first instances through which mutual perceptions began to get shape between the independent Armenia and

54 The “orphans affair” that had been perceived as an anti-Armenian act could well had been perceived as an expression of the humanitarian concerns of the non-Armenian Soviet peoples. As such, “orphans affairs” is a revelation of the persistent psychological effects of the 1915 tragedy.

55 There have been rumors that after the earthquake, Armenian SSR rejected the blood donation of the Azerbaijani SSR. Yet, this rumor is yet to be proven.

56 Charles Aznavour, born as Chahnour Varinag Aznavourian in Paris, France on 22 May 1924 is a world renowned Armenian-French songwriter and singer. Besides his artistic career, he has been a generous philanthropist to Armenia. For his worldwide fame and philanthropic activities, Aznavour was appointed as the ambassador of Armenia to Switzerland and Armenia's permanent delegate to the United Nations in 2009.

57 George Deukmejian, born as Courken George Deukmejian, Jr., in New York, USA on 6 June 1928. He served as the republican governor of California between 1983 and 1991. See also, Appendix 7 for his role in the pardoning of Gourgen Yanikian after serving eleven years in prison, who assassinated two Turkish diplomats in the USA in 1973.

diaspora upon the already existing perceptions developed through the decades. However, these were not always positive.

Thirdly, earthquake kindled the Armenian diaspora communities and created a spirit of unity. For example, Verluise (1995, 37-40) argues that the earthquake vitalized the “Armenianness” of the Armenian-French, which had been fading away because of assimilation and divisions within the Armenian-French community. He reports following the earthquake about sixty Armenian-French physicians took off to Armenia for aid. Three Armenian churches, i.e., Apostolic, Catholic and Protestant formed the SOS/Armenia to carry out relief work in Armenia⁵⁸. The ARF’s existing Armenian Blue Cross of France was mobilized to that end as well (Verluise 1995, 37-40). Gakavian (1997, 246-249) states another joint communiqué was issued by the three traditional diaspora political parties calling the diaspora to unite, strengthen the cooperative spirit, display a strong sense of national awareness and mobilize all available resources. Numerous articles, editorials, calls were issued that called Armenians to fulfill their duty to help Armenia. Political parties, Church, both Prelacy and Diocese, the AGBU⁵⁹ took part in this campaign. In this process, renowned diaspora Armenians such as Charles Aznavour and Kirk Krikorian grant huge sum of aid to Armenia. Significantly, a fund named United Armenia Fond was established (see, Libaridian 2001, 189).

This spirit of unity did not last long. On the contrary, soon conflicts began to surface. First, as the resources of diaspora were directed to Armenia, complaints about the negligence of the diaspora communities were raised. More importantly, instead of continuing the cooperative

58 For Armenian Apostolic, Armenian Protestant and Armenian Catholic Churches see Appendix 6.

59 The Armenian Benevolent Union (AGBU), established in Cairo, Egypt in 1906 and moved its headquarters to New York City, USA by the World War II, is the largest world-wide non-profit Armenian organization with an annual budget of 36 million USD that is raised by the charity of the benefactors. The AGBU identifies its objective as carrying out educational, cultural and humanitarian programs for the preservation and promotion of the Armenian identity and heritage. Today, the AGBU is active in twenty-eight or thirty-five countries (the website and the blog of the AGBU gives different numbers) and operates in over 69 districts and chapters. It runs and administers 47 Community Centers and Offices, 27 Young Professional Groups, 18 day and Saturday schools. Furthermore, the AGBU supports various programs such as Soup Kitchens, Children’s Centers, Student Scholarships, Summer Camps, Athletics & Scouts, Internship Programs, the Performing Arts. The American University of Armenia in Yerevan is also supported by the AGBU. AGBU publishes 14 dailies, weeklies and periodicals in six different languages (AGBU n.d.). The publications that the AGBU distributes are AGBU Armenia Newsletter (Armenia, in Armenian and English), AGBU-AYA News (USA, in English), AGBU e-newsletter (USA, in English), AGBU News Magazine, AGBU Voice (Bulgaria, in Bulgarian), Ararat, Arek (Egypt, in Arabic), Deghehadou (Egypt, in Armenian), Generación 3 (Argentina, in Spanish), Hoosharar (USA, in Armenian), Khosnag (Lebanon, in Armenian), Mioutune (Australia, in Armenian and English), Nor Tsayn Newsletter (Australia, in Armenian and English), Revue Arménienne des Questions Contemporaines (France, in French), UGAB e-newsletter –Paris, France (French) (Publications&Media, 2013). For the history of the AGBU from its inception to 1946 see, The Central Committee of America (1948).

work, diaspora organizations chose to pursue their own projects to secure their influence, reputation and leadership (Libaridian 2001, 189; Gakavian 1997, 246-252). As Libaridian (1989, 61-62) claims, the earthquake revealed the difficulty of the diaspora organizations to overcome petty differences and achieve a minimal degree of coordination and cooperation at the center of which laid personal and organizational egos. He states (1989, 62) that although “all organizations seemed to be saying and doing the same things competition for the same kind of loyalty became fierce; immediate success and recognition became critical at the expense of long-term programs”. This alienated many diaspora Armenians who could have significant contributions. As a result, many of the prospective goals remained unfulfilled and this eventually resulted in the decline of the credibility of the organizations.

The decline of the credibility of the diaspora organizations had a significance consequence for the diaspora communities that had not been reported adequately until the day. That is, individual Armenians with or without organizational affiliations initiated aid campaigns independent of the traditional diaspora organizations. These initiatives were, first, the expression of the intensity of the sentiments that the earthquake triggered among the diaspora Armenians. Second, they also reveal the limits of the traditional organizations in appealing the individual Armenians. Third, whereas before the earthquake, contributing to the diaspora communities had the primacy, after the earthquake, aiding Armenia became a preeminent concern as a challenge to the accustomed *modus operandi* of the traditional diaspora organizations. Fourth, as Libaridian (2001, 190-191) argues, the earthquake triggered the transformation of the intra-communal relations in the diaspora communities. Whereas occupational and professional groups such as teachers, clergy, authors, publishers, lawyers and historians had held a high status and the leadership position as those who had been viewed as preservers and defenders of the rights of the Armenians, following the earthquake doctors, pharmacists and engineers gained status as those who could provide practical aid to Armenia. This raised the importance of task oriented non-political professionalism. Overall, with the earthquake new groups emerged that challenged the status of the old elite and dislodged the hierarchy in the diaspora communities.

2.1.2.5 From the Karabakh Committee to the Armenian National Movement

On August 19, 1989, the ANM issued a document titled “Program of the Karabagh Committee”, which stated its objectives, ideological principles, *modus operandi* and the

organizational structure⁶⁰. The Program defined the Karabakh issue as the supreme cause that awakened the Armenians nation and identified “reunification of Artshak with Armenia”⁶¹ as its main objective. It further argued that Armenian people faced a series of interrelated problems that were eventually linked to the survival of the Armenian people and declared the right of self-determination and the restoration of national rights were at the center of these interrelated problems. The Program stated that “Karabagh Committee undertook to organize an Armenian National Movement while maintaining the original designation of the Karabagh Movement up until the reunification of Artsakh with Armenia”. By this way, it clarified that the agenda of the ANM was not limited with the solution of the Karabakh issue⁶².

In this program the ANM determined national rights as the precondition of the exercise of the individual’s natural rights and liberties⁶³. This was an expression of the intention and ideological preparation for the independence. The Program also manifested that de-Sovietization and re-Armenization of Armenia was the top objective of the ANM.

Importantly, this document was early framework of the “New Thinking” and its corollary “realist and pragmatist” approach in politics that the first President of the third Republic of Armenia Levon Ter Petrosyan advocated against the “National Ideology” as shall be discussed below. Self-reliance and non-reliance on “guardians”, dismissal of the idea that there are eternal friends and eternal enemies, putting forward national and state interests as the

60 Verluise (1995) quotes the entire program in his book in pages 133-140.

61 For the use of the Artshak see, footnote 30. It is noteworthy that the document uses the word reunification, instead of unification, which is more correct since Karabakh and Armenia had never been united before. Here, again, this is another example of what I call the politics of rhetoric that is constructing a new rhetoric and by extension a new discourse to achieve legitimacy on disputed issues.

62 The Program states:

Our movement has been and remains the unification of Artsakh with Armenia. The fulfillment of this objective is intimately linked to the resolution of other questions vital to the Armenian people...Each of these, taken by itself, is significant in assuring the survival of the Armenian people and for the accomplishment of its major objectives (cited in Verluise 1995, 136).

Likewise, it announces “[Karabagh Movement] also concerned with all of the other major issues tied to the destiny of the Armenian people, including problems that appear at first not to be directly linked to the question of Karabagh” (cited in Verluise 1995, 133).

63 The Program expresses this perspective as follows:

It is undeniable that Armenians, like all nationalities, have known how to mobilize their resources to the fullest and to contribute to the progress of civilization when they have lived freely and democratically and been able to make their own decisions concerning their economic, social, and cultural systems without outside interference.

It is clear that only under these conditions can individuals exercise their natural rights including principal ones of the right to life, personal liberty, and the pursuit of happiness (Cited in Verluise 1995, 134-135).

main principles in international relations rather than religious similarities or differences were the elements of the “New Thinking” that were mentioned in the Program⁶⁴. However, this program contained also themes of the “National Ideology” such as the emphasis on the preservation of the Armenian language and Church to preserve the Armenian identity, identifying the “recognition of Armenian genocide” as a top priority, and although not explicitly stated, territorial claims on Turkey. Last but not least, it is striking that the Program denoted the diaspora as a part of the “national forces”. This demonstrates that the ANM regarded the diaspora as an important asset in the construction of the new state and the nation. Furthermore, by undertaking the responsibility to organize the diaspora the ANM also assumed a leadership role vis-à-vis the diaspora. This shows ANM’s nation building prospect had not been confined by the borders of the Armenian state.

2.1.3 The Beginning of the Karabakh War and the Establishment of the Independent Armenian State

While the blaze was escalating⁶⁵, the ANM won the last parliamentary elections in the Armenian SSR and then Levon Ter Petrosyan was elected as the president on August 4, 1990 (Suny, 1993b 239; Libaridian 2001, 15). By the victory Ter Petrosyan, the Armenian SSR began to be ruled by an anti-Soviet president, which means that the *de facto* de-sovietization of Armenia gained momentum about a year before the *de jure* de-sovietization. In the second half of the same year, traditional diaspora political parties began to set up their organizational infrastructure in Armenia. In October 1990, the Social Democratic Hunchakian Party (SDHP)

64 See the Program in Verluise (1995, 133-140), in particular the fourth, fifth, seventh, and eighth ideological principles that contain important elements of the new thinking.

65 On August 16 1989, Armenian National Council (ANC) was formed in Karabakh and on 24 August 1989 declared Karabakh’s secession from Azerbaijan and unification with Armenia. On 17 August 1989, Pravda published a document on nationalities policy entitled “the Party’s Nationalities Policy under Present Conditions” stating Moscow was geared up to amend its nationalities policy, which, according to Geukjian (2007), was rather a rhetorical document without any exact proposals. On 5 October 1989, Azeri authorities passed the “Law on Sovereignty” that acknowledged Azerbaijan’s full control over its territory and highlighted the right to secede from the USSR after a referendum. On 1 December 1989 the Armenian Supreme Soviet, together with the ANC annexed Karabakh to Armenia. Next, on 9 January 1990, Armenian Supreme Soviet met to discuss the budget for Karabakh. These initiatives triggered anti-Armenian violence in Baku. As a response, on January 15, 1990, Moscow declared state of emergency in Azerbaijan. Five days later, Soviet troops stormed Baku leaving hundreds of people dead. This was followed by the evacuation of the Baku Armenians, suppression of the Popular Front in Azerbaijan, the Azeri counter-part of the Armenian National Movement, and the reestablishment of rule of the Communists. In Spring 1990, guerilla warfare began between Armenians and Azeris. In May 1990, Armenian irregulars clashed with the Soviet troops at the rail station in Yerevan that resulted in twenty-four casualties. After this event, Moscow issued an ultimatum demanding the irregulars to be disarmed in fifteen days. Otherwise, the ultimatum declared, Soviet troops would invade Armenia. Consequently, the ANM, the *de facto* ruling body, faced the task of disarming the armed groups and restoring the order in Yerevan (Geukjian, 2007 252-254).

established itself in Armenia⁶⁶. In November 1990, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation-Dashnaksutyun held its first Regional Congress in Yerevan⁶⁷. In July 1991, Armenian Democratic Liberal Party officially registered in Armenia. Suny (1993b, 239) argues in addition to pro-Moscow forces in Armenia, the ANM had to struggle also against the traditional Armenian diaspora parties, which believed that in the face of the eternal and perpetual danger coming from Turkey and the Pan-Turkist ideology⁶⁸ Armenia needed the protection of Russia or the USSR and refused independence on this ground. Besides the ideological struggle, the ANM in the final stage had to deal also with the collapse of the social order in Armenia.

2.1.3.1 The Declaration on Armenia's Independence

On 23 August 1990, Armenia formally declared its intention to secede from the USSR with Karabakh incorporated (Suny 1993b, 240). Libaridian (1991, 107) states, the Declaration on Armenia's Independence is the "first major statement of the democratically elected parliament of Armenia". Besides this chronological significance, as article 12 of the Declaration states, this declaration was issued "as the basis for the development of the constitution of the Republic of Armenia and, until such time as the new constitution is approved, as the basis for the introduction of amendments to the current constitution; and for the operation of state authorities and the development of new legislation for the Republic". Therefore, as Libaridian (1991, 107) puts it, the Declaration "sets the framework for intellectual and political development, standards by which society's evolution must be measured" that means this document framed the ideological and political make-up of the future independent Republic. As such, the Declaration is one of the founding documents of the Republic of Armenia⁶⁹.

66 The irony here is that the Marxist SDHP installed itself in Armenia when Communist rule was collapsing.

67 In this congress the ARF declared its traditional commitment to "constant struggle' for the realization of our people's complete rights, from Artsakh to Moush, to Van-Vasbouragan, to Yerevan. Onward, for the sake of our fatherland, for the restoration of a free, independent, and democratic Armenia" (cited in Gakavian, 1997, 231). Given that Moush (Muş) and Van are two cities in Eastern Turkey, this declaration constitutes another proof of ARF's irredentism.

68 See, footnote 44.

69 In the official website of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, this declaration is titled "Armenian Declaration of Independence". However, Libaridian (1991, 107) warns that this declaration was not the declaration of independence but the declaration of the intention of declaration of independence that draws the road map to secede from the USSR. Therefore, it is more appropriate to call this text "Armenian Declaration on Independence". There are some minor differences in the text published by the website of the Government of the Republic of Armenia at <http://www.gov.am/en/independence/> (latest access, 09.01.2014) and the text in Libaridian's book. When quoted, the former is used in this study. For the whole text (the government version) see Appendix 8.

The Article 11 of the Declaration states the “international recognition of the 1915 Genocide” as a task. Astourian (2000-2001, 20-21) argues, Ter Petrosyan objected the inclusion of this clause on genocide in the Declaration as he believed this was both politically and diplomatically wrong. However, the Armenian Communist Party, the ARF and the ADLP not only fiercely pushed for the inclusion of a clause on genocide, but also to refer to “Western Armenia”⁷⁰ as the lost lands. On this discord, Astourian cites Edmond Azadian, a leader of the ADLP, stating the following on 20 August 1990:

We have always maintained that the territory of this Republic of Armenia is the nucleus of tomorrow’s Greater Armenia. In this respect, we expect the newly formed government to commit itself to the restoration of our historic rights. More specifically, the new Republic must include in its on-going agenda the recognition of the Armenian genocide and our historic territorial claims by the international community. But the ways, means, and the opportune time to pursue those goals must be left to the best judgment of our far-sighted leader [i.e. Ter-Petrosian] (cited in Astourian 2000-2001, 20)

Importantly, Astourian (2000-2001, 21) rightly argues there was contradiction between the “Program of the Karabagh Committee” and the attitude of Ter Petrosyan with respect to his rejection of the inclusion of the genocide recognition and territorial demands in the “Declaration on Armenia’s Independence” by pointing out Articles 6,7,8 of the short-term objectives in the former document clearly mention these points as short-term objectives. As such, the Declaration caused heated debates among the elite, which in fact, was an early eruption of the conflict between Ter Petrosyan’s “New Thinking” and the anti-ANM camp’s “National Ideology”⁷¹.

⁷⁰ In the Armenian political lexicon, Western Armenia (also called Ottoman-Armenia) refers to Eastern Turkey as one of the two bits of “historical (greater) Armenia” together with the Eastern Armenia (also called Russian-Armenia), i.e., approximately present-day Armenia. Historical (greater) Armenia expands roughly from the Caspian Sea in the East to Cilicia in the West. Although Armenian historiography presents historical (greater) Armenia as the territory occupied by the Armenian King Tigran the Great’s Kingdom (95-55 BCE), it is a construct that refers to the aggregate of all the territories that ancient Armenian kingdoms has ever occupied. In other words, no Armenian state has ever occupied historical (greater) Armenia at once alone. Alternatively, historical (greater) Armenia can also be thought as the geography that Armenian communities had lived through out the history approximately until 1920s. Notably, much of the historical (greater) Armenia overlaps with Western (Ottoman) Armenia. For the relevant maps see Appendix 1.

Western Armenia has remained as the homeland in the diasporic Armenian social memory throughout the twentieth century. For example, the Armenian nationalist Marxist-Leninist underground organization ASALA’s (Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia; founded in Lebanon; active between 1975-1986 in Turkey, USA, Western Europe and the Middle East) main goals were to compel Turkey to recognize “the Armenian Genocide” and liberate the “Turkish-occupied Western Armenia”. For, the ASALA and the Armenian nationalist militant radicalism between 1975 and 1985 see, Appendix 7.

⁷¹ The anti-ANM coalition was composed of the nationalist elite in Armenia, who parted their way from Ter Petrosyan. One of the major components of the anti-ANM coalition has been the ARF. In that sense, the anti-ANM coalition was also a coalition of Armenian and diasporic elite.

As regards to relations with diaspora, the Article 4 of the Declaration states:

All citizens living on the territory of Armenia are granted citizenship of the Republic of Armenia. *Armenians of the Diaspora have the right of citizenship of Armenia.* The citizens of the Republic of Armenia are protected and aided by the Republic. The Republic of Armenia guarantees the free and equal development of its citizens regardless of national origin, race, or creed (emphasis added).

As Suny (1993b, 240) argues, with this article, the Declaration defines the Armenian nation “broadly to include, not only those on the territory of the republic, but the worldwide diaspora as well”. This is an example of the uneasy collocation of the premises of the “New Thinking” and the “National Ideology”, in other words, the civic territorial definition and the ethnic definition of nation that is seen in the early founding documents of the Third Armenian Republic.

2.1.3.2 Independence and Diaspora’s Reaction

In March 1991 Armenia declared a referendum on secession from the USSR on September 21, 1991. The answer of Moscow to this declaration was the landing of the Soviet paratroopers at the Yerevan airport without prior notification in May 1991. On August 19, 1991, conservative generals of the Soviet Army, KGB and the Communist Party declared state of emergency. However, the coup was invalidated in few days. On 20 September 20 1991 referendum, Armenians voted for independence. On 8 December 1991, by the declaration of the leaders of Russia, Belarus and Ukraine the USSR ceased to exist. On 25 December 25 1991 Armenia’s independence was finalized⁷². By the dissolution of the USSR and the emergence of former Soviet republics as independent states Karabakh conflict transformed to a conflict between two independent states over a territory. Soon the conflict between the two newly independent states rapidly grew into a full-fledged war.

Libaridian (1991, 107) claims that declaration of independence was met with hesitation in the diaspora for the concern over the security of Armenia without the protective shield of the USSR at the face of the “Turk, bloodthirsty archenemy of the Armenian”⁷³. Suspicion about

⁷² Azerbaijan and Georgia, the two other South Caucasian states declared independence on 30 August 1991 and 18 October 1991, respectively.

⁷³ In fact, it was the same worries that had been the reason of the pragmatic support of the liberal ADLP to the Armenian SSR. Likewise, the SDHP had admitted the Armenian SSR mainly for ideological reasons, but also for the same pragmatic reason. The ARF, on the other hand, changed its approach to the Armenian SSR and the USSR from a determined enmity to cautious acceptance by the mid-1970s and 1980 that went parallel to stronger

the capability of an independent Armenian state to govern itself was another concern. Particularly, the ARF was cautious of the proficiency of the leadership in Armenia to handle the gross responsibility of bringing the country to independence. To the ARF, independence was untimely and unplanned; it was not the choice of Armenia but something that was thrown on it. Moscow's likely punitive actions after the declaration of independence were another major concern.

Thirdly, the ARF's perception of itself as the eternal vanguard of the Armenian nation had been another factor for its negative stance. Interestingly, the ARF Bureau's organ *Droshak* claimed that it was only the right of the ARF's to choose the moment of declaration of independence. The arrogance of the ARF was so extreme that the party believed not only by declaring independence, but also by adopting the tricolor flag of the first Armenian Republic that was established under the leadership of the ARF in 1918, the ANM seized the leadership rights of the ARF⁷⁴.

Lastly, Ter Petrosyan's diaspora policy raised uncertainties and mixed reactions among the wider circles in diaspora. Diaspora suspected that the ANM's aim was to control the diaspora rather than accepting it as an equal partner. This kind of suspicions grew following the declaration of independence as the Ter Petrosyan administration revealed its unwillingness to implement some policies targeting the diaspora such as the dual citizenship legislation that the Armenian parliament had declared as its intention on 23 August 1990.

emphasis on Turkey as the chief enemy of the Armenians and to bringing the "genocide back in" the discourse. The effect of this was the bolder emphasis on the Pan-Turkist dreams of Turkey right next to tiny Armenia and the unavailability of the Soviet rule that changed the latter from an usurper of the Armenian rule in Armenia to the protector of Armenia. It was these transformations that precipitated the reinterpretation of the motto of the ARF "Free, Independent, United Armenia" and its reformulation as "United, Free, Independent Armenia", according to which occupied Armenian lands in Turkey could be liberated by the USSR and incorporated to the Armenian SSR. Then, when the time comes the United Armenia could be freed from the Soviet rule (see, Libaridian 2001, 191).

74 Libaridian, in November 1990, assessed the arrogant mood of the ARF that inhibit it to acknowledge and accommodate itself to the reality as follows:

. . . the national movement in Armenia and Artsakh had a profoundly destabilizing impact on diaspora institutions and values. . . . We, in the diaspora, should have the humility and courage to recognize that our institutions were not built to face the new, and bigger, challenges facing our nation; that in order for the diaspora to realize its great potential, our institutions must undergo actual transformations. . . . To have a right to continued leadership in the diaspora and before they can make a claim to leadership in Armenia, political parties must apply to their own past the same critical review which Armenians in Armenia applied toward their own past." (cited in Gakavian 1997, 230).

2.2 The First Stage of the Post-Independence Armenia-Diaspora Relations (1991-1998)

Panossian (2005) argues after the referendum on independence in September 1991 relations between Armenia and the diaspora attained a more constructive character. Within such a friendly atmosphere, Ter Petrosyan invited Gerard Libaridian to Armenia in January 1991⁷⁵. California born Raffi Hovanissian⁷⁶ was another personal from the diaspora who was appointed as the first Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1991, when he was thirty-two years old, although unlike Libaridian, he had to resign from this post only a year after for his hard-line with respect to the genocide issue and relations with Turkey that was not coherent with Ter Petrosyan's "New Thinking" and "realist and pragmatist" approach⁷⁷. In addition to these appointments, in March 1992, *Hayastan* All Armenian Fund, the official philanthropy-clearing house of the Republic of Armenia, was founded by the presidential decree of Ter Petrosyan. This had been a major event for being the first initiative aimed at building institutional connections between Armenia and diaspora⁷⁸. Besides these initiatives at the state level, contacts between Armenia and the diaspora at the individual level began to intensify, as well. Visiting the "homeland" as either tourists or volunteers, Panossian (2005) claims, became a "rite of passage" among the Armenians in diaspora. There were also cases of repatriations, too⁷⁹. However, Panossian adds, those who passed this rite of passage had been only a small minority. Lastly, intellectuals and politicians from Armenia began show off at diaspora centers.

75 See, footnote 48.

76 Raffi Hovanissian, born in California, USA on 20 November 20 1959 as the son of Richard Hovanissian, professor of Armenian and Near Eastern History at the University of California, who has developed the popular thesis that the 1915 tragedy was a result of the Pan-Turkist ideology of the Young Turk government in late Ottoman Empire. Raffi Hovanissian studied political science and law. In 1987, he co-founded the Armenian Bar Association. After the 1988 earthquake, he set foot in Armenia to coordinate the construction activities funded by the Armenian Assembly of America. Then in 1990, he moved to Armenia with his family. In 1993, he founded the Centre for National and International Studies, the first political think tank in Armenia. In 2002, Hovanissian founded the Heritage party. Hovanissian is still an active politician in Armenia and the leader of the Heritage Party.

Raffi Hovanissian son Garin Hovanissian in 2010 published the biographical novel *Family of Shadows: A Century of Murder, Memory, and the Armenian American Dream* that tells the stories of the three Hovanissians, his great-grandfather, grandfather and father. As a note, "family stories" constitute a large volume of the Armenian diaspora literature. As such, Grain Hovanissian's novel is just another piece of this biographical literature.

77 Sebouh Tashjian (Armenian-American; 1993-1995 State Minister of Energy), Vardan Oskanian (Armenian-Syrian; 1998-2008 Minister of Foreign Affairs) are some other diasporics who held important posts in Armenia.

78 Establishment of the Hayastan All Armenian Fund confirms that Ter Petrosyan's acknowledgment of the economic significance of the diaspora. Although establishment of the Hayastan All Armenian Fund is important for being the earliest attempt to institutionalize the Armenia-diaspora relations, the fact that it is solely an economic initiation renders it qualitatively different than the later attempts which are more of political initiatives, as shall be discussed below.

79 For repatriation to Armenia in the twentieth century see Appendix 9. For studies on repatriation see, Darieva (2011), Johansson (2008), Malekian (2007), Minasyan et al. (2008), USAID (2007).

However, mutual visits did not inevitably result in stronger affection between Armenian in diaspora and in Armenia (Panossian 2005). Quite the opposite, those encounters often ended up with frustration. Armenia with its immense socio-economic problems did not fit to its idealized image of the “homeland” in diaspora. Furthermore, for the “brothers and sisters”, who had fallen apart for many decades, imagining a shared Armenian was easier than finding it in the real life. Thus, diasporans and Armenians in Armenia, to their disillusionment, discovered how foreign they were from each other. This disappointing discovery was often translated into the “non-Armenianness” of the other party. For the diasporans it was communism in the Armenian SSR and for the Armenians in Armenia it was the overflow of the foreign cultural codes in diaspora that had eroded the Armenianness in those settings. Panossian (2005, 232) describes this situation as the follows:

As the two parts of the nation came to know each other more intimately, they realized that the realities of the ‘other’ fell well short of the ideal images they had. Ironically, open contact meant increased tensions and antagonism as the two bodies did not necessarily like what they saw on the other side. Armenians in the republic came to view the diaspora as more talk than assistance, as condescending and arrogant, eager to dispense advice despite being culturally ‘corrupted’. Its limitations did not at all correspond to the high expectations the homeland had of its kin abroad. The diaspora, on the other hand, came to perceive Armenians in the homeland as lazy, opportunist, corrupted by Soviet rule – not at all the ‘pure’ Armenians they were expecting to find. Both sides soon realized how culturally different they were from each other in terms of values, beliefs and outlook. There was – and still is – much disappointment and even resentment, although many personal relationships within families and between individuals continued unbroken.

As such, contacts between independent Armenia and diaspora since late 1980s not only planted the seeds of future cooperation but also the mutual suspicions and conflicts onto the already existing ones matured through decades during the times of the Armenian SSR (Panossian 2005; 2006b).

The first storm between Armenia and the diaspora broke in October 1991 during the presidential election that resulted in the unconditional victory of Levon Ter Petrosyan and the solid defeat of the ARF⁸⁰. Importantly, the result of the October 1991 presidential election

⁸⁰ See, Appendix 10 for the presidential election results in Armenia between 1991 and 2013.

was not just an electoral defeat for the ARF but was a humiliation as a beat over ARF's image as the pioneer of the Armenian nation. Probably because of this ARF toughened its opposition to the ANM and race between the two soon evolved into an "open warfare". In June, 29 1992, Ter Petrosyan accused the charismatic leader of the ARF, Iranian born Greek citizen Hrair Marukhian of connections with the KGB⁸¹ and terrorist activities in Armenia. Marukhian was expelled from Armenia on the eve of the twenty-fifth World Congress of the ARF that would be held in Yerevan. This was a clear-cut message not only to the ARF but also to the entire diaspora warning the latter to know its place (see, Gakavian 1997, 235-237). The second blow came in October 1992, when Raffi Hovanissian was forced to resign after he accused Turkey of not recognizing the 1915 events as genocide and therefore of not being competent to "claim to be a model of European values" during his visit to Turkey⁸². Some sections of the diaspora perceived this step as the elimination of the diasporans in the Armenian polity. Although, the origin of Hovanissian was not the reason of his forced resignation, it can also be thought that, this forced resignation was a result of the clash between the "New Thinking" of the ANM and the post-genocide hegemonic thinking in the Armenian world that has mostly developed in diaspora. Therefore, Hovanissian's case can be viewed as an indirect elimination of the diaspora thinking from the Armenian government. In any case, Panossian (2005) designates the forced resignation of Hovanissian as the symbolic date of the end of the honeymoon between Armenia and the diaspora.

After the expulsion of Hrair Marukhian, Ter Petrosyan continued his offensive on the ARF and accused ARF members of organizing an underground paramilitary organization called

81 The below quote from the former Chief of the Counter-Intelligence and Major General of the KGB Oleg Kalugin's book "Spymaster: My Thirty-two Years in Intelligence and Espionage Against the West" gives some idea about the source of Ter Petrosyan's accusation.

...the émigré organization we most thoroughly infiltrated was the Armenian exile group, Dashnak Tsutyun [sic]. Once, Dashnak Tsutyun 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 had stopped fighting against Soviet power in Armenia. The organization and some of its members had been co-opted by the KGB. Years later, in 1992,... I provided [President Ter Petrosian] and the Armenian press with information about KGB's deep penetration of that émigré group in the 1970s (Kalugin 1994, 193, cited in Panossian 2006b, 374).

Note that, it is the 1970s that the ARF changed its radical anti-Soviet stance to a more moderate one.

82 Besides the disagreement between Ter Petrosyan and Hovanissian on the proper policy vis-à-vis Turkey, Ter Petrosyan was in favor of waiting other states to recognize Karabakh as an independent republic, whereas Hovanissian advocated the recognition of Karabakh by Armenia without waiting other states (see, Shogren 1992).

Dro⁸³ responsible of assassinations, drug trafficking and activities to destabilize the country. Following these accusations, twelve ARF members were tried and ten of them were found guilty⁸⁴. Meanwhile, the ARF was accused of violating the law on political parties, which prohibit political parties to be controlled from abroad, and/or by a foreigner⁸⁵. Consequently, on 28 December 1994, the ARF, its auxiliary organizations and press were banned in Armenia. In summer 1995, again thirty-one ARF members including one of its leaders, Vahan Hovhannisian, were arrested on the charge of planning a coup⁸⁶. The ANM's ruthless anti-ARF raids, however, had an adverse effect. Many perceived Ter Petrosyan's attempts as anti-democratic and despotic⁸⁷. Even, the ADL, the supporter of the ANM and the archenemy of the ARF cursed Ter Petrosyan of intending to reshape a submissive and diffident diaspora (Panossian 2005, 233-234; 2006a 233). To the credit of Ter Petrosyan, this can be interpreted as the success of the ANM in delivering its message to whole diaspora via the ARF.

Interim, in April 1995, Ter Petrosyan encouraged the election of Karekin I as the Catholicos of Etchmiatzin, when he was serving as the Catholicos of Holy See of Cilicia that has been under the influence of the ARF⁸⁸. Although the maneuver of Ter Petrosyan could be assessed

83 Dro (Drastamat Kanayan) is a renowned Armenian military-man He was born in Igdirdir (then Russian Empire, present day Turkey) on 31 May 1884. He joined the ranks of the ARF after 1903. In 1918-1920 he became the Minister of Defense of the first Armenian republic. He commanded the military campaign to clean the Zangezur region in Armenia off its Muslim population and fought battles against the Ottoman troops. After the Soviet takeover of Armenia, Dro fled to Iran and then to Germany. During the World War II, he, with Karekin Nzhdeh, another renowned ARF member (see, footnote 145), formed and commanded the Armenische Legion of Wehrmacht, the 812th Armenian Battalion to fight at the side of the Nazi Germany. At the end of the WWII, he was arrested by the American forces but soon released. He died in 1956 in Boston, USA. Dro's remains were brought to Armenia and were buried ceremonially on 28 May 2000.

84 The trial lasted approximately two years and those who were found guilty were given sentences ranging from three years of imprisonment to death penalty (Panossian 2005, 234).

85 The Armenian Law on Parties, Article 5.3 banned the control of the political parties from abroad. In addition, Articles 1 to 5 of the same law granted the rights to join, establish, reorganize and liquidate political parties only to Armenian citizens. In 2002, the Law on Parties was amended. The Article 5.3 was deleted. Furthermore, the word "citizens" was deleted or replaced by the word "person" in the Law (Harutyunyan 2009, 199-200 footnote 21). The texts of these laws are available at the official website of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia at <http://www.parliament.am/legislation.php?sel=alpha<ype=3&lang=eng> (latest access 13.02.2014). Libaridian (2001, 70) explains when the ARF applied to register itself in Armenia in 1991, the Ministry of Justice to embrace the diaspora as a gesture of the good will approved this application while it was aware of the illegality of this act. Libaridian to legitimize the unlawful act of the Ministry of Justice argues the Armenian establishment believed the ARF would very soon adopt itself to the Armenian laws. No matter what, it is noticeable that the Ministry of Justice was the institution which broke the Armenian law. In fact, it is the aggregation of such violations eventually hindered the consolidation of democracy based on the superiority of law.

86 See, Armenian Revolutionary Federation (1996) for the ARF's statement on these arrests issued on 9 July 1996.

87 This perception was not groundless. Many foreign commentators and reports of international organizations agree that in time Ter Petrosyan increasingly adopted authoritarian measures as he failed to overcome the opposition and the socio-economic problems in the country.

88 For the Armenian Apostolic Church, see Appendix 6.

as a gesture to the ARF, the ARF interpreted this event as an attempt to break its influence on the Holy See of Cilicia. The non-ARF diaspora bloc was equally discontented as this election brought a catholicos to Echmiadzian, the legitimacy of whom they had been questioning. Finally, Armenians in Armenia were displeased as in addition to the secular leader, now the spiritual leader of the Armenian nation was an *aghbar*⁸⁹ (Panossian 1998, 94).

Despite this bleak picture, however, Harutyunyan (2009, 197-199) warns that there was no absolute alienation between Armenia and the diaspora. She argues that the ANM never dropped its emphasis on the importance of diaspora and the Armenian government reduced personal income taxes, profit taxes, and payroll taxes to encourage diaspora's socio-economic activities in Armenia. She adds, there were also diaspora organizations and individuals who supported cultural and economic projects in Armenia without any political expectations. For example, after 1991 children centers, medical establishments, schools, soup kitchens and the American University of Armenia were founded by the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU)⁹⁰. Armenian Catholic and Protestant churches and the Fund for Armenia Relief run similar humanitarian aid programs. The Armenian Medical Association and the Armenian Lawyers Association were founded in the early 1990s. Armenian Assembly of America (AAA) initiated various projects in Armenia and Karabakh. The AAA together with the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) lobbied against US aid to Azerbaijan. Adoption of the Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act that banned aid to Azerbaijan was the definite success of the lobbying activities of these organizations⁹¹. Famous businesspersons and artists such as Kirk Kerkorian, Hrair Hovnanian, and Charles Aznavour run various philanthropic activities. Yet, only when Robert Kocharyan became the second president in 1998 and revised the paradigm of Armenia-diaspora relations that was set by Ter Petrosyan storm between Armenia and diaspora relatively eased.

Meanwhile, deep cleavages grew within the domestic political sphere and antagonism became the characteristic of the post-1991 Armenian politics. As early as summer of 1991, quarrel between Ter Petrosyan and the ANM that supported strong presidency and the opposition that

89 *Aghbar* means brother in Armenian. In Armenia, this word is used to refer to diasporans, however, pejoratively.

90 See, footnote 59.

91 Harutyunyan (2009, 198 footnote 17) importantly reports that, however, following the ARF's ban in Armenia, ANCA lobbied against the U.S. aid to Armenia. The Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act was waived in 2002 by the Bush administration. For studies on kin-diaspora involvement in conflict situations see, Demmers (2007), Fair (2005), Kent (2006).

supported strong parliament began in Armenia. Those who advocated the parliamentary system insisted on the democratic nature of parliamentarism and the potential authoritarianism of the presidential system. They also stressed the parliamentary tradition in Armenia that was inherited from the first Armenian republic and the Armenian SSR. Supporters of strong presidency stressed the non-professional parliament and the weak political parties as the detriments of parliamentarism. This camp also pointed out the need for a strong leadership for the success of the political and economic transition, and nation and state building. They also emphasized the Karabakh conflict and its consequences as another reason of the need for strong presidency (Markarov, 2006 160). Yet, Markarov (2006, 160) notes that, conflict between the two camps was in reality mostly a competition for power rather than principles. In 1991, the Law on the President of the Republic of Armenia and the Law on the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Armenia were passed that established the presidential system. For many, this was also the establishment of the foundations of authoritarianism that later Ter Petrosyan accused his successors of. Meantime, the ANM ranks began to split, as well. Prime Minister Vazgen Manukyan, a key member of the ANM, who was regarded as its ideologue left the ANM and formed the National Democratic Union (NDU) before the 1991 presidential elections⁹². The conflictual domestic politics has been the norm until the day despite the post-1998 ideological homogenization⁹³.

In a nutshell, the years between 1992 and 1998 had been, in Panossian's words, the "postnationalist" years for the gradual demise of the spirit of national unity and the emerging fractures in the socio-political domain (Panossian 2006a).

2.2.1 The Clash between the ANM and the Opposition until 1998: The "New Thinking" vs. the "National Ideology"

Papazian (2006, 237) argues that "unlike the other Soviet republics, the foundation of a sovereign Armenia relied on Karabakh movement and the ensuing conflict, and not on the struggle against communism or the expression of a new national identity"⁹⁴. It is true that the "Armenian revolution" was not an anti-systemic movement in its origins and Karabakh was

92 For Vazgen Manukyan see, footnote 45. Manukyan turned back to the ANM to serve as the Minister of Defense from 1992 to summer of 1993. However, he again left the ANM and became a stern opponent of Ter Petrosyan. Ashot Manucharian, another founding member of the ANM, was another name that left the ANM to join the opposition (Panossian 2006a, 232; see also Libaridian 2006, 4).

93 See, footnote 131 for political killings in post-1991 Armenia, the final episode of which was put into stage on 18 February 2013.

94 Note that this is an argument that challenges the post-1991 argument of the Armenian social revolt discourse that caused the collapse of the USSR.

the main cause that triggered Armenians to join the march of the Soviet peoples to independence. However, what Papazian misses is that Karabakh re-appeared as a critical issue among Armenians as an effect of the *zeitgeist* of the national revival of the Soviet nations that gained momentum in the mid-1980s. As such, what Papazian perceives simply as a territorial issue was also an assertion of the Armenian ethno-national identity within the late-Soviet context. The emphasis on re-nationalization in the Program of the Karabakh Committee as a corollary of Armenia's de-sovietization is a solid verification of this co-existence. Second, both for the Azeris and the Armenians, Karabakh was rather a struggle of national dignity, honor, esteem and respect, probably more so for the Armenians, as Armenians as the losers of 1923 Karabakh resolution and the "victims" in the hands of the "Turk enemy"⁹⁵. For the Armenians Karabakh was the symbol of the historical injustices against the Armenian people. Therefore, winning the Karabakh war was to take the revenge of the historical injustices and to reverse the historical misfortune of the Armenians. Lastly, from a theoretical point of view, any kind of political, social and economic restructuring inevitably correlates with a process of re-construction of the social and political identity since the latter is an aspect of what is being transformed⁹⁶. All things come together, the march to independence via the Karabakh conflict was also a march of the re-construction of the Armenian identity⁹⁷.

Aside the question of the successful of this transformation, only if the Karabakh conflict, process of independence and the rivalry among different political actors are understood within this frame of the re-construction of the Armenian identity, one can truly understand the years of establishment of the Republic of Armenia. In particular, the clash between the ANM and its opponents can be comprehended fully only if framed also as a struggle of two social engineering projects that envision different national identities, the pivotal element of which

95 See, footnote 39.

96 Socio-political identities, including ethno-national identities, are not static constructs. Rather, the re-making of social identities is a perpetual process. However, this process accelerates or decelerates in certain socio-political contexts. In times of major socio-political transformations such as revolutions, the re-making of the social identities not only accelerates but also deepens in correspondence with the ascendance of the socio-political kinesis. Therefore, periods of major socio-political crisis are also the major constructive periods.

97 Harutyun Marutyan argues the victory over Karabakh transformed the basis of the Armenian identity from victimhood to victor-hood, i.e., transformed the "Armenian the victim" to the "Armenian the victor and the defender" (Interview with Marutyan on 29.07.2011 at the Institute of Archeology and Ethnography of National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, Yerevan). Yet, to what extend this transformation was achieved, or, more importantly, to what extend Armenian elite is prepared to and keen on carrying out such a social engineering project given the hegemony of the Armenian identity based on victimhood, the intellectual comfort of subscribing to the hegemonic perspective in opposition to hard labor of opposing it, and the use-value of victimhood in both international and the domestic domains stands questionable. Marutyan is a senior research fellow at the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of National Academy of Sciences of Armenia. His current research focuses on social memory and Armenian national identity. In 2009, he published the book "Iconography of Armenian Identity: The Memory of Genocide and the Karabagh Movement".

was the debates on Armenia-diaspora relations and the place of the diaspora in the Armenian ethno-national imagination. For this reason, in the rest of this section, the “New Thinking” of Ter Petrosyan and the “National Ideology” of the anti-ANM coalition⁹⁸ will be examined as the ideological bases of competing conceptualizations of the Armenian identity and nation that eventually concluded by the victory of the “National Ideology” by the 1998 presidential election.

2.2.1.1 The Armenian Cause and the National Ideology

The foundational basis of the “National Ideology” is what is referred to as “Armenian Cause” (*Hay Dat*). The “Armenian Cause” has neither a definite formulation nor a precise content. As such, “Armenian Cause” is more of a discursive signifier of the higher ideals of the Armenian nationalism, which, however, are not formulated concretely. Despite this vagueness, several pillar of the “Armenian Cause” can be detected. Recognition of the 1915 events as genocide by the international community and Turkey, consequent restoration of the “historical justice”, that is, return of the “Turkish occupied lands” to Armenia and reparations, and the eventual free, independent and united Armenia⁹⁹ are the constants of the “Armenian Cause”. Yet, in different times, other elements could be added by expanding the notion of “historical justice” often by relating the new issues to genocide and the victimhood of the Armenians in one way or another¹⁰⁰. For example, today, the independence of Karabakh and its eventual unification with Armenia and for some including the ARF, although less salient, status of Javakheti in Georgia are among those lately added elements¹⁰¹. In fact, selectivity and eclectism of the

⁹⁸ See, footnote 71. Interestingly, in that coalition there were people like Robert Kocharyan and Sezh Sargsyan who held minstrel level posts in the ANM government.

⁹⁹ It has to be noted that these demands are not always in the same sequence. In different times or according to different actors one may come before the other in sequence. For example, by the 1970s to the ARF unification of Armenia came prior to independence, while for some others it was independence to be followed by unification.

¹⁰⁰ Harutyunyan (2009, 174) rightly argues,

Since its inception at the end of the nineteenth century, the content of the Armenian Cause, initially known as the Armenian Question, underwent substantive changes particularly following the Genocide. Towards the end of the twentieth century, the Armenian Cause came to embrace not only the three R’s (i.e., Recognition of the Genocide, Reparation of historic lands in Western Armenia and Repatriation of Armenians to their historic homeland) but also Karabagh’s unification with Armenia”.

She adds, since independence, “extension of citizenship rights to post-Genocide diaspora Armenians as a restitution for sufferings caused by historical injustices” was added to the content of the Armenian Cause. Whereas, the 3R’s and Karabagh are the obvious elements of the present-day Armenian Cause, it is an exaggeration to argue that citizenship has been added to the list.

¹⁰¹ Javakheti is a southern province of Georgia populated mainly by ethnic Armenians. At times, tensions arise between the Javakheti-Armenians and the Georgian authorities as the former raised complaints about cultural and ethnic oppression and discrimination. As an interesting matter of fact, Javakheti Armenians oppose the Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan oil pipeline, South Caucasus gas pipeline and Kars-Akhalkalaki-Baku railway that connects Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan, which are likely to increase the economic situation in the region,

“Armenian Cause” is its major strength, which enables its adherents to adopt it to new circumstances.

However, the real strength of the “Armenian Cause” comes from elsewhere. As a “mass identity symbol” genocide “encapsulates four major themes of post-Genocide Armenian identity—“we are a victim nation,” “we are still suffering,” “we have lost our homeland,” and “*pahanjatirutyun*”—“we” should demand justice, revenge and retribution (Panossian 2002: 137, cited in Barseghyan 2007, 2008). As such, as Berseghyan (2007, 288) perceptively states,

...almost all major events or issues, relating to Armenian national identity, are articulated together with the genocide signifier. For example, national survival and genocide survival merge and conceptualise the idea of a “white massacre,” symbolising a fear of assimilation into the host countries with a consequent loss of national identity.

By utilizing and simultaneous reproducing the genocide, “Armenian Cause” can reach out to Armenian individuals. As such, it becomes a national catch-all ideology.

Libaridian (2001, 12&33-34&104) rightly states “National Ideology” conceptualizes the statehood as a means to reach the pre-defined goals of the “Armenian Cause”. Upon this determination, he (2001, 121-122) identifies two political detriments. First, being pre-defined by the “Armenian Cause”, “National Ideology” falls short to attendant to the contemporary political realities. Related to that, secondly, “National Ideology” for the hatred of “the Turk the victimizer” that it inherits from the “Armenian Cause” intensifies revanchist motivations that lead to national security jeopardizing adventurism. However, this mindset also thickens

however isolates Armenia. In Armenia and diaspora, some political groups, including the ARF, claim the unification of Javakheti with Armenia as a part of the united Armenia, although the Armenian government does not have such official demand. In Armenia, the ARF-related Yerkir Union is one of the major organizations that pursue the “Javakheti Cause”. Yerkir Union presents its mission as:

1. Repatriate Armenians living outside the Homeland and ensure a balanced distribution of population in Armenia.
2. Repopulate, develop and revitalize the border regions of the Republic of Armenia and Mountainous Karabagh, by building homes, schools, kindergartens, clinics, hospitals and community centers, and through the implementation of agricultural programs.
3. Aid in the study and preservation of cultural and historic monuments in border regions of Armenia and Mountainous Karabakh.
4. Help the Armenians living in Javakheti and other parts of Georgia to preserve their lingual and cultural identity.

For a fact sheet on Javakheti by the organization called Armenian Cause Foundation see, Armenian Cause Foundation (2011). See, Metreveli and Kulick (2009) for a report on governance in in Javakheti. See also, Kanbolat and Gul (2001).

the fear of the Turk, who with her grandeur is right next door to tiny Armenia. In fact, fear and hatred of the Turk feed each other and eventually lead to an indignant foreign policy (see, Harutyunyan 2009, 98-99). Thirdly, “National Ideology” is irreconcilable with the ideas of individual autonomy and moral and political pluralism as its adherents present national ideology as an all-encompassing Armenian ideology and accuse those who do not embrace it as immoral, coward and unprincipled. As such, “one nation one ideology” approach creates a fertile soil for the flourishing of authoritarianism¹⁰². Fourthly, as the “National Ideology” frames the Armenian identity on victimhood, it turns self-destructive as it unwittingly generates inferiority complex and a perpetual anxiety in the Armenian psyche (see, Harutyunyan 2009, 72& 80-81) that hinders rational thinking. Lastly, the fear of the Turk brings about an aspiration for a protector. For historical and geographical reasons, adherents of the “National Ideology” perceive Russia as this protector. In fact, this was the major reason why the traditional diaspora political parties opposed independence and strongly recommended good relations with Moscow. On the opposite side, the ANM perceived this mode of thinking as an obstacle against independence and tried to eradicate it (see, Libaridian 1991, 2-4). It can be seen that this is one of the reasons why the ANM advocated a new interpretation of history and politics.

2.2.1.2 The New Thinking

The nationalist leadership that was formed in late 1980s, first and foremost in Barseghyan’s (2007, 291) observant words advocated “a critical reinterpretation of the Armenian national identity” that “challenged the whole conceptual and mythical system of the hegemonic post-genocide project of national identity”, which was at the final analysis to a great extend a “diasporic project”¹⁰³. The nationalist leadership perceived this reinterpretation as a necessity as it perceived the “hegemonic post-genocide project of national identity” incompatible with the political realities of the day. Accordingly, against the “hegemonic post-genocide project of

102 Ter Petrosyan came to terms with the authoritarian nature of such “one nation one ideology” approach and reflected on in his speeches as exemplified in the below quote.

National ideology is a false political category . . . implying that the whole nation must adopt that particular ideology. In my opinion, nations are forced to be guided by one ideology only in totalitarian systems . . . Democracy cannot survive in a society where a nation is forced to adopt one particular national ideology (cited in, Harutyunyan 2009, 77).

Notwithstanding this criticism, however, Ter Petrosyan established an authoritarian rule in Armenia during his presidency.

103 This is so because it was the traditional diaspora political parties, particularly the ARF that formulated and reproduced the post-genocide project of national identity in search of the perpetuation of the Armenian identity in diaspora.

national identity”, the ANM put forward “the post-independence project of national identity”. In this way, the ANM subordinated the “ideological” to the “political” in the sense that the ANM came to terms with the subjective, political and constructed-nature of the national identity as opposed to objectivist and primordial approaches to national identity¹⁰⁴.

In its post-independence project of national identity, the ANM employed the idea of normalcy as its pivotal notion. According to the notion of normalcy, Armenians have to strip themselves off from the myth of Armenian exceptionality, uniqueness and superiority alleged by the “National Ideology”. As such, the “New Thinking” envisions the “normalization of the Armenian people” by maintaining that Armenians are neither the perpetual victims nor had they an eternal cultural and moral superiority over neighboring (Muslim) nations and vice-versa. To achieve this, the “New Thinking” advocates “normalization” of the Armenian history by clearing it off from romantic narratives and relinquishing over-valuation and over-emphasis of the history. Next, the “New Thinking” insists to conceptualize the Armenian state as a “normal” state in contrast to a state as a tool to achieve higher ideological ideals which can also be named as “de-ideologization” of the Armenian state (see, Libaridian 2001, 12&33-34).

The discourse of the Armenian exceptionality, uniqueness and superiority is arguably a socio-psychological defense mechanism to counter-balance the hegemonic discourse of the perpetual victimhood of the Armenians at the hands of powerful antagonists. In other words, the post-genocide hegemonic Armenian narrative based both on victimhood and superiority of the Armenians necessitates an explanation of the defeats of the Armenians throughout the history in order to permit the self-esteem of the Armenian nation. This paradox is solved first by constructing a powerful antagonist. This powerful antagonist is the Turk, who is constructed as the polar opposite of the Armenian. In this way, a superior and exceptional Armenian is constructed, too, who possesses outstanding talents, higher intellectual and other capacities, and even, a predetermined historical role. On this ground, not surprisingly many perceived the ANM’s claim of normalcy as an insult. For example, Vazgen

104 The ANM’s 1996 program states:

If the perception of national identity is historically determined, then it is not perpetual, and the same is the national interest. They become meaningful only if they are related to issue(s) of Armenian democratic state and are re-defined in a form of concrete political aims in activities of constitutionally formed state bodies... The concept of nation, of people is verified in its relation with the concept of statehood. State issues and programs superordinate the modes of traditional behaviour and historical memories of nation (APNM 1996, 3-8, cited in Barseghyan 2007, 291).

Manukyan, the leader of the NDU, who was once one of the leaders of the ANM, identified the ANM's notion of normalcy as “devastating” and as “a source for “provincial complexities and national misery”. Parallel to the post-genocide hegemonic narrative, for Manukyan, the Armenian nation was a “world nation”, “a special and unique people stretching back to times immemorial with an extraordinary national potential and historical mission”. This “special and unique people”, which is also the first Christian nation not only developed “exceptional skills” but also made priceless contributions to civilization (Harutyunyan 2009, 85-86).

Normalcy via de-mystification of the Armenian people, history, and state is supposed to be the basis of a realist outlook on foreign policy, that is, implementation of policies following value-free and unbiased factual analyses of the concrete political and economic circumstances in opposition to pre-determined higher missions. As such, realism of the “New Thinking” is the basis of its pragmatism, i.e., pursuing what is achievable at the moment, hence the anti-adventurous approach and the evolutionary *modus operandi* of the New Thinking. As a corollary, the “New Thinking” regards national security as the primary value, which could be secured only by the Armenian state. Therefore, the security of the Armenian state becomes the most important concern of the policy. Within this frame, good relations with the neighboring countries and self-reliance, in opposition to reliance on foreign powers, are the guiding principles.

2.2.1.3 Policy Areas of Conflict between the National Ideology and New Thinking

Ideological differences between the “National Ideology” and the “New Thinking” revealed themselves in practice, particularly with respect to the prospects of relations with Turkey and Russia, Karabakh issue and the conduct of the Armenia-diaspora relations¹⁰⁵. The dispute between the “New Thinking” and the “National Ideology” over the Karabakh problem was crystallized with the controversy over the alternative approaches for the solution of the Karabakh problem, namely, the “step-by-step” solution and the “package” However, controversy over the technicalities of a peace agreement was just one aspect of the heated debates on Karabakh in Armenia.

Malkassian (1996, 44) cites Hambartsum Galstyan, a member of the Karabakh Committee saying “the issue of Mountainous Karabagh's unification was a pretext for expressing the

105 For the controversies over the conduct of relations with Turkey and Russia see Harutyunyan (2009, 71-80;101), Libaridian (2001, 111-117) and Papazian (2006, 240).

discontent which has been accumulating over decades in the face of social injustice, corrupt leaders, the degradation of the environment, [and] the decline of cultural and moral values.”. However, politico-psychological aspects of the Karabakh problem were even more than that. For the many, Karabakh was the living symbol of the injustices to Armenians through the history and microcosmic reincarnation of the Armenian history. Therefore, solution of the Karabakh problem in favor of Armenians was a symbolic first step of the retribution of the past wrongs. For example, Andranik Margaryan, who assumed the leadership of the Republican Party of Armenia following Vazgen Sargsyan’s assassination, on October 27, 1999 defined the Karabakh war as a moral-psychological war. He said Armenian victory in Karabakh would be the reason to overcome the victimhood of the Armenians; Karabakh victory would convince the Armenians that they were not a “slaughtered nation with lost homeland but were also capable of re-conquering their fatherland.” In that sense, Karabakh was also the first step of the United Armenia (Harutyunyan 2009, 176-180)¹⁰⁶. For that, incorporation of Karabakh in the Armenian Cause did not take much as the settling of the historical accounts with the Turk, eliminating the Pan-Turkish danger, and the first step of seizure of the lost lands (Harutyunyan 2009, 174). In Harutyunyan’s (2009, 175) words Karabakh was the “ethno-territorial vengeance”. As she puts it:

In many ways Karabagh for ethno-nationalists became the site for a resentment, a symbol of revenge for all historical injustices, from the Genocide to lost homelands. For ethno-nationalists victories in Karabagh and in seven surrounding districts symbolized an ultimate turning point, shifting the nation’s historical trajectory from endless humiliation and victimization to a restitution of justice, national liberation, and self-assertion. This is why any attempt of territorial concessions was tantamount to betraying pan-national ideals and invalidating the long history of Armenians’ sufferings. It is because of this psychological significance, ARF and the anti-ANM camp adopted an uncompromising stance on Karabakh issue and identified it as the central cause of the Armenian state. Any divergence from this path meant treason.

The ANM questioned attaching such a meaning to Karabakh as a part of its objection to the “primordial interpretation of the Armenian history”, “core values of martyrdom”, relevance of Pan-Turanism at the end of the twentieth century and collective fear and hatred against the Turk (Harutyunyan 2009, 186-187). Accordingly, Ter Petrosyan brought mutual compromise

106 See, Papazian (2006, 243) and Freire and Simão (2007) for the symbolic significance of Karabakh.

as the solution as the below quote demonstrates, which, yet caused the great hostility of the opposition.

To solve the question of Karabagh we have only one option, a compromise solution, which does not mean that one side is the victor and the other the loser; it does mean finding an agreement based on what is possible when the conflict has reached maturity The opposition should not mislead the people by arguing that there is an alternative to the compromise: the alternative to compromise is war. The rejection of compromise and maximalism (the drive to obtain the maximum rather than the possible) is the shortest path to the final destruction of Karabagh and the worsening of the situation in Armenia That which we are rejecting today, we will be asking for tomorrow, but we will not get it, as has often happened in our history. We must be realistic and understand that the international community will not for long tolerate the situation created around Nagorno Karabagh because that is threatening regional cooperation and security as well as the West's oil interests Compromise is not a choice between the good and the bad, but rather between the bad and the worse; that is, compromise is just a means to avoid the worst, from which parties benefit when they have become conscious of the worst and are able to display the necessary political will and courage Let us not be preoccupied with self-deception and let us not cherish hollow illusions. On the issue of Karabagh's independence we have no allies. No one will resolve the present enigma but us. We are the ones who must resolve it, and we will resolve it to the extent that our capabilities allow us. Our only ally is our rejection of adventurism (cited in Harutyunyan 2009, 172-173)

2.2.2 Armenia-Diaspora Relations: the Civic vs. the Ethnic, and the 1995 Constitution and the Controversy over Dual-Citizenship

The conduct of the Armenia-diaspora relationship was another point of dispute between the ANM and the opposition including the diaspora. As mentioned above, as early as 1988 the ANM began to approach to diaspora as an asset and envisioned intensified cooperation between Armenia and diaspora. In practice, this meant unilateral economic and political support of the diaspora to Armenia without interference into the politics of the country. However, this conduct was not what diaspora dreamt about. Quite the opposite, as stated above, the ARF, for example, perceived itself as the only rightful leader of Armenia. Although, the ARF's position was radical, the fact that the ADL and the SDHP opened their branches in Armenia right after independence affirms that the ARF was not the only organization that hoped to be a socio-political actor in Armenia.

In reality, the controversy over the conduct of the relationship between Armenia and diaspora was deeper than a simple question of the proper scope of diaspora's intervention in Armenian politics; it was a reflection of diverse ideological approaches to statehood, national belonging, nationhood and citizenship. Simply put, whereas the ANM stressed the civic components of the nationhood and emphasized citizenship status as the chief concept with respect to the relationship between the state and the people, the anti-ANM camp conceptualized the nation as an ethnic/racial community and deemphasized the formal citizenship in favor of ethnicity as a criterion of the mutual rights and duties of the state and the people. Having said that, in practice, the ANM did not strictly comply with civic principles, but aimed to utilize the ethnic bonds between Armenia and the diaspora, as mentioned above.

The conflict between the civic and the ethnicist/racist approaches of the ANM and the anti-ANM camp revealed itself soon after the independence and heated discussions on dual citizenship erupted as early as 1995 when the first constitution was brought to referendum; whereas the ANM opposed, the anti-ANM camp supported dual citizenship legislation. The ANM's theoretical reason in its opposition to dual citizenship was its advocacy of establishing the population within the borders of Armenian as a civic community based on the principle of territoriality that would encompass all citizens of different ethnic, religious, racial backgrounds as bearers of equal rights and duties (Harutyunyan 2006, 288). This approach was incorporated in Article 15 of the 1995 constitution¹⁰⁷. Besides theoretical arguments, practical arguments of the ANM were basically built on the national and state security concerns. First, the ANM stressed the Karabakh conflict and the need for a strong army. The ANM reasoned if dual citizenship is legalized, Armenians would not choose to serve in the Armenian army and this would reduce the ability of the army to defend Karabakh. Furthermore, the ANM stated that dual citizenship would accelerate emigration. Thirdly, the ANM stressed the demographic factor, that is, the greater size of the diaspora population compared to the population of Armenia. Given the unbalanced multitude of the diaspora, the ANM feared the possibility of the political influence of diaspora in Armenia at the expense of the Armenians in Armenia (Harutyunyan 2009 195-196). Fourthly, ANM referred to

107 In 1992, a commission was formed with the participation of the parties in the parliament, academicians and lawyers to conduct the preparations of the 1995 constitution. In time, some parties resigned from the commission. Finally, the draft constitution was brought to referendum and accepted as the first constitution of the third republic (Libaridian 2005 65).

The Article 15 of the 1995 Constitution states, "Citizens, regardless of national origin, race, sex, language, creed, political or other persuasion, social origin, wealth or other status, are entitled to all the rights and freedoms, and subject to the duties determined by the Constitution and the laws". See, Constitution of the Republic of Armenia(n.d.) for the whole text of the 1995 constitution.

international norms to argue against granting citizenship based on ethnicity¹⁰⁸. Fifthly, opponents of dual citizenship argued such legislation would endanger the security of diaspora Armenians as they would be perceived as fifth-column in their country of residence¹⁰⁹ (Harutyunyan, 2006, 289; see also Libaridian 2006, 7). Following this reasoning, the ANM advocated the parting of Armenia and the diaspora as two separate political communities.

Markarov (2006, 168) rightly states that dual citizenship legislation is not just a practical concern. Rather, it has a significant symbolic importance. In fact, the emphasis of the anti-ANM camp was on the symbolic value of the dual citizenship. For this camp dual citizenship was a way to confirm the eternal unity of the Armenian nation and to correct a historical injustice that the Armenia nation faced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, i.e., the forced dispersal of the Armenians throughout the world. For the proponents of dual citizenship legislation¹¹⁰, the bounded territory of Armenia should not be a limit to the reach of the Armenian state. On the contrary, Armenian state should regard diaspora Armenians as the integral part of the Armenian nation despite their legal citizenship status¹¹¹ and assume duties towards the diaspora such as ensuring its preservation and survival. For example, in the 1995 parliamentary elections, the National Democratic Union stood for dual citizenship by identifying Armenia as “a pan-national spiritual cultural center, which must undertake the responsibilities of preserving the nation, defending the nation’s genetic repository and guaranteeing the *common development of the nation*” (cited in Harutyunyan 2009, 201)¹¹². As regards to the diaspora, it should have a right to have a word in the Armenian politics as *jus sanguinis* and help the creation of a stronger Armenia as an asset that is the equivalent of

108 Although this argument refers to the normative political theory, it is contradictory to the contemporary political trends, as many nation-states with kin-diasporas seek to form stronger ties with the latter. As such, reproducing the normative political theory contradicts to the realist and pragmatist approach of the ANM.

109 However, the ANM did not hesitate to conceptualize the diaspora as an asset, which might be a solid reason for the emergence of a perception of the diaspora a fifth-column. This reveals, the reasons that the ANM forwarded were not always keen.

110 National Democratic Union, Communist Party of Armenia, Union of National Self-Determination, Republican Party of Armenia, People’s Party, Law and Unity Party, Country of Law Party, and the ARF Party were the major proponents of the dual citizenship (See, Harutyunyan 2009, 200-204).

111 The Unity Bloc formed by the Republican Party of Armenia and People’s Party during the 1999 parliamentary elections stated “diaspora had a special place in the Armenian state’s foreign policy and must be treated as an extension of the Armenian state and national ideology.” (Harutyunyan 2009, 202).

112 Likewise, the Communist Party of Armenia defended dual citizenship arguing that “Our party has consistently fought and fights for the Armenian Cause...The survival of the Armenian nation is the most ultimately important issue and must be at the heart of both domestic and foreign policy.” (Harutyunyan 2009, 201).

Georgia's sea and Azerbaijan's oil (Hartuyunyan 2009, 201-204)¹¹³. The ARF's 2006 draft-proposal on "The Law of the Republic of Armenia on Granting Dual Citizenship Status of the Republic of Armenia to Armenians of Abroad," quoted below illustrates ARF's position on the dual citizenship issue:

The necessity of dual citizenship for the Armenian people has emerged by our national historical conditions, because we represent a people, who because of the Genocide committed on the territory of its motherland, in the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century has been forced to disperse across the globe. The Armenian Diaspora is a unique phenomenon in world history . . . Each Armenian with national dignity wishes that Armenia becomes the motherland for all Armenians, that the whole collective potential of our people concentrates in the Republic of Armenia and be utilized for the achievement of national and state priority goals. Today less than 1/3 of Armenians live in their Motherland. This situation requires efforts towards establishment of a united system of national identity, which . . . will form a collective responsibility towards the Motherland and the future of the Armenian nation based on national and historical memories.

. . . Granting dual citizenship to Armenians living abroad will . . . unite all Armenians around the world for the creation of a single and united motherland (cited in Harutyunyan 2009, 203).

Overall, the ANM's rejection of the dual citizenship legislation was perceived as offensive to the ideal of one and indivisible Armenian nation¹¹⁴ (see, Astouryan 2000-2001, 40). By extension, ANM's denial of dual citizenship also strengthened the perception in the diaspora that Armenia views the diaspora simply as a "cow to be milked". Gevorg Poghosyan (2003, 64, cited in Harutyunyan 2009, 200 footnote 23), for examples, stated:

So there is an impression that they have the "right" to worry, to take care of Armenia, to build hotels, factories, to construct the roads, and to render financial assistance to the population of Armenia, but they do not have the right to become an Armenian citizen. The status given to this group who

113 During his presidential electoral campaign in 1997, Vazgen Manukyan, the leader of the NDU, made a statement that both captures and summarizes the political trajectory since late 1980s: "Azerbaijan has oil, Georgia has sea, Armenia has Diaspora" (cited in Harutyunyan 2009, 201).

114 Exemplifying this perception, Panossian (1998, 171) cites Apo Boghigian, a diaspora scholar and the editor of *Asbarez* Armenian Newspaper in Los Angeles, writing:

The government decided to deny its citizens the right to be simultaneously a citizen of another country. For many diaspora Armenians who thought naively that their Armenian ethnicity entitled them to Armenian citizenship, this was a major disappointment. It meant that there was no such a thing as a one and indivisible Armenian nation.

may be active in the country, without having full rights of citizenship, is describe as “empty citizenship”.

Causing intense debates, eventually, the Article 14 of the 1995 constitution banned dual citizenship¹¹⁵. Article 11 identified only the cultural sphere where Armenia and diaspora relations would be developed¹¹⁶. However, the legal arrangements had not been completely free of favoritism in diaspora’s benefit. Article 13 of “The Law of the Citizenship of the Republic of Armenia” ratified in 1995 simplified acquisition of the Armenian citizenship by the diaspora Armenians, who reside in Armenia by obviating a three-year residency requirement¹¹⁷. Likewise, “The Law on Legal Status of Foreign Citizens in the Republic of

115 Article 14 states:

The procedure for obtaining and terminating Republic of Armenia citizenship is provided for by law. Armenians by nationality obtain Republic of Armenia citizenship by a simplified procedure.

A citizen of the Republic of Armenia cannot be at the same time a citizen of another state (Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, n.d.).

116 Article 11 states:

Historical and cultural monuments and other cultural valuables are under the care and protection of the state.

The Republic of Armenia within the framework of the principles and norms of international law

assists the preservation of Armenian historical and cultural valuables located in other states and aids

the development of Armenian educational and cultural life (Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, n.d.).

117 Article 13 states:

Any person 18 years of age that holds no citizenship of the Republic of Armenia can apply to be accepted into the citizenship of the Republic of Armenia, if he/she has resided on the territory of the Republic of Armenia in a manner prescribed by Law for the last 3 years, is proficient in the Armenian language and is familiar with the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia.

The citizenship of the Republic of Armenia is accepted by the decree of the President of the Republic of Armenia of the granting of the citizenship.

A person with no citizenship of the Republic of Armenia can be accepted into the citizenship of the Republic of Armenia without the condition of the term of residence, if he/she:

1) marries a citizen of the Republic of Armenia or has a child, father or mother who are citizens of the Republic of Armenia;

2) has parents or at least one parent that had held citizenship of the Republic of Armenia in the past or had been born on the territory of the Republic of Armenia and had applied for the citizenship of the Republic of Armenia within 3 years from becoming 18 years of age;

3) Armenian by his origin and has resided in the territory of the Republic of Armenia.

The petition to be accepted into the citizenship of the Republic of Armenia can be rejected, if the applicant violates by his/her activities state and social security, public order, protection of the public health and traditions or rights, freedoms, dignity and good reputation of the others.

The citizenship of the Republic of Armenia can be granted without the keeping of the provisions of this Article to the persons who have provided exceptional services to the Republic of Armenia.

The person accepting the citizenship of the Republic of Armenia administers the following oath: " I, (name, surname) becoming the citizen of the Republic of Armenia, swear to be

Armenia” enacted in 1994 permitted Armenian descents holding citizenship of foreign countries and survivors of the Armenian Genocide to obtain Armenian passport with Special Residency Status in the Republic of Armenia for a ten-year term with the possibility of extension that obviate visa requirements to travel to Armenia and military service. This law granted those people protection of Armenian law and economic rights except the right of land ownership, right to vote and be elected, and political organization membership¹¹⁸ (see, Harutyunyan 2006, 288-289; 2009, 197-199&288-289; Panossian 1998, 90-91; Markarov 2006, 168; Gimishyan 2005).

2.3 The Second Stage of the Post-Independence Armenia-Diaspora Relations (1998-Present)

The September 1996 presidential election was held in an intense political climate. Against the ANM, an oppositional bloc named the National Alliance Union (NAU) was formed under the leadership of Vazgen Manukyan, once a comrade of Ter Petrosyan¹¹⁹. Although officially banned in Armenia, the ARF also took part in the NAU. Against ANM’s program, the NAU plead dual citizenship, better relations with the diaspora, and lifting the ban on the ARF (Panossian 2005, 234), which were apparently addressing diaspora related controversies, yet, in real, revealing the conflicting approaches of the ANM and the opposition. The ANM won the election only with the 51.3% of the votes¹²⁰. The opposition accused the ANM of corrupting the elections and organized mass protests¹²¹. Eventually, protests turned violent and the masses attacked the National Assembly, insulted its president and the vice-president. The unrest was surpassed by the army and again the ARF was accused of being the orchestrator of the unrest (see, Libaridian 2001, 70-71)¹²². Importantly, commentators identify

loyal to the Republic of Armenia, to comply with the Constitution and the legislation of the Republic of Armenia, to defend the independence and the territorial integrity of the Republic of Armenia. I am obliged to respect the State language, the national culture and the traditions of the Republic of Armenia."

The person accepting the citizenship of the Republic of Armenia is to read the text of the oath in Armenian and sign it

118 See, Law on the Status of Foreign Citizens in the Republic of Armenia (1994) at <http://www.legislationline.org/documents/id/6640> (latest access 26.09.2012).

119 See, footnote 45.

120 See, Appendix 8.

121 Likewise, international observers reported electoral fraud in 1996 election. For the OSCE/ODIHR report, see Osborn (1996).

122 Libaridian (2001, 71) accuses the ARF and Manukyan’s NDU of regarding violence and “revolutionary means” as legitimate political means. In fact, the ARF was founded as a revolutionary organization for the independence of Armenia in 1890 and utilized militant means to this end. The Operation Nemesis in 1920s, the murder of the Archbishop Tourian in New York in 1933, the Justice Commandos for the Armenian Genocide-Armenian Revolutionary Army in 1970s and 1980s and other petty examples reveal violence has been in the

the aftermath of the 1996 election as another step towards “pragmatic authoritarianism” coupled with the legitimacy crisis in the country.

To ameliorate his decaying image, Ter Petrosyan appointed Robert Kocharyan, the then president of the unrecognized *de facto* Karabakh Republic, as the prime minister of the Republic of Armenia on 20 March 1997. Years proved this appointment was a major political mistake as Kocharyan became Ter Petrosyan’s most powerful rival before long. Moreover, contrary to Ter Petrosyan’s hopes, this appointment accelerated the fragmentation within the ranks of the ANM; on 15 September 1997, Gerard Libaridian, the right-hand man of Ter Petrosyan resigned. Although, Libaridian claimed personal reasons, conflict between him and Kocharyan has probably been the main reason that led one of the architects of Ter Petrosyan’s Armenia to leave his post (see, Astourian 2000-2001 43-54). Lastly, after his arrival to Armenia, Kocharyan and Serzh Sargsyan began laying the foundations of the “Karabakh Clan” in Armenia that shall be explained below¹²³.

In December 1997, the OSCE Minsk Group presented the “step-by-step” proposal for the solution of the Karabakh problem¹²⁴. This proposal foresaw the withdrawal of the Armenian forces from seven Azeri provinces to 1988 borders of Karabakh, return of the refugees and displaced persons to their place of residence, opening of the transportation routes and the lift of the economic embargo. As the final step, conflicting parties would engage in a dialog to decide the final status of Karabakh and the Lachin corridor¹²⁵. Until this time, Karabakh would be given “the highest degree” of autonomy within Azerbaijan and the security of Karabakh population’s would be guaranteed. Azeri and Armenian authorities agreed on this proposal, although the latter had some reservations. This was the first time that the conflicting parties reached an agreement on a proposal. However, the *de facto* Karabakh administration and in Armenia, Prime Minister Robert Kocharyan, Minister of Defense Vazgen Sargsyan, Minister of Interior and Security Serzh Sargsyan, the three powerful members of the government raised against this proposal and accused Ter Petrosyan of selling out Karabakh. Alternative to the “step-by-step” proposal, this camp insisted on “package” solution that

repertoire of the ARF. Moreover, the ARF does not hesitate to play the “politics of heroics” and to utilize the “rhetoric of fighters and martyred” to attract Armenians to its ranks.

¹²³ See, footnotes 138 and 142.

¹²⁴ See, footnote 35 for this proposal.

¹²⁵ The Lachin corridor is a part of the Lachin region of Azerbaijan. It is the shortest pass that connects Armenia with Karabakh and as such a high strategic point. Lachin corridor was occupied by the Armenian forces during the Karabakh War. Since then, this strategic pass is under the control of the *de fact* self-declared Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh.

foresaw the resolution of all the problems including the final status of Karabakh at once and for all within a single framework (Leckie 2005; Astourian 2000-2001)¹²⁶.

Eventually, Ter Petrosyan lost his strength to resist the opposition, he resigned on 3 February 1998 about one and half year after the controversial 1996 election¹²⁷ (see, Libaridian 2001, 73-79 for the entire process). After Ter Petrosyan's resignation, on 16 March 1998 presidential election was held and Kocharyan, who put forward his Karabakhtsi identity,

¹²⁶ The step-by-step solution gives priority to the termination of the armed clash and the security of the Armenians in Karabakh. It postpones the final decision of the status of Karabakh to future. On the contrary, the priority of the advocates of the alternative "package" solution is the settlement of the final status of Karabakh, which is either the unification of Karabakh with Armenia or its independence. Importantly, For the advocates of the "step-by-step" solution, the seven occupied regions of Azerbaijan were no more than bargaining chips at the negotiation table. For the ANM, as Libaridian notes, "the war in Karabagh was a defensive war, and not a war of expansion. Armenia did not seek territorial aggrandizement in general" (Libaridian 1999, 72, cited in Harutyunyan 2009, 163). Significantly, in time the "occupied lands" turned into "liberated lands" in the Armenian political lexicon and negotiating these territories for the status of Karabakh became a less acceptable option. Importantly, another controversy emerged from ANM's rejection to recognize the independence of Karabakh or to annex Karabakh, while there were such claims at the side of the anti-ANM camp. According to Croissant (1998, 70, cited in Harutyunyan 2009, 165), this was because:

By renouncing their [Armenians'] claims to the region while refusing to recognize its [Karabagh's] independence, Armenian officials sought to deny Baku its strongest argument for justifying suppression of Karabagh's separatism, that Armenia was trying to annex Azerbaijani land, while at the same time gaining a powerful argument of their own, that Azerbaijan was forcibly denying the right of self-determination to its own constituents.

See, Harutyunyan (2009 159-162) and Libaridian (2005, 84) for the positions of the political forces in Armenia vis-à-vis the proposals.

¹²⁷ Below is Ter Petrosyan last speech before his resignation.

Dear Compatriots,

Well-known political powers have demanded my resignation. Therefore, since my ability to fulfill the constitutional duties of the presidency under the current situation is fraught with the real danger of destabilizing the country, I have accepted their demand and I am announcing my resignation.

I will refrain from making any comments or assessments in order not to aggravate the situation. However, I do think it (SIC!) necessary to comment in regard to the speculation that the Karabakh problem was the cause of this crisis of power. The problem is much deeper and is related to the fundamental concept of statehood and the alternative between peace and war.

Time will tell who did what for Karabakh and who is, indeed, selling it out. Nothing out of the ordinary is really happening. Simply, the party of peace and decent accord has lost. The party of peace has also suffered defeat in even more developed societies, like Israel. But both in Israel as well as in Armenia, this is a transient phase-a temporary retreat. Sooner or later, peace will pave its own path.

I call on you to display restraint, to maintain order in the country and to carry out legal, civilized elections for the new presidency (SIC!). Such conduct will manifest the maturity of the state that we have created together during these last eight years, and a guarantee for our country's credibility abroad.

I wish the new President success for the benefit and welfare of the Armenian people. I am very grateful to you for the trust and support you have given me all these years.

I would also like to thank all my supporters who have constantly and unconditionally stood by me. Believe me, my decision to resign means that I consider the alternative to be more dangerous for our state. If I have done anything good, I do not expect any gratitude. I beg your forgiveness for my mistakes and the things I did not do.

All my best wishes to you (Azerbaijan International 1998).

played the “politics of heroics” (Papazian 2006, 244), and sent warm messages to diaspora became the second president of the third Armenian Republic.

Resignation of Ter Petrosyan marked the closing down of the first stage of the Third Armenian Republic that was marked by immense socio-economic problems as a consequence of the collapse of the Soviet economic and social order, corruption in almost all the social domains in the process of transition to liberal-capitalism, the Karabakh War, and Azeri and Turkish blockages¹²⁸. The absence of a democratic political culture also added to the chaos in the country. All these negative circumstances resulted in a significant decline of the living standards in Armenia. Armenians, who were used to the social state of the USSR, found themselves in the midst of a corrupt free market economy as “free” but socially vulnerable citizens, a phenomenon that led to massive emigration to Russia and other former Soviet republics and the West¹²⁹. Today, in Armenia these days are still remembered with grief. On the other hand, these transitional years were marked by youthful, expectant and eventful activism; the excitement of nation and state building and the vividness of the revival of the Armenian nation.

2.3.1 The Post-1998 Political and Social Landscape in Armenia

On 27 October 1999, five armed men raided the National Assembly of Armenia and gunned down Prime Minister Vazgen Sarkisyan and eight other parliamentarians, wounded half a dozen people and take forty hostages. They declared their action was to punish corrupt

¹²⁸ Still today, closed border between Armenia and Turkey is a major issue for Armenia for its economic and indirectly political consequences. Therefore, both the Armenian state and the civil society in Armenia and diaspora lobby hard for the border opening. In doing that, however, these actors fail to bring forward arguments beyond moral and idealistic ones such as the contradiction of the closed borders with the spirit of the twenty-first century. In making this sort of claims, the 1915 tragedy and its consequences are also mentioned to imply both the moral and economic debt of Turkey to Armenians. In addition, humanitarian arguments are uttered such as the need for interpersonal relations between Armenians and Turks to understand each other that would eventually lead to the establishment of fraternity between the two peoples, yet forgetting the fact that only the land border is closed and there are weekly flights between Istanbul-Yerevan. As regards to the economic concerns of the Armenians, during an interview on 09.08.2011, Hovsep Khurshudyan, one of the spoke-persons of one of the major political parties in Armenia, the Heritage Party of Raffi Hovahanissian, stated that Turkey is obliged to pay reparations for the economic losses of Armenia for the closed borders. He also argued that according to the international law, states that do not have access to seas have the right of free passage to the harbors in other countries and hence Armenia has an internationally recognized right to have free access to Trabzon harbor in Turkey. Besides either the striking nescience or distortion of Khurshudyan of the international law, his argument about the reparations for the closed borders reveals the “economic rationality” of the Armenians behind the wail of the moral arguments.

¹²⁹ For a striking article on the problem of emigration in Armenia see, Libaridian (2011). For research on the economic and humanitarian consequences and legal aspects of emigration in Armenia see, Aghababyan (2012), Gevorkyan et al. (2006a; 2006b), Grigorian (2005), UNDP Armenia (2009). For an evolution of emigration since 1991 see, Chobanyan (2011). For the discourses of the political parties in Armenia on emigration see, Chobanyan (2012).

officials and to stage a *coup d'état*. The five men were sentenced to life imprisonment. Some pointed Russia as the orchestrator of the parliamentary attack. Others signaled out Robert Kocharyan. At the second anniversary of 1999 parliamentary shootings in October 2001, thousands demanded Kocharyan's removal¹³⁰. This incident left Kocharyan without a powerful adversary. As such, 1999 parliamentary killings became a milestone for the establishment of Kocharyan's post-1998 Armenia. Since then, political violence has been a latent reality of the political sphere in Armenia¹³¹.

Another characteristic of the post-1998 Armenian politics is the absence of meaningful ideological debate despite the fierce competition for the political power¹³². In Ara Sahakyan's¹³³ perceptive words, ideological uniformity has been "one of the challenges that Armenian statehood is facing" in the "absence of original political thought" and "rational political debate"¹³⁴. Thirdly, notwithstanding the ideological homogeneity, in the post-1998

130 On the twelfth anniversary of the parliamentary shootings, on 27 October 2011 Demirchyan's son, the leader of the People's Party of Armenia leader Stepan Demirchyan said, "The authorities did everything to cover up the Oct. 27 case, and I'm convinced that it would be quite a different situation in the country if Oct. 27 never happened. It was a grave crime directed against our state and our people, the negative effects of which are felt till today" (ArmeniaDiaspora 2011).

131 On 28 December 2002, Tigran Naghdalian, chairman of the board of state television and radio and a supporter of Kocharyan was assassinated. In March 2003, brother of Vazgen Sakisian, Armen Sarkisian, was arrested on charges of ordering the murder. The International Crisis Group (2004, 3) states:

The indictment came as a surprise. A long list of unresolved politically sensitive cases starting in 1993 includes the violent deaths of, among others, State Security Committee Chief Major-General Marius Yuzbashian, Railroads Director-General Hambartsum Kandilian, former Yerevan Mayor Hambartsum Galstian, Prosecutor-General Henrik Khachatryan, Deputy Defence Minister Colonel Vahram Khorkhoruni, and Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs Major-General Artsrun Markarian.

The last episode of the political violence in Armenia was staged in Yerevan on 31 January 2013, when Paruyr Hayrikyan, a renowned nationalist politician and candidate in 18 February 2013 presidential election was shot and wounded (see, for example, Armenia presidential candidate, 2013). See, footnotes 50 and 131 for Hayrikyan.

132 For some studies on the Armenian political parties and the political landscape in Armenia see, Defeis (1998), Ishkanian (2008), Karakhanian (2003), Petrosyan (2010), Rutland (1994). See, Chobanyan (2012), European Friends of Armenia (2012), Iskandarian and Meloyan (2003) for ideological stances, domestic policy priorities, approaches to migration, and foreign policy perspectives (Armenia-diaspora relations, Armenia-Turkey relations, genocide issue, Karabakh issue, relations with the neighboring states and big powers). Nedolyan (2013) provides an overview of the major Armenian political parties in 2013.

133 See, footnote 34.

134 He rightly contrasts this state with the early years of the independence as follows:

On the eve of the collapse of the Soviet Union and during the first years of independence, there were heated debates on remaining parts of a reformed USSR or seeking independence, on presidential versus parliamentary systems, on normalization of relations with Turkey without preconditions versus making the recognition of the 1915 genocide by Turkey and its attendant issues preconditions, on the choice between traditional pro-Russian foreign policy and political pragmatism. There were also efforts, during those years, to analyze and understand Armenian identity, the resources of the diaspora and its possible impact on Armenia's policies. Debate was not just part of the life of Parliament and the pages of party organs, but also of academia and the universities. More-or-less recognized figures published articles on all subjects important to the public and the country.

All of that seems to be forgotten now. The connection between political theory and practice is broken. The nondemocratic policies of the authorities have had their impact on the

Armenia, political domain further fragmented¹³⁵ among not only ideologically but also organizationally similar clannish, clientelist political parties (see, Armenia Human Development Report 1996, cited in Astourian 2000-2001, 5; see also Sahakyan and Atanesyan 2006)¹³⁶. All these constituted a major obstacle against the deepening of democracy in the post-1998 Armenia¹³⁷.

The reflection of clientelism in the political sphere is the “clans” in the social sphere that refer to competing interest groups composed of politicians, businesspeople and others from different occupational and professional groups that seek to control the key socio-economic positions by creating mutual support networks through clientele relations. International Crisis Group 2004 report identifies Karabakh Clan, Demirchian Clan, Sarkisian Clan, Geghamian Clan as the most powerful clans¹³⁸ (see, Stefes 2006).

political mind, rather than on its absence. The fact is that the forces dominating the political arena do not feel the need for political science, legal studies, or the findings of contemporary studies on international relations; they function along the path of long discarded autocratic concepts (Libaridian 2006, 12-13).

135 As of January 10, 2007, there were seventy-four registered and functioning political parties in Armenia. Astourian (2000-2001, 5) observes, there were fifty-two political parties by May 1996 and sixty-nine by the summer of 1998. This reveals the party fragmentation of the political sphere is a continuing trend in Armenia.

136 Astourian (2000-2001, 5) describes the Armenian political parties in late 1990s and early 2000s as, The overwhelming majority of these parties share a number of characteristics: limited geographic scope, ideological fuzziness, and weak institutionalization. These are essentially personalistic organizations, instruments for the ambitions of a more or less well-known individual and his clientele.

From that point, Sahakyan and Atanesyan (2006) point out the gap between the rhetoric of democracy and Western orientation of the Armenians and the primacy of the feudal relationships in politics.

¹³⁷ Freire and Simao (2007, 7) argues although nationalist excitement in the late 1980s and early 1990s brought political leaders and the society closer, it failed to bring “democratic results as the legacies of the Soviet period and the difficult strategic environment of the region led to the development of a presidential regime, with extensive power over the Executive and the Parliament, in a political system marked by appeasement and intrigues”. Freire and Simao (2007, 7-8) further state although Armenia improved its democracy since 1996, it failed to achieve a significant progress in that direction that result in a people’s trust in democracy. They add:

Internally, the consolidation of democratic practices at the institutional and decision-making levels has shown limits, in a society used to a strong leadership, and where the power of the local elite in political and economic terms is substantial. These old-style practices render the development of a civil society and the enhancement of rules regarding transparency and accountability very difficult. The recurrent use of violence to suppress dissidence and opposition is a clear example of political and economic allegiances and of the difficulty to establish an independent judiciary. Armenia is thus an incomplete democracy in a regional context where democracy as a model has mostly been the exception (Freire and Simao 2007, 19).

Astourian (2000-2001 2-4), a critique of Ter Petrosyan, argues the hyperpresidentialism of the 1995 constitution responsible for the establishment of authoritarian regime in Armenia.

138 On the Karabakh Clan the same report states the following:

Kocharian is perceived by the majority of Hayastantsis as a foreigner in terms of traditional Armenian politics. Faced with some initial resistance, he gradually consolidated his power by breaking old structures, and putting his supporters, mostly originating from Karabakh, in key socioeconomic positions. Today he can rely on this network of Karabakhtsis, who are dependant on him and his clan to maintain their political status.

Related to the clans, another bleak social phenomenon of the post-1998 Armenia is the oligarchs. Oligarchs are the economically powerful mafioso-type businesspeople that accumulate significant wealth through illicit activities by the help of their ties with politicians, people in the executive, law-enforcement and power structures, social and political organizations and mass media, “as well as by means of direct entrance into the official structures of power - the Parliament, and sometimes into the Government”¹³⁹. As a matter of fact, oligarchs began to grow during Ter Petrosyan’s presidency¹⁴⁰. Yet, as Shahnazaryan (2003, 11) explains “some known businessmen become deputies of the National Assembly. Besides, now it is possible to refer to the category of oligarchs a number of high-ranking representatives of executive power, mating in semi-legitimate form civil service and large business” (see also Freire and Simao 2007, 6). Importantly, the phenomena of clans and oligarchs partially explain another important social phenomenon in Armenia, namely the low level of the civic trust in Armenia¹⁴¹. Finally, advent and consolidation of social stereotypes

¹³⁹ Shahnazaryan (2003 2) describes the oligarchs as a social type as the follows:

At any rate, one can state that the present generation has chiefly formed in the last ten years of the soviet power, in the "years of stagnation" with its such negative characteristics, as an ideological cynicism, general corruption, low labor moral and discipline, the output of poor products.

Finally let us note that most of our respondents achieved more or less appreciable successes in early 90s, though a few people began to ascend to influential positions after 1997-1998

For a recent study on oligarchs in Armenia see, Petrosyan (2013).

¹⁴⁰One of the accusations directed to Ter Petrosyan was the corrupt economic activities of his brothers Telman and Petros. Astourian (2000-2001, 17) cites David Petrosyan, a columnist for the Noyan Tapan news agency describing the connections relationship between the oligarchs and the parliamentary deputies elected in 1995 as follows:

By the mid-90s, the leaders of the main oligarchic structures of Armenia were: now late Thaelmann Ter-Petrosyan (the brother of the first president of Armenia), who controlled manufacturers and industrialists, the construction business, part of the local market in oil products, part of the incomes generated from transport junctions, and who was a kind of umpire in inter-oligarchic disputes; Vano Siradeghyan (interior minister), who controlled part of the local market in oil products, part of the incomes generated from transport junctions, the greater part of the food market, the smaller part of bread production, and the woodwork and timber industry; Vazgen Sargsyan (defense minister), who controlled part of the local market in oil products, part of the incomes generated from transport junctions and the greater part of bread production. Respectively, the mentioned oligarchs had strong lobbyist groups in the 190-seat parliament elected in 1995. Among them were: the “Reforms” parliamentary group (over 50 mandates) led by Thaelmann Ter-Petrosyan personally; “Timber Lobby” (23 mandates) dominated by Vano Siradeghyan; “Grain Lobby” (25 mandates) controlled by Vazgen Sargsyan.

¹⁴¹ For example, according to a survey conducted between February 2004 and March 2005 with a total of a thousand respondents in the Armenian cities of Yerevan, Berd, Yeghvard, Gyumri, Gavar, and Vanadzor more than half of the respondents agreed honesty causes lose in business and while dealing with the government. Almost 70% of the respondents considered the level of honesty of politicians to be either “low” or “very low”. For the civil servants the percentage was almost 65%. Respondents indicated very low trust to state institutions. Moreover, they viewed Armenia as the most corrupt country in the World (Shakaryan 2007). Despite the likely methodological problems, this survey reveals the absence of civic trust in Armenia in the Kocharyan’s Armenia. Babajanian (2008) argues it is more the existing power structures than the collapse of the interpersonal relations and mentality of citizens that rests at the root of socio-political problems in the country. The EuFoA 2012 poll reveals voters’ little trust and support for the politics in Armenia and state institutions.

such as *hayastantsi* (native of Armenia of Armenian ethnic background), *karabakhtsi* (native of Karabakh)¹⁴², *baqvihay* (Armenian refugees from Azerbaijan), *spyrukahay* (diaspora Armenian), *parskahay* (Armenian of Iran) such a socio-political context may constitute a potential threat to post-1991 ethno-national re-construction, although for the time these stereotypes have not reached to a level that would damage this process.

2.3.2 The Post-1998 Ideological Landscape in Armenia: The Republican Party of Armenia and the Armenian National Ideology

Kocharyan's victory in the 1998 presidential election was also the victory of the "National Ideology" over the "New Thinking" that resulted by the end of meaningful ideological debate, ideological homogenization and the following ideological and intellectual desertification. As such, the post-1998 Armenian political and social spheres politics turned into stages on which all the major political actors, except the inheritor of the ANM, Armenian National Congress, and the majority of the public intellectuals speak out the same radical, irrational, demagogical ethnic-nationalist ideas, romantic views of history and politics based on victimhood and heroism¹⁴³. This facilitated the reproduction of Manichean categories of good and self-deceptive explains of the unpromising socio-economic and political situation in the country. The post-1998 ideological landscape of Armenia can be understood by examining the ideological postulates of Kocharyan's and his successor Sargsyan's Republican Party of Armenia (RPA) that has been the ruling party since 1998 and the major force in the consolidation of the hegemony of the "National Ideology".

The RPA identifies itself as a national conservative party and as the successor of the separatist underground National United Party (NUP) of 1967-1987¹⁴⁴. The RPA determines "Armenian

142 In the formation of the *Karabakhtsi* stereotype as rough, uncouth, showy people with a thick dialect especially among the educated elite of Yerevan, strengthening of the Karabakh Clan during Kocharyan's period has been functional. Related to the Karabakhtsi stereotype in Armenia, International Crisis Group in its April 2008 Policy Briefing perceptively argues "there is a big gap between the perception in Armenia of Nagorno-Karabakh as the sacred idea supported by Armenians worldwide and Karabakh Armenians as represented by individuals in everyday life" (International Crisis Group 2008, 7). On the other hand, the same report also refers to some commentators that the dominance of the *Karabakhtsis* in Armenia is exaggerated and majority of the oligarchs in Armenia are not Karabakhtsis but natives. Whatsoever the truth is, succession of Kocharyan by another Karabakhtsi, Serzh Sargsyan, in 2008 was perceived as confirmation of the reality the Karabakh Clan in Armenia.

For a report that compares the demographic, economic and social realities of Armenia with the neighboring countries via the numbers see, Civilitas Foundation (2011).

143 Harutyunyan (2009; 2006) rightly identifies the post-1998 Armenia as a stage of overriding ethno-nationalism.

144 In the post-Stalinist 1960s, awareness of and interest on national cultures and languages began to flourish among the Soviet people. This was followed by the emergence of dissident nationalist movements. In Armenia,

national ideology” that “is built on the basis of combination of Armenian value system and historical-cultural experience in conjunction with the national values and the ones common to all mankind(SIC!)” as its ideological guide and acknowledges the “substantial place” of the theory of Karekin Nzdeh¹⁴⁵, the father of the ideology of *tseghagron* (race-worshipping), which is based on the primacy of the Armenian race and the nationalist struggle (see, History of the Party, 2012). Given the fact that *tseghagron* was developed in 1930s, when nationalist and racist political movements and ideologies were popular, it is safe to argue that, *tseghagron*, in its basics, is the Armenian version of the 1930s’ racist/nationalist ideologies.

the milestone of dissident Armenian nationalism was the mass demonstration on 24 April 1965, on the 50th anniversary of the 1915. That day a crowd gathered together in the city center and shouted slogans demanding the return of “the Armenian lands in Turkey”. Few years later, a monument for the 1915 was erected at Tsitsernakaberd in Yerevan. This was followed by the construction of other monuments of Armenian national heroes in different parts of the city. The National Unity Party (NUP) was formed in such an atmosphere in 1967 by Stepan Zatikian as an underground extreme and violent dissident movement with the objective of unification of Nakhichevan, Karabakh, and “Western Armenia”, i.e., Eastern Turkey, and independence, i.e., united and independent Armenia. On January 8, 1977, a bomb exploded in the Moscow Metro killing seven and injuring thirty-seven. Soviet authorities related this explosion with the NUP and founded Zatikian and two others guilty and executed them (Suny 1983b, 79-80). Paruyr Hayrikyan, joined the NUP in 1967 and in a year became one of its leaders at age nine-teen. He became the leader of the NUP after the imprisonment and execution of the former leaders and in 1987 rectify the NUP to form the Union for National Self-Determination (UNSD).

¹⁴⁵ Nzdeh (birth name, Garegin Ter-Harutyunyan; also Garegin Nzdeh or Karekin/Garegin Njdeh) is a renowned Armenian national hero that joined the ranks of the ARF at a young age and dedicated his life to Armenian nationalism as a combatant, propagandist, organizer, publisher and theoretician. He was born as the son of a village priest in Nakhijevan in 1886. He graduated from Sofia Military Academy in Bulgaria in 1907. After his return to the Caucasus, he joined the revolutionary circles and arrested by the Tsarist authorities. In 1911, he escaped to Bulgaria, joined General Antranig’s brigade and fought the Ottomans at the Bulgarian side. In 1914, Njdeh turned back to Caucasus, joined the Armenian nationalist movement against the Ottomans and became Dro’s aide (for Dro, see footnote 83). In 1918, he took part in the Battle of Karakilise (Black/Dark Church), where Armenian forces stopped the advancing Ottoman troops. His military activities continued with the suppression the Azeri rebellion in Nakhijevan and taking part in the cleansing of the Muslims in Zangezur in 1919. By the Soviet takeover of the First Armenian Republic, Njdeh began guerilla warfare against the Bolsheviks and proclaimed the independence of Lernahayastan (Mountainous Armenia) in the mountainous region of Zangezur, where he led the rebellion in 1920-1921. After Bolsheviks defeated the rebellion, Njdeh fled to Iran and later to Bulgaria. In 1933, the ARF assigned him to the USA. Following, his arrival in the USA, Nzdeh founded the ARF’s *Tseghagron* Youth Movement in Boston, Massachusetts, which later became the Armenian Youth Federation (AYF), the youth organization of the ARF. Four years later, he turned back to Bulgaria, began publishing a newspaper and founded the Taron Nationalist Movement. Nzdeh, parallel to the ARF’s policy, viewed the World War II as an opportunity to finish the unfinished business with the Turk. Therefore, he proposed supporting the Nazi Germany if it decides to attack Turkey and formed the infamous Armenian military unit, Armenische Legion of Wehrmacht, the 812th Armenian Battalion, with his comrade, Dro. However, Nazi Germany did begin an offensive on Turkey and the Armenian Battalion was sent to Crimea in 1943. In 1944, Nzdeh changed side and offered his service to the Bolsheviks that once he fought in the mountains of Zangezur some 25 years ago in case the latter attacks Turkey. However, at the end, Soviet forces arrested and sentenced him to 25 years of imprisonment. Nzdeh died in a Soviet prison in 1955. The adventurous life of Njdeh and his dedication to the Armenian Cause made him one of the most renowned national heroes in the Armenian historiography, which, however, paints out his pro-Nazism. In 1992, the supreme court of the Republic of Armenia rehabilitated Njdeh. On 26 April 2005, at the 84th anniversary of the self-declared Republic of Mountainous Armenia (*Lernahayastan*), remainings of his body were buried on the slopes of Mount Khustup, that once he willed, near where a monument dedicated to him was erected in Kapan. For two articles about Nzdeh’s term in the Soviet jail see, Devedjian (1971; 1970).

The “Armenian national ideology” of the RPA stands on the following themes: 1) ethno-national survival, 2) genetic/racial continuity of the Armenians, 3) defense and maintenance of the “Fatherland”, 4) conservation of Armenian traditions and the “national peculiarities”, 5) priority of the state and nation over the individual, and 6) articulation of the intellectual, scientific and moral achievements of the universal civilization into the national culture without transforming the latter¹⁴⁶. Among these six themes, national survival and defense of the “fatherland” are pointed out as the two foundational principles on which others stand.

By stating “the cradle of Armenian people is the Armenian plateau, which is the godsent (SIC!) Fatherland of Armenians” the RPA establishes an organic and fix merger between the Armenianness and a quasi-designated territory¹⁴⁷. The RPA constructs the Armenian national identity as an entity that is tied to a certain territory. According to this view, Armenian land is the seedbed of Armenianness and Armenianness is appertained to this land. As such, Armenian land is designated as the condition of the Armenianness and ethno-national survival¹⁴⁸. However, the RPA does not propose Armenianness solely as a territorially defined identity. In addition, the RPA conceptualizes the Armenian nation as a nominated community bounded by common ancestry and genetic linkage. In other words, the RPA perceives the Armenian nation as a racial community. Accordingly, other than the survival of the Fatherland, genetic/racial continuity of the Armenians, or as put by the RPA, the “perpetuation of the Armenian type”, is set as another condition of the national survival of the Armenians.

As a typical conservative party, the RPA emphasizes the Armenian Church “as an integral part of the Armenian essence”. However, it does not discard the pre-Christian period of the Armenian history. In contrast, the RPA dignifies the pagan period “on the principle of national identity”. As another typical conservative disposition, the RPA identifies “traditional family” as the “basis of the Armenian society”. Furthermore, by stating, “formation of strong and healthy families, retention and development of national values in a family must be among the matters of high importance for the State”, it grants the state the right to interfere in the familial domain as a revelation of RPA’s predisposition to merge conservatism with

146 The RPA summarizes the basics of the “Armenian national ideology” in twelve articles under the title “Our Values” at <http://www.hhk.am/en/program/> (latest access 09.01.2014) as quoted in Appendix 11.

147 It is a quasi-designated territory for the fact that the borders of the “Armenian land” exceed the internationally recognized borders of the Republic of Armenia. Furthermore, as the difference between the map of United Armenia according to the Armenian Revolutionary Federation and the Map of Western (Ottoman) Armenia in Appendix 1 demonstrates, there is no agreement on the exact borders of Western Armenia.

148 On this ground, the RPA assigns the Armenian state the duty to facilitate the repatriation of “Armenians from all over the world to their Native country”.

authoritarian social engineering. The same authoritarian social engineering predisposition is also apparent in the RPA's approach to education. According to the RPA, education must incorporate "Armenian moral and ideological values" and "national traditions" to serve to the strengthening of the "nation and Fatherland". As such, for the RPA education is not simply a cognitive process of schooling, but a moral-political education and social engineering of the youth for the higher goals of the nation and the state. In fact, this is not surprising given that the RPA prioritizes "national and state interests" over the "personal and other individual interests" as it conceptualizes the state as the "main and most effective means to attain goals and objectives of Armenian people". Notably, the RPA does not pre-define the regime type, yet, mentions "any reform must match the traditional system of values of the society and be directed to the modernization of that system". Likewise, the RPA announces its will to integrate Armenia into the international community and universal civilization in the fields of foreign policy, economy, education, science and culture, however, by incorporating them into the traditional structures. The RPA envisions benefiting the advancements of the universal civilization while preserving the national.

Bringing these together, the RPA can be defined as a neo-conservative party that is economically liberal, culturally conservative, socially communitarian, politically statist, ideologically nationalist that stands on the very edge of racism. Furthermore, authoritarianism is another characteristic of the RPA for its strict ideological orientation that draws the frame of an all-encompassing national "supreme purpose", which illegitimizes other ideological perspectives by utilizing a moral discourse strengthened by pseudo-ecclesiastic themes such as "the eternal(SIC!) contact between God and the Armenian nation" and "the Armenian plateau, which is the godsent(SIC!) Fatherland of Armenians" that presents both the Armenian nation and the Armenian land as God-created entities. By this way, the RPA reproduces an understanding of Armenianness that is based on fix and sacred essentials such as the "eternity of the Nation and the Fatherland"¹⁴⁹. Finally, by putting the national survival as the core value, the RPA securitizes the political and the social domains, that also reveals the Social-Darwinist nucleus of the "Armenian national ideology".

149 It can be seen that the Armenian National Ideology had been inspired by the national myths such as the story of Hayk (or Haik, Hayg), the mythical founder of the Armenian nation told in the "History of Armenia" attributed to Moses Khorenatsi (410 – 490s AD). As such, Armenian National Ideology appears as an unproductive result of the interaction between analytical and philosophical deductions and the fantastic myths.

2.3.3 Post-1998 Foreign Policy

Freire and Simão (2007, 19) describes international circumstances in 2000s as follows:

The lack of regional cooperation, due to the unresolved Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and competition for resources and influence in the area, render the geostrategic and political-economic setting highly complex. The lack of diplomatic relations with Azerbaijan and Turkey; difficult relations with Georgia; and cooperative relations with Iran and Russia, despite elements of divergence, render the whole picture bleak. In addition, the EU and the US have also become engaged in the South Caucasus, providing economic, political and even military assistance. From this wide involvement, a complex net of bargaining, concessions and trading of power has emerged.

Within such an international context, after 1998 Armenia adopted the “policy of complementarity” formulated by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kocharyan administration, Vartan Oskanian¹⁵⁰, as its foreign policy paradigm and included it in “The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia” adopted in 2007¹⁵¹. The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia explains the “policy of complementarity” as follows:

The foreign policy of Armenia is based on a partnership approach that seeks to simultaneously develop relations with all states in the region and with states with interests in the region. Such a policy is aimed at maintaining an overall balance in the region. The positive trends in the dialogue and cooperation among the major powers and the consolidation of the international community to combat terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are conducive to Armenia's pursuit of its foreign policy of complementarity.

The same document also identifies “policy of engagement” as the correspondent of the “policy of complementarity” as quoted below:

Armenia is actively involved in both regional and international integration and regards itself as an equal partner in such processes. Armenia sees its engagement and participation in the international developments as being in conformity with Armenian interests. Armenia's (SIC!) strategic partnership with Russia, its adoption of a European model of development, mutually

150 See, footnotes 7 and 77.

151 See, The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia (2007).

beneficial cooperation with Iran and the United States, membership in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), and its intensification of the cooperation with the NATO alliance, all contribute to the consolidation of the potential of Armenias(SIC!) policy of complementarity. There are three layers of Armenias(SIC!) external security strategy: the international, regional and pan-Armenian.

Overall, “policy of complementarity” envisions collaboration with the world and the regional on common interests. According to this approach, Armenia would strengthen its autonomy and security, and overcome isolation from the large scale regional energy and the railroad projects among Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey by diversifying international interlocutors and multiplying the relations (see, Freire and Simão 2007, 9; Mirzoyan 2010, 90; Weinstein 2004). As such, “policy of complementarity” foresees a difficult task of collaboration with countries and power blocs rival to each other. However, both international dynamics beyond the control of Armenia and Armenia’s lack of resources and political and economic power to pursue its projections whenever they conflict with the projections of other international actors renders this policy a truly thorny one, to say the least. Therefore, it is not surprising that, in the present, Armenia, practically, appears as the “junior partner in the emerging Moscow-Yerevan-Tehran axis”¹⁵².

Interestingly, in June 2000, when there was no contact between Armenian and Turkish officials and civil society representatives with the exception of the Turkish-Armenian Business Development Council (TABDC) that was established in 1997¹⁵³, a series of tentative meetings began between prominent Turks and Armenians at the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna that were tacitly approved by the Armenian and Turkish governments. On 9 July 2001, the Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Commission (TARC) was established by the assistance of the US Department of State. The goal of the TARC was to initiate dialogue between Armenians and Turks through track-two, non-governmental, person-to-person diplomacy¹⁵⁴. Six months after the establishment of the TARC, Turkey as a goodwill gesture

152 For a report on Armenia’s geopolitics and its relations with the key actors in the region and the world see, ACGRC (2009). For a critical assessment of Armenia’s relations with Russia see, McGinnity (2010).

153 See the official website of the TABDC at <http://www.tabdc.org/> (latest access 09.01.2014) that includes links to the objectives and activity reports since its foundation.

154 The TARC was chaired by David L. Phillips, who taught in several universities in the USA and served as a senior adviser to the US Department of State and the United Nations Secretariat, besides his responsibilities in several other foundations and institutes. The three founding members of the TARC at the Turkish side were Ilter Turkmen, a former Turkish foreign minister, and Gunduz Aktan and Ozdem Sanberk, former ambassadors. The

normalized the visa regime with Armenia. However, diverse expectations created tensions; while the Armenian side wanted to see quick results, the Turkish side aimed to decelerate the process. Failure to establish a policy-working group and a secretariat, untimely statements of some TARC members to the press and acting like state officials instead of civil actors limited the achievements of the TARC. Likewise, public criticisms that mostly came from Armenia also had been another obstacle.

First, the TARC was perceived as an attempt to hinder Armenia's attempts for the international recognition of the Armenian Genocide. The ARF, for example, stated, "nobody is allowed to circumvent the issue of Turkey's recognition of the Armenian Genocide under the guise of "reconciling" the two nations, which jeopardizes the process of the international recognition of the Genocide." and added "There can be no reconciliation without the recognition of the historical truth." (Khachatrian 2001). Second, some in Armenia viewed the TARC as a hostile American creation based on Van Z. Krikorian's good working relations with the US State Department. The argument went on to say, the US government that opposed to the recognition of the 1915 events as Genocide created the TARC to end Armenian claims. Thirdly, the representativeness of the Armenian members of the TARC was questioned. The main was Alexander Arzumanyan, a former Foreign Minister and the then leader of the ANM. As these criticisms intensified, Kocharyan suspended his commitment to support the TARC and distanced himself for its activities¹⁵⁵.

Importantly, in November 2001, TARC appealed to the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) to issue a report on the applicability of the United Nations Genocide Convention to the 1915 events. The ICJT presented its legal analysis on 4 February 2003 that concluded the term genocide might be applied to the 1915 events, however, stated:

International law generally prohibits the retroactive application of treaties unless a different intention appears from the treaty or is otherwise

four Armenian founding members of the TARC were Van Z. Krikorian, an Armenian-American attorney and the representative of the Armenian Assembly of America since 1977, and David Hovanissian and Alexander Arzumanyan, former ambassadors. This composition reveals that, the TARC was connected with the governments more than a usual civil society initiative.

¹⁵⁵ There were also positive reactions to the TARC. For example, Onnig Beylerian and Dennis R. Papazian, ethnic Armenian professors in the University of Quebec at Montreal and the University of Michigan-Dearborn, assessed the TARC as a success of the Armenians. Beylerian stated "for many years the Turkish ruling elites simply refused to recognize the necessity of reaching out to Armenians, considering them as mischievous at worst and born losers at best... But this track-two diplomatic initiative could serve Armenian interests as well." Papazian, argued, "several people have rightly pointed out that the members of the Turkish team are hardliners... Rather than frightening me, it gives me hope. It took a Charles de Gaulle to separate Algeria from France. It will take hardliners to change Turkey's old public stance." (Khachatrian 2001).

established. The Genocide Convention contains no provision mandating its retroactive application. To the contrary, the text of the Convention strongly suggests that it was intended to impose prospective obligations only on the States party to it. Therefore, no legal, financial or territorial claim arising out of the Events could successfully be made against any individual or state under the Convention.¹⁵⁶

The TARC was concluded in 2004¹⁵⁷.

2.3.4 Post-1998 Armenia-Diaspora Relations

One of the earliest political acts of Kocharyan after coming to power was to uplift the ban on the ARF, release the imprisoned ARF members except for the few, and bring the ARF back to Armenian politics on 9 February 1998. Furthermore, Kocharyan appointed Vahan Hovannisian, the jailed chairperson of the ARF, as his top advisor and a post was given to Levon Mkrtchyan, another key ARF figure, in the new cabinet (Mirzoyan 2010, 90). These were the early acts of the new president that radically altered the thorny state of affairs between Armenia and diaspora.

Given that both the RPA and the ARF are the adherents of the “Armenian Cause” and the “National Ideology”, hence, hold similar perspectives on controversial foreign policy issues, Karabakh issue, and Armenia-diaspora relations, Kocharyan’s attempts were not unexpected. However, ideological affinity only partially explains Kocharyan’s warm gestures to the ARF. To grasp the full picture, Kocharyan’s pragmatism to solve the intense economic and political problems by securing the help of diaspora’s economic and political aid has to be acknowledged. As such, the post-1998 rapprochement between Armenia and the diaspora was a result of both ideological and pragmatic considerations.

Kocharyan’s electoral victory created excitement in diaspora and his messages to diaspora via the ARF were well received (Panossian 2005, 238). Within this renewed climate of unity, on

156 See, The International Center for Transitional Justice (2002) for the entire text.

157 In its closing, the TARC recommended the following to the concerned governments: 1) official contacts should be improved further 2) opening of the Turkish Armenian border should be announced and implemented 3) the two governments should support publicly civil society programs focused on education, science, culture and tourism 4) standing mechanisms for cooperation on humanitarian disaster assistance and health care should be established; (5) security and confidencebuilding measures between Turkey and Armenia should be enhanced 6) religious understanding should be encouraged 7) the Turkish and Armenian people need to develop more confidence. See, Turkish Armenian Reconciliation Commission (2004) for TARC’s final report titled “Turkish Armenian Reconciliation Commission Recommendations to Concerned Governments Regarding Improvement of Turkish Armenian Relations” issued on 14 April 2004. For the TARC see, Phillips (2005), Gunter and Rohtus (2010, 161), Mirzoyan (2010, 94).

22-23 September 1999 the first Armenia-Diaspora Conference was held. More than 1200 people from about seventy countries attended the event. Personals and representatives of the Armenian parliament, government, bureaucracy, political parties in Armenia and diaspora, Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, Great House of Cilicia, Armenian Catholic Patriarchate, Armenian Evangelical Church, main diaspora philanthropy and lobby organizations, diaspora communities in different countries, and academicians and intellectuals from Armenia and diaspora participated this event. In two days, reports and speeches on diaspora philanthropy, economic issues, lobbying and advocacy, social and cultural issues were delivered¹⁵⁸. In 2002 and 2006, two follow-up conferences were held in Yerevan, as well. Overall, however, all the three conferences were over-loaded by inflated number of reports and speeches and on various topics, many of which were simply rhetorical expressions of the same old trivial themes like the will and the need of unity of the Armenians all over the word around Armenia and so on. These reports and speeches hardly had any substantial analysis, diagnosis, action plans and proposals. Indeed, these conferences were more of a show and/or a ritual without any direct significant concrete and practical results. On the other hand, these and similar events had been functional to create a spirit of unity.

One of the correlates of Armenia-diaspora rapprochement was the re-employment of the genocide discourse and adopting a tougher stance against Turkey to instrumentalize diaspora's higher sensitivity about the genocide issue and to cultivate a common national agenda that would facilitate Armenia-diaspora rapprochement to secure the economic and political support of the diaspora. Thirdly, by undertaking the decades-long struggle for the recognition of 1915 events as genocide, Armenia could strengthen its leadership claim in the Armenian world. Finally, by bringing the genocide issue and playing on the deep-seated anxiety that it creates, post-1998 Armenian administrations could diverge the attention of diaspora from serious socio-economic and political problems in Armenia and brush the controversies between the two under the carpet vis-à-vis the common enemy. As such, for Kocharyan's administration genocide issue has been one of the strongest and most all-encompassing instruments to create an ethno-national sense of unity based on victimhood, sense of injustice and pain.

158 During a conversation on March 12, 2012, Libaridian told that this conference was indeed planned by Ter Petrosyan. However, after his resignation, Kocharyan assumed the event. For the list of participants and the program of the conference, see Armenian News Network/Groong (n.d.) and Baghdasarian (n.d.). Some of the speeches delivered in this conference are available at <http://www.groong.org/ADconf/199909/> (latest access 09.01.2014). Notably, as regards to the country of residence of the participants numerous countries are listed, some of which do not host notable Armenian communities. This may be due to the intention of Kocharyan to turn this event into a show to gain political capital rather than a conference that would have concrete results.

Besides diaspora related causes, by re-employing the genocide issue Kocharyan aimed at several interrelated foreign policy goals. First, according to Kocharyan administration, Ter Petrosyan's Turkey policy was a policy of concession that failed in the sense that Turkey did not regard Armenia as an equal partner and this policy did not bring any positive results (see, Mirzoyan 2010, 100-101)¹⁵⁹. Kocharyan aimed to stalemate Turkey by bringing the genocide issue in the international area as this was one of the few political weapons in the hand of Armenia. In other words, Kocharyan sought to utilize the genocide issue to balance against Turkey and force it to make concessions to open the Armenian border (see, Mirzoyan 2010, 91&100-101)¹⁶⁰. Accordingly, as an important event, Kocharyan spelled out the "G-word" in his speech during the UN General Assembly in September 1998 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the UN Genocide Convention. This was a concrete sign of the change in the Turkish policy of the Armenian state. At this meeting, he stated:

This year also marks the 50th Anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. As is well known—the international community did not—at the time—duly condemn the Genocide of Armenia's in the Ottoman Empire in 1915 and that encouraged certain regimes to commit new crimes of genocide.

After the Holocaust—the UN addressed the problem of genocide—defining it as a crime against humanity and adopted on December 9—1948—the above-mentioned Convention. Despite that fact—during the last five decades—crimes of genocide were committed in different parts of the world on more than one occasion. The recent recognition and condemnation by several parliamen's

159 For example, Ruben Safrastyan, Director of the Institute of Oriental Studies of Republic of Armenia National Academy of Sciences, in 2008 stated that:

After 10 years of re-evaluation of our approach, now I think that it was politically wrong [to make concessions]. It gave no results. And what happened in 1998-2000 regarding the toughening of the position towards Turkey was logical as we got nothing in front of our concessions (European stability Initiative 2009).

Interestingly, Safrastian was a junior colleague of Libaridian, who was as one of the architects of the "politically wrong" approach.

Likewise, Gegham Manoukian, ARF member and director of the "Yerkir Media" TV company states:

All of Ter Petrossian's conciliatory actions towards Turkey have remained unreciprocated. Even at a time when he closed the Armenian Revolutionary Federation party in Armenia, the Turkish position remained unaltered. Armenia could have made further concessions towards Turkey, make pressures on the Armenian diaspora, and there were not to be any results. From 1990-98 Armenia did not make any step against Turkey, it made only concessions. ... So it was clear that that policy had no perspectives. Kocharian's coming to power was a turning point in Armenia's policies toward Turkey. ... Until 1998 there was very little talk in international forums about the fact that Armenian-Turkish borders were closed and that there were no relations between those two countries. After 1998 we saw the reverse process (European stability Initiative 2009).

160 Mirzoyan (2010, 124) refers to Ruben Safrastyan who views post-1998 Armenian policy as an "example of a weak state exerting pressure on a strong power, through which the former not only is capable of resisting the demands of the latter, but also gains certain relative advantage in the diplomatic stalemate by tapping into the issues of history and social memory".

(SIC!) of the Genocide of Armenia's committed at the beginning of this century is evidence of an increased understanding of the necessity to combat that evil.

The general Assembly—upon the presentation of Armenia and five other member-states—included in the agenda of its present session the issue of the 50th Anniversary of the Genocide Convention. We hope that—by combining efforts in the struggle against the crime of genocide—humanity will take a decisive step towards the elimination of that crime in the next century (Asbarez 1998)¹⁶¹.

However, this does not mean that Kocharyan's hawkish Turkey policy meant burning bridges with Turkey. Instead, Kocharyan, like his predecessor, admitted the importance of Turkey and aimed to keep a door open (Mirzoyan 2010, 89-93). Therefore, by giving messages to the Turkish public that for Armenia the issue was a moral, not a political and legal, Kocharyan tried to assuage Turkey. For example, on 29 January 2001, Kocharyan gave an interview to a well-known Turkish journalist Mehmet Ali Birand. In this interview, Kocharyan dismissed reparations and land claims following Turkey's recognition of the 1915 events as genocide¹⁶².

2.3.4.1 The 2005 Constitutional Amendments and the 2007 Dual Citizenship Legislation

Besides symbolic and ritualistic initiatives, Kocharyan also took concrete steps to advance Armenia-diaspora relations. Among those steps, the 2005 constitutional amendments and the following 2007 dual citizenship legislation laid the foundations of the legalization, and following legalization, formalization and institutionalization of the Armenia-diaspora relations. As such, these acts have been major steps with respect to the deepening of Armenia-diaspora relations.

161 Kocharyan made a similar statement at the Millennium Summit of the United Nations on 7 September 2000. In this summit he stated:

The Armenian nation is unfortunately destined to carry the problems of the past century into the new Millennium. Turkey's continuing denial of the Genocide of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire has been only intensifying our aspirations for historical justice. Some countries and nations had in the past been burdened by similar problems. However, they managed to overcome them through making moves of reconciliation and with the support of the international community. Penitence is not a humiliation, but it rather elevates individuals and nations. I am confident that a constructive dialogue with Turkey will allow us to jointly pave the way towards co-operation and good neighbourly relations between our two peoples (Asbarez 2000).

This speech caused Turkish President Ahmed Necdet Sezer's tough criticism during the remarks at the summit (Asbarez 2000).

162 The whole text of the interview is available at <http://asbarez.com/44407/kocharian-discusses-territorial-claims-in-interview-with-turkish-tv/> (latest access 09.01.2014). In fact, Kocharyan's double-discourse is a typical political tactic of the Armenian establishment and the hegemonic elite that results in distrust at the Turkish side. Mirzoyan (2010, 99) draws attention that Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs adopted a tactic to distance itself from diaspora's campaign for the recognition genocide by stating that Armenia and diaspora are two separate actors. The irony is that the separateness of Armenia and diaspora as two separate entities was the argument of Ter Petrosyan that caused intense criticisms from diaspora and Kocharyan in the pre-1998 era.

In his inaugural speech on 9 April 1998, Kocharyan stated the following as an expression of his will to legalize dual as a policy priority.

Our generation is here to shoulder one more responsibility. That is the unification of the efforts of all the Armenians and the ensuring of Diaspora Armenians' active participation in the social, political and economic life of our republic. A constitutional solution to the issue of dual citizenship will also contribute to the issue. Armenia should be a holy motherland for all the Armenians, and its victory should be their victory, its future, their future. We have to realize that a nation, understanding the value of its combined force, can never be defeated (cited in Panossian 2005, 239)¹⁶³.

In order to amend the 1995 constitution, as early as 19 May 1998, that is, approximately a month after becoming the president, Kocharyan signed a decree to form Constitutional Reform Preparation Committee that would collaborate with the European Commission for Democracy through Law, i.e., the Venice Commission. In July 2001, a proposal for the constitutional amendments was presented to the parliament. Yet, debates continued until 2003. In May 2003, an unsuccessful attempt was made to amend the constitution, which the Venice Commission did not approve. Eventually, on 27 November 2005, another referendum took place and despite opposition's habitual grievances about the irregularities in the referendum, overwhelming majority of the voters gave consent to the amended constitution. The Venice Commission also approved amendments (see, Markarov 2006; Venice Commission 2005; Freire and Simao 2007). One of the main criticisms about the 1995 Constitution was granting extensive powers to the president with Article 55, hence causing hyper-presidential political system (see, Astourian 2000-2001, 2-3)¹⁶⁴. One of the main differences that the amended constitution of 2005 brought was the transformation from hyper-presidential system to semi-presidential system (see, Markarov 2006) that was justified by the need to "create a balance between the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of power, to secure their independence, and to review the dominant role in regard to them of the president of the republic" (Armenia: 10 Questions 2005). However, these amendments did not result in a real transformation of the authoritarian system.

Notably, in propagating the need for constitutional amendments, the Armenian government stressed relations with the diaspora as one of the prospects of constitutional amendments. For

163 The entire speech was available at <http://www.arf.am/English/ARFNews/10/1002.htm>. However, latest checked on 09.01.2014 this link was dead.

164 For the 1995 Constitution, see Constitution of The Republic of Armenia (n.d).

example, the document published by the Armenian government on the 2005 Constitutional Referendum to “inform [voters] in an accessible and simple way about the basic provisions envisioned by the draft law on amending and amplifying the constitution” mentioned prospective changes in relations with the diaspora, specifically the dual citizenship that would bring diaspora closer to Armenia, as one of expected outcomes of the constitutional amendments¹⁶⁵.

As mentioned above, the 1995 Constitution limited Armenia-diaspora relations principally to cultural sphere. The amended Article 11 permitted a more inclusive relationship between Armenia and the diaspora. Likewise, the amended Article 11.3 secured “Armenians by birth” a “simplified procedure” to “acquire citizenship of the Republic of Armenia”¹⁶⁶. Similarly, the Article 30 of the 2005 Constitution that partially stated “the law may define the right of suffrage for the elections of the bodies of local self-government and for the local referenda for persons who are not citizens of the Republic of Armenia” was a step for the inclusion of

¹⁶⁵ This document partially stated the following:

Why have constitutional reforms become necessary at this particular time, and how will these reforms impact on relations with the diaspora and on our country's authority within the international community?

...The constitutional amendments are called upon to create a balance between the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of power, to secure their independence, and to review the dominant role in regard to them of the president of the republic. This will strengthen the democratic foundations for the development of the country and strengthen the real guarantees of the individual and the citizen. No one will be able to place himself above the law.

It is extremely important to abolish the ban on dual citizenship. This most important question must be resolved in accordance with the law, a process that will allow [us] to implement a more flexible policy in this area and to involve our co-nationals from the diaspora in the life of the country... (see, Radio Free Europe Liberty 2005).

¹⁶⁶ The amended Article 11 states:

Historical and cultural monuments and other cultural values are under the care and protection of the state.

Within the framework of the principles and norms of the international law the Republic of Armenia shall *contribute to fostering relations with the Armenian Diaspora*, protecting the Armenian historical and cultural values located in other countries, advancing the Armenian education and culture.

Article 11.1

Regions and communities shall be the administrative-territorial units in the Republic of Armenia.

Article 11.2

The Republic of Armenia guarantees the local self-governance.

Article 11.3

The citizens of the Republic of Armenia shall be under the protection of the Republic of Armenia within the territory of the Republic of Armenia and beyond its borders.

Armenians by birth shall acquire citizenship of the Republic of Armenia through a simplified procedure.

The rights and responsibilities of citizens with dual citizenship shall be defined by law.

(The Constitution of the Republic of Armenia with Amendments 1995).

diaspora in Armenian politics¹⁶⁷. On this constitutional ground, in February 2007 amendments in the citizenship law, military service law and election code were done¹⁶⁸. With the amendments in the citizenship law, the much debated dual citizenship was legalized.

As a determined critique of the 2005 Constitution and the 2007 amendments, Harutyunyan (2006, 293-294) argues proponents of the dual citizenship legislation envisioned this legal act only to encompass ethnic Armenians and left out ethno-religious minorities, who hold Armenian citizenship and non-Armenian ethnic groups abroad¹⁶⁹. She (2009, 208-212) further argues the 2007 legislative amendments chiefly promoted the interests of the old diaspora and put the native Armenian citizens into the same category with foreign citizens with respect to requirements of dual citizenship; whereas there is no such requirement for the old diaspora, those who emigrated and obtained second citizenship without renouncing their Armenian citizenship after 1 January 1995, are required to report their location to restore their

167 The Article 30 of the amended 2005 constitution states:

Eighteen-year old citizens of the Republic of Armenia have the right to take part in the elections and referenda as well as the right to take part in the public administration and local self-governance through their representatives chosen directly and through the expression of free will.

The law may define the right of suffrage for the elections of the bodies of local self-government and for the local referenda for persons who are not citizens of the Republic of Armenia.

Citizens found to be incompetent by a court decision, duly sentenced to prison or serving the sentence, shall not be entitled to vote or be elected (The Constitution of the Republic of Armenia with Amendments 1995).

Harutyunyan (2006, 292-293) argues it is unlikely that this article intends to protect migrant workers in Armenia as Armenia itself is a labor exporting country. She adds, it is not probable that this article targets refugees from Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh, and Northern Caucasus, whose total population is 360,000, since the law “On Amendments to the Republic of Armenia Electoral Code” (enacted April 21, 2000) has already given refugees electoral rights. Harutyunyan, in the same way, eliminates the possibility of adopting EU norms as the motivation of this article. Finally, she argues the only explanation is the will to take another step to integrate the diaspora into local politics.

168 These laws can be found at the following links:

http://www.mfa.am/u_files/file/citizenship/dualcitizenship-final-en.pdf;

http://www.parliament.am/law_docs/130104HO8eng.pdf?lang=eng;

<http://www.parliament.am/legislation.php?sel=show&ID=2020&lang=eng> (latest access 20.05.2013).

169 Harutyunyan (2006, 294) mentions several interesting suggestions of those who engaged in the debates on dual citizenship. She points out that the chairman of foreign affairs of the National Assembly proposed to deny those who marry foreigners the eligibility for Armenian citizenship. He further insisted on restrictions on emigration to prevent population fall after dual citizenship legislation. Harutyunyan argues that a member of the Armenian Cause Committee persisted not to grant Armenian citizenship to non-Armenians. This person also stated that the able-bodied ethnic Armenians should be given priority and only soldiers should be given full political rights. The chairman of state and legal affairs of the National Assembly also proposed ethno-religious criteria for dual citizenship for national security reasons.

Between June 17-18, 2006 in Yerevan the Armenian International Policy Research Group organized a conference titled “Dual Citizenship: Alternative Arrangements, Economic Implications, and Social Dimension” devoted to the discussion of dual citizenship. See, AIPRG (2006), Antaramian (2006), Armenian Revolutionary Federation (2006), Gevorkyan (2006), Khurshudyan (2006), Kzirian (2006), Ohanyan (2006) for the papers delivered in this conference that discuss contemporary issues related to dual citizenship in Armenia. For these and other papers presented in this conference see, <http://www.aiprg.net/en/content/29/#DC> (latest access 09.01.2014).

citizenship rights and become eligible for dual citizenship. Secondly, the post-1995 emigrants were principally subjected to Armenian laws in case of dual citizenship, while no such thing exists for the old diaspora. Harutyunyan also detects that the amended law says nothing about those who left the country before 1995 that creates a huge ambiguity for those people. Likewise, the 2007 amended Election Code and the 2007 amended law on military service define different rights and duties for the old and the new diaspora. While the 2007 amended Election Code bans absentee voting for resident citizens and post-1995 diaspora dual citizens, it states no such requirement for the old diaspora. The 2007 amended law on military service, similarly, states Armenian citizens who adopted the citizenship of a second country are not exempt from the military service even if they served in the military forces of the second country. However, same amended law states citizens of other countries who adopted the citizenship of Armenia are released from the military service in the Armenian military forces if they served in the military forces or fulfilled alternative service in their country of original citizenship. If military service is not compulsory in the country of original citizenship, there is no requirement to serve in the Armenian military. Overall, Harutyunyan (2009, 208-212) rightly argues that the 2007 legislative amendments granted the old diaspora more rights and less obligations compared to the new diaspora and the local citizens. This, Harutyunyan (2009, 208) claims, creates first and second-class citizens in Armenia. Despite these fallacies, however, 2005 and 2007 amendments were the concrete steps towards the third stage of the post-independence Armenia-Diaspora relations of legalization, formalization and institutionalization of the Armenia-Diaspora conduct.

2.3.4.2 Republic of Armenia National Security Strategy

Although, the details of the constitutional and legal amendments in 2005 and 2007 give some idea, there is one more document that needs to be examined to grasp Armenian establishment's reasoning with respect to the acts targeting the deepening of Armenia-diaspora relationships. This document is the Republic of Armenia National Security Strategy (hereafter, NSS) that was approved on 26 January 2007¹⁷⁰.

The NSS determines 1) the independence of Armenia, 2) the security of the state and the population of Armenia, 3) peace and international cooperation, 4) the prosperity of the population of Armenia and 5) the preservation of national identity within and outside of the borders of Armenia as the “fundamental values of the national security of the Republic of

170 The NSS is available at http://www.mfa.am/u_files/file/doctrine/Doctrineeng.pdf (latest access 13.03.2014).

Armenia” and defines the threats to national security as “events, actions, or the absence thereof, that may threaten the existence of the Armenian state, society, family or individual”. Not unexpectedly, the Karabakh conflict is identified as the key national security issue. The NSS identifies the following as the external threats:

- 1) Military actions of Azerbaijan and the probable support from Turkey
- 2) Instability in the neighboring states
- 3) Disruption of the transit routes in the neighboring states
- 4) Waning or ineffectiveness of the strategic alliances
- 5) Terrorism and transnational crime
- 6) Energy dependency
- 7) Isolation of Armenia from regional programs
- 8) Decline of national and cultural identity in the Armenian diaspora
- 9) Epidemics and natural and man-made disasters

On the other hand, it lists internal threats as follows:

- 1) Deterioration in the efficacy of public administration and the decline in trust in the judiciary
- 2) Insufficiency of the political system.
- 3) Insufficient level of democratic consolidation
- 4) Polarization.
- 5) Urbanization.
- 6) Challenges from the market economy and financial-budget management.
- 7) Inadequate infrastructure.
- 8) Low level of science and education
- 9) Inadequate intellectual and national education
- 10) Negative demographic trends.
- 11) Environmental problems and efficient administration of natural resources
- 12) Epidemics and disasters

“Negative demographic trends” as an internal threat, which is partially detailed as “illegal migration, especially among the educational, scientific and cultural workforce” is an important item in the list¹⁷¹. Despite the ambiguity of the expression “illegal migration”, this item is a manifestation of the damaging trend of emigration from Armenia that causes the post-1991 expansion of the Armenian diaspora. This is another reason of the growing importance of the Armenia-diaspora cooperation for Armenia and classification of the

171 The Republic of Armenia enlists low national birthrate, disappointing indexes of health, mortality, life expectancy and the quality of life, unregulated and illegal migration, especially among the educational, scientific and cultural workforce, as demographic threats to national security.

Armenia-diaspora cooperation as the pan-Armenian layer of Armenia's external security strategy detailed as:

The wide range of issues comprising ArmeniaDiaspora(SIC!) relations presents a significant component of the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia. In sheer numbers, the Armenian Diaspora exceeds the overall population of Armenia; it is geographically diverse and stems largely from the exodus of Armenians to safety during the Genocide and related forced deportations. The Armenian Diaspora is well integrated within their host countries of residence and is active in many areas of political, economic and social affairs of those countries. The largest Diasporan communities are presently located in the Russian Federation, the United States, France, Iran, Georgia and in some Arab countries. Majority of the Diasporan Armenians are non-Armenian citizens.

In order to consolidate relations with its Diaspora, the Republic of Armenia focuses its efforts on preventing the assimilation and loss of lingual and cultural identity among the Armenians living abroad. Additionally, Armenia embraces all systemic demonstrations of *Diaspora involvement in the solution of vital problems* facing Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh. The integration of the Armenian nation offers a serious degree of *economic and cultural potential*, especially as a means to promote trade, tourism, preservation, development and publicizing of the cultural heritage.

The preservation and intensification of ties with the Diaspora also creates a *unique bridge between Armenia and the international community*, as Armenian community organizations worldwide support the development of bilateral ties with different countries, and foster Armenias(SIC!) global integration and consolidation of democracy.

The Armenian Apostolic Church, through its capacity as the national church, also has an important mission in the integration of the Armenians and the development of the nation (The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia 2007, emphasis added).

This explanation demonstrates that Armenian state seeks to utilize diaspora as a political lobby¹⁷², economic resource and a socio-cultural bridge between Armenia and the rest of the world for its size, wide-spreadness, status, activism and economic potential.

172 For the early twentieth century Armenian lobbying for Armenia in the USA, see Aftandilian (1981), Bryson (1976) and Malkasian (1984). For two studies on the recent Armenian lobbying in the USA, see Gregg (2002) and Paul (2000). Recently, Azerbaijan and Turkey began to organize counter-lobbying groups and activities in the USA to the discomfort of the Armenians, who until recently have carried out unrivalled lobbying that result in frequent complaint about the "millions of dollars" that these two countries spend for lobbying in the Armenian media both in Armenia and diaspora. These complaints on Turkish lobbying interestingly usually stress the huge amounts of money that Turkey spends on lobbying instead and recommend Turkey to spend this money for more

All these may be interpreted as the cause of the inclusion of the preservation of the national identity within and outside of the borders of Armenia as a fundamental values of the national security of the Republic of Armenia that is detailed as “the Republic of Armenia strives to preserve and develop the identity of the Armenian nation, within both Armenia and throughout its Diaspora” In fact, the NSS lists “decline of national and cultural identity in the Armenian diaspora”¹⁷³ and “inadequate intellectual and national education”¹⁷⁴ and among external and internal threats as shown above. Likewise, the NSS mentions “new quality of life and morale” as an aspect of domestic security strategy and enlists the following as the policy some of the policy priorities as regards to that¹⁷⁵:

- create a favorable environment for the preservation and reproduction of universal and national values, national traditions, and standards of cultural and intellectual heritage;
- ensure increased access to cultural values;
- support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural activities of the Armenian Apostolic Church;
- prevent any threat to the cultural and intellectual identity and moral values of the Armenian people;
- engage in greater cooperation with other states in order to preserve Armenian cultural, spiritual and historic monuments located within their territory;

fruitful enterprises. What are hard to grasp in this kind of arguments is, first, what gives the Armenian the right to say what Turkey should do, and second, Armenian lobby also spends lots of money for lobbying and following the Armenian argument the same recommendation can also be made to the Armenian side; Armenian lobby groups should spend this money for fruitful enterprises on Armenia rather than for lobbying in the USA. For a study on the “lobby wars” between Armenian and Turkish lobbies in the USA see, Evinch (2005).

173 The NSS details the “decline of national and cultural identity in the Armenian diaspora” as the following:

The Republic of Armenia attaches a great importance to the preservation of the national identity in the Armenian Diaspora. Well-organized and efficiently integrated Diasporic communities are important contributions to the overall increase in Armenias international involvement. Any weakening of the Armenia-Diaspora ties and the absence of mutually enriching contacts may threaten the fundamental values of the National Security of the Republic of Armenia (The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia 2007).

174 Notably, the NSS details the “inadequate intellectual and national education” as the follows:

The education of national morals and tenets of patriotism should start at home and continue through all levels of formal education. An insufficient awareness of national ideals, respect towards the state and its institutions, and individual morality, including healthy living, the traditional role of the family, and the *misinterpretation of the national identity*, threaten national security (The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia 2007, *emphasis added*).

The phrase “misinterpretation of the national identity” reveals that the Armenian state assumes the right to the correct interpretation of the national identity. It also reveals that the NSS acknowledges the subjectivity of the national identity. This is in great contrast to the objectivist outlook that dominates the Armenian statediscourse on Armenian identity, as shall be revealed in the following chapter.

175 Interestingly, animation of the Armenian language, national values, traditions and heritage, Armenian Apostolic Church are placed among the means to achieve the declared goals.

- protect the historic, spiritual, cultural heritage and the ethnic identity of the national minorities living in Armenia;
- increase the role of the Armenian as a language of the national identity and of the state language;

All these hint some implications. Firstly, inclusion of the preservation of the national identity in the NSS as a security matter amounts to the securitization of the national identity¹⁷⁶. Secondly, by stressing preservation of the national identity not only within but also outside of the borders of Armenia, the NSS bestows the Armenian state extra-territorial duties and rights, which, in abstract, expands the Armenian state beyond its recognized borders. These two indicate the implicit authoritarian social engineering tendency in the NSS that follows the securitization of diaspora and the national identity. Fourthly, the NSS presents the Armenian identity as a kind of *elan vital*, vital force, life force, vital impulse that would trigger the achievement of *reel* results. By this way, the NSS not only securitizes Armenian identity, but also mystifies it by ascribing it metaphysical attributes¹⁷⁷. Last but not least, the NSS demonstrates that Armenian state envisions the development of Armenia-diaspora relationship on the ethno-racial grounds. As such, ethno-race is employed as the condition of the Armenia-diaspora relationship.

176 The NSS explains preservation of the national of identity as a factor and policy of the national security guarantee as the follows:

- developing and implementing a comprehensive concept of ArmeniaDiaspora (SIC!) relations, with a broader mobilization of the potential of the Armenian Diaspora;
- promoting and fostering Armenian studieslanguage (SIC!), literature, history and culture as factors ensuring continuity of national spiritual heritage and symbolizing national identity;
- and,
- enhancing the Armenian national culture along with preserving the elements of its distinguishing national features, aware of universal cultural values and developments, including the promotion of Armenian cultural heritage abroad.

As such, the NSS asserts Armenians have distinguished national features. This argument resembles National Ideology's conceptualization of the Armenian ethno-nation as a unique and superior entity. Similarly, language, literature, history and culture are designated as the pillars of the distinguished Armenian ethno-national identity. Elsewhere in the NSS, Armenian Apostolic Church is also mentioned as another identity pillar. These reveal that the NSS constructs the Republic of Armenia as an ethnic state. Secondly, framing the matter as such demonstrates the tradeoff between diaspora's material support to Armenian and Armenia's identity-wise support to diaspora.

177 The NSS, with respect to the domestic security strategy states:

The sustainable and secure development of the Republic of Armenia calls for greater efficiency in governance, establishment of democratic values and continued economic growth. In recognition of the above, Armenia has undertaken a comprehensive reform process. *The implementation of these reform programs is supported by the preservation of the Armenian national identity*, through a full utilization of national potential and is supported by and based on international best practices (emphasis added).

As it is seen in this quote, preserved, and strengthened, Armenian national identity is defined as a strength to pursue the reforms. In this way, Armenian national identity is attributed a material power.

To summarize, the NSS identifies the diaspora as a political, economic and social asset. This identification conditions the intensified attempts to build solid ties between Armenia and the diaspora in the post-1998. The NSS discloses is that as the Armenian nation is designated as an ethno-racial entity, Armenia-diaspora relationship is conceptualized as camaraderie among the members of the same ethno-racial group. Therefore, preservation of the ethno-racial identity in Armenia and the diaspora is framed as a security matter, which amounts to the securitization of the Armenian identity. In this way, the NSS designates the Armenian state as the guardian of national identity, hence, the cultural survival of the diaspora. Such status enables the Armenia state to claim rightful engineering of Armenian national identity within and outside of the state borders. In fact all these points either explicitly or implicitly stated in three texts, namely, the text in the official website of the President of the Republic of Armenia at <http://www.president.am/en/diaspora/> (latest access 01.11.2012) titled “Armenian Diaspora”, Charter of the Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia, and The Concept on Development of the Armenia-Diaspora Partnership.

2.4 Beginning of the Third Stage of the Post-Independence Armenia-Diaspora Relations: Legalization, Formalization and Institutionalization of Armenia-Diaspora Relations since 2005

The fourth presidential election in Armenia was held on 19 February 2003. Kocharyan received slightly fewer than 50% of the votes and the second round of the election took place on 5 March 2003. In the second round Kocharyan received 67% of the votes and with this result defeated Stepan Demirchyan, son of Karen Demirchyan and the leader of the People’s Party of Armenia¹⁷⁸. The 2003 presidential elections were criticized by the opposition and the international observers for the electoral fraud (see, for example International Crisis Group, 2004; Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights 2003). On 12-13 April 2004, government sent security forces to break a peaceful oppositional demonstration following the Constitutional Court’s decline of Stepan Demirchyan’s challenge to the result of the 2003 presidential election although it accepted that there had been drawbacks in the election. The International Crisis Group (2004, 4) reports, “the police broke up the demonstration that evening, beating pensioners and journalists, using stun grenades, water cannons, electric prods and tear gas. The offices of opposition parties were raided, computers and archives

178 See, Appendix 10.

confiscated and staff arrested and interrogated for up to 36 hours”. Interestingly, same report writes¹⁷⁹:

Some observers believe that President Kocharian resorted to violence to prove that he maintains control over the police and the army, his staunchest supporters. The opposition considers it a sign of weakness, demonstrating that Kocharian lacks genuine public support. In any case, the muscle flexing was a stark reminder that violence is still a part of Armenian political life.

The fifth presidential election in the Third Armenian Republic took place on 19 February 2008. The two main competitors in the 2008 presidential election were Serzh Sargsyan and Levon Ter Petrosyan, who broke his silence since February 1988 later in September 2007 by bringing forth accusations against his rival successors Kocharyan for corruption and other problems in Armenia. Ter Petrosyan based his campaign on the ills that Kocharyan and Sargsyan brought to Armenia as the leaders of the Karabakh Clan, specifically emphasizing nepotism and the occupation of top governmental positions by their fellow Karabakhtsis. However, this propaganda did not prove enough to win the election; On 24 February 2008, Prime Minister Sargsyan was announced as the winner of the presidential election with 52.8% of the votes, whereas Ter Petrosyan received 21.4 %¹⁸⁰. However, the victory of Sargsyan was shortly followed by one of the darkest days in the history of the Republic of Armenia, namely the March 2008 events.

The OSCE announced that the 2008 presidential election mostly met OSCE commitments and international standards, despite some reported deficiencies in vote count. Likewise, international community rapidly welcomed the conduct of the elections. However, supporters of Ter Petrosyan insisted that 2008 election was flawed by gross electoral violations and fraud. Quite strikingly, Ter Petrosyan even before the election asked his supporters to hold a rally after the election either to celebrate the victory or protest the electoral fraud and before the announcement of the official results, on 21 February demonstrations started in Yerevan insisting that the winner of the election was Ter Petrosyan. The protest continued peaceful until 1 March 2008, the day when violence broke up between the security forces and the protestors, state of emergency was declared in Yerevan, media reporting was restricted, and Ter Petrosyan was put into *de facto* house arrest. The result was 10 dead, some 200 injured

179 About political violence in Armenia the International Crisis Group 2004 report (2004, 4) rightly argues “close to a decade of rigged elections has not only discredited democratic practices, but has also favoured a culture of political violence that includes assassination”.

180 See, Appendix 10.

including police officers, about 130 arrests and 100 criminal cases opened¹⁸¹. The state of emergency was lifted on 21 March 2008. On the same day, a coalition government was formed between the Republican Party of Armenia (RPA), Prosperous Armenia Party (PAP), Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), Rule of Law Party (RLP). Sargsyan officially became the third president of the Republic of Armenia on 9 April 2008¹⁸².

2.4.1 The Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia

Both Kocharyan and Sargsyan are native Karabakhtsis. Both men had been the leaders of the separatist movement in Karabakh as close comrades in arms. Following their relocation in Armenia proper, Sargsyan in 1993 and Kocharyan in 1997 to hold ministerial level posts, they remained close to each other. Therefore, whereas the 1998 presidential election was a turning point, the 2008 election did not bring any substantial ideological changes nor was it followed by radical breaks in social and economic policies and foreign policy. Rather, ideological and political continuity was the main characteristic between the two *Karabakhtsis*. As such, the 2008 election was more like a handover of the power from the outrageous Kocharyan to the more even-tempered Sargsyan, who, however, were speaking the same language, yet with different accents. In fact, it was this close association between the two Karabakhtsis that provoked the concerns over the “Karabakh Clan” that allegedly dominated the political and economic domains in Armenia proper. The continuity between Kocharyan and Sargsyan eras is also true for the diaspora policy of Armenia; since 2008 bold steps have been taken by Sargsyan’s administration that deepened the process began by 1998. Put differently, the process of post-1998 Armenia-diaspora rapprochement that gained momentum by legalization of the Armenia-diaspora relationship by the 2005 and 2007 constitutional and legal amendments, entered in a new stage of formalization and institutionalization by 2008 by the establishment of the Ministry of Diaspora.

Developing a productive state policy on Armenia-Diaspora relations was one of the proposals of Sargsyan’s election campaign. To this end, by the Spring 2008, reforms were initiated.

181 There are rumors that the actual number was more than ten. The allegation is that authorities forced the relatives of some of the victims to sign a document declaring that they would not charge authorities for the death of their relatives to be given the dead bodies to be buried properly. Another rumor that was told to the author of this dissertation by several individuals in Yerevan in September, 2008 is that the military forces that fired the crowd were brought from Karabakh. The Karabakhtsi origin of Kocharyan and Sargsyan is likely to be the source of this. Moreover, this rumor reveals the implicit divide between the Hayastantsis and the Karabakhtsis.

182 Harutyunyan (2009, 198 footnote 17) observes the ARF-related Armenian National Committee of America did not report the events in Armenia in its website “except just a few representing the distorted “official” view”. On the contrary, The Armenian Assembly of America “harshly criticized authorities’ brutality and state of emergency”. The websites of the two main lobby Armenian-American lobby organizations can be found at <http://www.anca.org/> and <http://www.aaainc.org/> (latest access 09.01.2014). See, Appendix 8.

Between 2002 and 2008, the Executive Secretariat for Relations with Diaspora and between June 2008 and October 2008, the State Committee for Relations with Diaspora within the Armenian MFA were the sub-ministerial bodies responsible for coordinating the Armenia-Diaspora relationships at the state level (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, 2011). As a decisive step, on 1 October 2008 by the decree of Sargsyan, the Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia (hereafter, MD) was established. By this act Armenia began to carry out its diaspora policy at the ministerial level approximately seventeen years after its establishment. Notably, establishment of the MD as a major step has intensified debates and proposals on further institutional arrangements both in Armenia and the diaspora such as National Council, two-chamber parliament, and Foreign Council that would bring Armenia-diaspora relationship to more advanced levels.

The website of the President of the Republic of Armenia at <http://www.president.am/en/diaspora/> (latest access 09.01.2014), as well as “The Concept on Development of the Armenia-Diaspora Partnership” that will be explored below state establishment of the MD is a step forward to the creation of a National Council that would be composed of officials from Armenia and Karabakh, representatives of diaspora organizations, prominent individuals, and clergymen under the President of Armenia. This council is supposed to intensify cooperation between Armenia and diaspora on “issues of international concern, as well as clarify the national and state priorities, steer the activities of state bodies in the necessary direction and secure the cooperation between the bodies”¹⁸³.

On 30 January 2011, at a meeting with the Armenian community in Los Angeles Minister Hakopyan declared President Sargsyan’s will to create a two chamber parliament that would allow diaspora Armenians to serve as representatives and be part of the Armenian legislature. She explained “in assessing the issue, the president of Armenia has come to the conclusion, and is making suggestions, that yes, certain changes within the governing structure of Armenia are needed to allow Diaspora Armenians to be part of Armenia’s government” and added,

183 In a TV program on 24 May 2009 that connected Yerevan, Moscow, and California and hosted Minister Hakopyan, businesspeople, media people and academicians from Armenia, Russia and the USA, Hakopyan introduced the idea of the "National Council" and stated that Ara Abramyan, the Russia-based wealthy businessperson, “had agreed to slow down the development of the World Armenian Congress and would work with the ministry to establish the national council, which would be chaired by the president of Armenia” (Lima 2009). The World Armenian Congress was established by Abrahamyan in 2003 in Moscow as an umbrella organization that brings together Armenian organizations in the former Soviet republics and Eastern Europe. However, diaspora organizations in the Western countries did not participate in this umbrella organization.

The first step by the president was the creation of the Ministry of Diaspora, through which substantive policies for Armenia-Diaspora relations were put forth. The second was the establishment of the dual-citizenship institution, and clearly we are taking the third step by creating the upper house through which the Diaspora Armenians will have a voice in the governing of the country and in creating policy (PanArmenian Net, 2011)¹⁸⁴.

The ARF was one of the political actors that endorsed this proposal by reasoning that two chamber parliament would lead diaspora's involvement in "solution of all-Armenian issues", which would eventually strengthen national unity (ArmenPress 2011a). However, others pointed out the legal and practical difficulties of this proposal. Political analyst Alexander Margarov drew attention to Article 64 of the constitution that puts minimum five years long residency requirement to become a member of the parliament and said there are hardly any diasporan who could fulfill this requirement (ArmenPress 2011b). Harut Sassounian, the publisher-editor of "California Courier" daily in the USA and a well-known and outspoken diaspora figure, welcomed the proposal, however, stated it was not enough. He brought forward the idea of a Foreign Council "which will involved(SIC!) only in the issues connected with the Diaspora. The members of the Parliament will be selected from the communities" (Sassounian 2012a). To this end, in May, 2012, at the annual conference of the Armenian Bar Association California, USA, he proposed creation of a "democratically-elected structure that would represent all seven million Armenians in the Diaspora". In his speech, Sassounian stated:

Both the worldwide Hayastan All-Armenian Fund and the U.S.-based United Armenian Fund, consisting of a coalition of multiple Armenian organizations, have carried out large-scale humanitarian work in Armenia and Artsakh, in a coordinated and efficient manner, in the past 20 years.

More recently, a new coalition has been formed in Los Angeles – the United Armenian Council – which is the coordinating body of 34 Armenian organizations.

The Armenian government has also made an effort at unity by establishing the Diaspora Ministry which is supposed to serve as a bridge between Armenians scattered throughout the world and their homeland.

While all of these efforts are worthwhile and contribute greatly to the consolidation of resources and manpower, I find them to be fragmentary and not an optimum modality for unity.

184 Strikingly, in this statement Minister Hakopyan forgets that the dual citizenship legislation was passed in 2007 while the MD was established in 2008.

I would like to propose a framework based on the twin concepts of legitimacy and democracy. It envisages the establishment of a democratically-elected body that would legitimately represent all Armenians throughout the Diaspora, except those in Armenia and Artsakh, who already reside within elected state structures.

Under this proposed scheme, for the first time in Diaspora's history, Armenians around the globe would be able elect their own representatives and leaders, on the basis of one-man, one vote (Sassounian, 2012b)¹⁸⁵.

2.4.1.1 The Mission of the Ministry of Diaspora

The official website of the President of the Republic of Armenia states the following as the duties of the MD.

- 1) Drafting and implementing the policy of the Government of the Republic of Armenia aimed at
 - a) “strengthening of ties between Armenia and the Diaspora”
 - b) “development of cooperation with non-governmental organizations”
 - c) “preservation of Armenian national identity”
 - d) “revelation of potential of the Diaspora”
 - e) “drafting of the repatriation programs and work in other fields reserved for the Ministry under the supervision of the President of Armenia”.
- 2) Drafting and implementing “prospective pan-Armenian programs aimed at developing ties between Armenia and the Diaspora and the rise of the reputation of Armenia and the Armenian people”.
- 3) Contributing “to the implementation of pan-Armenian educational programs and development of public Armenian schools in the Diaspora” to
 - a) “support activities aimed at preservation, protection, development and broadening of national identity, culture and heritage”

185 As to this proposal, pre-registered voters, who are supposed to be Armenians and at least eighteen years would vote via regular mail, email or in person in a given electoral district regardless of their citizenship, country of origin, and religious or political affiliation. For each 20,000 voters one representative would be elected to compose a body consist of 350 elected representatives throughout the diaspora that would claim representativeness of the seven-million Armenians in diaspora. This body would deal with “important all-encompassing issues such as culture, language, religion, education, finance, international affairs, Armenian minority rights, relations with Armenia and Artsakh, the Armenian Genocide, and restitution from Turkey”. This structure would seek to gain “NGO status at the UN and other regional and international organizations, having the right to represent all Armenians in the Diaspora”.

b) “establish and radicalize Armenian national identity among Armenians speaking a different language or those who belong to a different religion”¹⁸⁶

c) “support the repatriation of Armenians of the Diaspora and the pilgrimage of Armenian youth to the Homeland”¹⁸⁷.

4) Supporting “the participation of businessmen of the Diaspora in economic programs of the Republic of Armenia; form a political, economic, cultural, juridical and spiritual environment for the productive participation of the Armenian Diaspora in the solution of national issues and strengthening of Armenian statehood”.

5) Helping “to further organize the Diaspora” and to contribute “to the creation and implementation of activities of pan-Armenian professional committees and unions”

6) Helping to “create and implement processes for Armenians of the Diaspora to acquire dual citizenship”.

7) Contributing “to the formation and development of the pan-Armenian unified information field”

8) Contributing to “unification of the political, economic, intellectual, scientific-educational, cultural-spiritual abilities and efforts of Armenia and the Diaspora aimed at”

a) “international recognition of the Armenian Genocide

b) “peace(SIC!) settlement of the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict”

c) “prevention, revelation and counterinfluence of anti-Armenian propaganda and Armenian history falsifiers.”¹⁸⁸

The Charter of the Ministry of Diaspora issued on 11 September 2008 identifies the same as the goals of the MD, yet, adds the following¹⁸⁹:

1) Full integration of the diaspora Armenians in social, political and economic life of their country of residence.

186 This phrase is another indication of the social engineering tendency of the Armenian state and self-attribution of the status of the legitimate nation builder. Furthermore, it reveals that Armenian language and the Armenian Apostolic Christianity are taken as two of the main pillars of the “correct” Armenian identity. In this way, those who do not speak Armenian language and affiliated with the Armenian Apostolic Church are designated as lesser Armenians. This understanding, however, is a fertile ground for the the creation of first and second class Armenians.

187 Notably, educational concerns ultimately target political objectives. This proves that the Armenian state regards education as an ideological tool rather than a cognitive tool.

188 As such, the unity of Armenia and diaspora is framed as a means for political ends.

189 The Charter can be found at <http://www.mindiaspora.am/en/legislation> (latest access 09.01.2014). As a matter of fact, repetitiveness and circularity is a characteristic of the documents issued by Armenian stateorgans. Moreover, absence of mastery of the English language in translated texts is another general fallacy of these texts.

2) Developing proper means and political, economic, cultural and spiritual environments for the effective participation of the Diaspora for the solution of international and domestic problems of Armenia and diaspora communities.

3) Utilization of the diaspora communities for the promotion of Armenia's inter-state relations.

Problematically, the Charter repeats the same things as the means to these ends. What the Charter adds as means are improvement of the legal basis of the Armenia-diaspora partnership, including right to residence, citizenship, civil relations and communication, and, unintelligibly, implementation of the EU Action plan within the framework of European Neighborhood Program.

The Armenian government approved the “Concept on the Development of Armenia-Diaspora Partnership”¹⁹⁰ (hereafter, the Concept) on 20 August 2009 that defines the principles, objectives, priorities and the expected results of the Armenia-Armenian diaspora cooperation in legal, economic, diplomatic, educational, cultural, informational and organizational fields informed by the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, international treaties, principles of the international law, Armenian laws, the National Security Strategy, and the political programs of the President and government of Armenia¹⁹¹. Akin to other texts, strengthening the homeland, protection of the diaspora communities and Nagorno Karabakh, prevention of assimilation of the diaspora, and recognition of genocide are identified as critical issues that necessitate a new form of Armenia-Armenian diaspora relationship. The Concept determines the absence of unity among diaspora and the misperceptions between AR and diaspora among the main challenges that the Armenians face and designates 1) dual citizenship and improvements in the entry-exit and residency regulations, 2) effective implementation of international legal instruments, 3) legislative, parliamentary and civil society initiatives, and 4) development of Armenian studies as the main instruments to facilitate the new form of Armenia-Armenian diaspora partnership.

Concept in its entirety identifies the diaspora as a pivotal potential for the implementation of the national and international objectives of Armenia. The leading principle of the Concept is the systematic participation of the diaspora in the vital issues of Armenia and the unity of the

190 This document is available at <http://www.mindiaspora.am/en/legislation> (latest access 09.01.2014).

191 Minister Hakopyan claims while composing the Concept, Armenian government consulted hundreds of Diaspora organizations, individuals, Armenian studies centers and over 250 Armenian political and non-governmental organizations (ArmenPress 2009).

Armenian people for the sake of national objectives. The Concept adds, realization of the “united potential” of the diaspora depends on its “spiritual unity”, although the diversity among and within the Armenian diaspora communities is coded as a strength. Three main domains are indicated as the domains, which Armenia-Armenian diaspora cooperation is most relevant. First, in the international politics diaspora is coded as a unique bridge between Armenia and the international community and other states. Moreover, as regards to the solution of the Karabakh conflict and the recognition of the 1915 tragedy as genocide, diaspora is mentioned as a significance actor. Second, in the economic field, active participation of the diaspora businessmen in the economy of Armenia, their functionality in forming bilateral and multilateral relations with other economic actors, and the foreign direct investment are highlighted by the Concept. Lastly, the know-how of the diaspora is specified as an advantage to promote modern knowledge and skills and know-how transfer from abroad. On the same track, the potential human capital of the diaspora is also pointed out. Whereas these are mentioned as the benefits of the Republic of Armenia, the Armenia-Armenian diaspora partnership is argued to be also to the benefit of the Armenians both in Armenia and diaspora, unrecognized de facto Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh.

The Concept groups the key objectives of the Armenia-Armenian diaspora partnership into three groups as Armenia-diaspora related key objectives, Diaspora related key objectives, and Armenian state key objectives, which are demonstrated in the below Table 1.

Armenia-diaspora related Key Objectives	Diaspora related Key Objectives	Armenian statehood related Key Objectives
Preservation and strengthening of the national identity and strengthening <i>hayadardzutyane</i> ¹⁹²	Preservation and development of the Armenian communities in diaspora	Lobbying activities of the diaspora to the advantage of Armenia
Consolidation of the Armenian diaspora communities	Creation of community self-government structures	Strengthening of the Armenian statehood
Full integration of the Armenians in the social, political, cultural and economic life in their countries of residence	Protection of the interests of the Diaspora communities through bilateral relations Armenia and host-countries	Recognition of the Armenian Genocide, peaceful solution of the Karabakh conflict peaceful and just settlement of issues of national importance
Development of Armenian educational institutions	Maintenance, development and transference of the Armenian spirit, national culture and traditions	
Development of regional strategic plans	Organization of distance education systems	
Creation of common information field	Organization of homeland visits	
Creation of networks of professional committees		
Development of repatriation programs and long-term and short-term homeland visits		

Table 1) Objectives of the Armenia-diaspora partnership

2.4.1.2 Projects of the Ministry of Diaspora

Upon such strategic vision, according to the information on its official website the MD pursues certain projects that can be classified under five categories as listed below (Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia 2009-2012a):

- 1) Projects targeting organization of the diaspora communities.
- 2) Projects targeting Armenia-Armenian diaspora cooperation.

192 With respect to the identity, Armenian Apostolic, Catholic and protestant churches, school, political parties and their organizations, and non-partisan benevolent, athletic and cultural organizations, media outlets, and Armenian studies centers are mentioned as the important institutions. The emphasis on the “spiritual life” is a salient emphasis. Another emphasis is the re-conversion of the converted Armenians “with different beliefs” back to the Armenianess. The Concept identifies this as one of the main functions of the Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia.

- 3) Projects targeting to facilitate repatriation and to enforcement dual citizenship.
- 4) Projects aiming at the preservation of the Armenian identity in diaspora
- 5) Projects targeting the consolidation of the material and intellectual assets of Armenia and the Diaspora to pursue political goals such as international recognition of the 1915 events as genocide and resolution of the Karabakh conflict.

In specific, Ministry website announces “Ari Tun” Project, “One Nation, One Culture” Pan-Armenian Festival, and “Consolidation of Potential of the Diaspora” as “the three major projects in 2010 that aimed to strengthen the Armenia-diaspora partnership” (Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia 2009-2012a)¹⁹³. “Ari Tun” Project is a homeland visit program for the diaspora youth between 13 to 20 years. In fact, “Ari Tun” is the most accurate, continuous and long lasting project of the Ministry until the day¹⁹⁴. “One Nation,

193 It is noteworthy that on 11.11.2012, the website of the MD still has not updated its website and mentions the projects of 2010 as its major projects.

194 “Ari Tun” means come home in Armenian.

The Ministry website explains the aim of the “Ari Tun” project as follows:

The aim of the project is to familiarize Diaspora Armenian youth with the Homeland, the sites to see; help them get acquainted with Armenian family customs and traditions by living in the Armenian family and their fellow Armenians; promote the strengthening of national identity among Diaspora Armenian youth, clinging to the roots, reinforcing national awareness, as well as support the unity of Armenia and the Diaspora in the realms of morality, psychology, education and culture and contribute to the repatriation of youth (Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia 2009-2012a).

The Ari Tun website, on the other hand, declares:

The main objectives of the program are: to introduce Diaspora Armenian youth to Armenian history, culture, public life, religion and family traditions; build strong relations with the Homeland; reinforce national self-determination and establish friendly relations between youth of Armenia and the Diaspora (Ari Tun 2011-2014).

Lastly, the application form available at http://aritun.mindiaspora.am/?page_id=16&lang=en (latest access 09.01.2014) opens up with the following introduction:

Dear friend,

We would like to thank you in advance for your wish to participate in “Ari Tun” program. If you visit Armenia and participate in “Ari Tun” program, you will have an opportunity to get acquainted with the *Armenian world history and culture, recognize your homeland, experience local customs and traditions* by living with a host family, spend your leisure activities in summer camp, as well as to attend lessons of Armenology, national music and dance classes.

Armenia’s doors are always open for all our Armenians from Diaspora.

We have done this project in order to help you newly appreciate the spiritual and cultural values of the Homeland and realize your national identity.

THE MINISTRY OF DIASPORA OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

“ARI TUN” PROGRAM COORDINATING COUNCIL (emphasis added).

Frequent references of the Minister Hakopyan to Ari Tun in her speeches and the existence of a separate link to the *Ari Tun* website at <http://aritun.mindiaspora.am/?lang=en&c=> demonstrates the significance of the *Ari Tun* among others. It is also interesting to note that “Ari Tun” is analogous with the Armenia trip programs of the diaspora organization that are examined in Chapter 4 in this study. From that, it can be said that not only the diaspora but also the Armenian state has acknowledged the instrumentality of homeland visits. However, it is also

One Culture” Pan-Armenian Festival is a yearlong series of cultural, educational and professional activities. Finally, “Consolidation of Potential of the Diaspora” refers to organization of pan-Armenian professional forums, creation of associations and the organizing of communities according to professions.

Besides these three major projects, the Ministry website provides the lists of the projects in each year starting from 2009¹⁹⁵ that show gathering more information and knowledge about the Armenian diaspora communities, increasing contacts between Armenia and the diaspora communities¹⁹⁶ and publication of the *Hayern Aysor* electronic daily had been the main directions of the Ministry in 2009. In 2010, educational projects and projects targeting the preservation of the Armenian identity in diaspora had been the major items in Ministry’s agenda. Homage to “Armenian Greats” and benefactors is another direction of the Ministry in 2010. Besides, indefinite projects such as “organizing the “Armenia-Diaspora” theme-based

noteworthy that, the MD with its facilities bigger has not developed a program that is qualitatively different than those organized by NGOs, the facilities of which are quite limited in comparison.

According to the Ari Tun website, between 2009 and 2011 over 1700 Armenian youth from 36 different countries aged between 13 and 20 participated in the two-weeks long project free of charge except the travel expenses from and to the Armenia. The goal for the 2012 is to host over 1000 participants. Participants of the program are offered “visits to major historical-cultural sites in Armenia, concerts, festivals, exhibitions, plays, as well as instruction of Armenian language, literature, dance, history and church traditions”. It is important to note that, one of the pivotal aims of the Ari Tun is to facilitate contacts among the youth from Armenian and abroad that displays the political instrumentalization of the state-organized homeland visits (see, Ari Tun 2011-2014).

195 See, Appendix 12 for the lists of Ministry of Diaspora projects in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012.

196 Conferences and forums are one of the major activities to this end. Until 13.08.2012, the Ministry organized the following conferences and forums.

- 22.04.2012-04 Scientific conference devoted to 500th anniversary of Armenian printing
- 2012-04-20 6th Pan-Armenian Conference of Writers
- 21.02.2012 Conference on “Television and Society”
- 10.12.2011 Religious Sectors of Armenians: Challenges and Opportunities” kicks off
- 15.11.2011 2nd Pan-Armenian Forum of Architects and Construction Engineers
- 14.10.2011 “Golden Ladle” Festival of Armenian Dishes held in Yerevan
- 26.05.2011 International Conference on “Prospects of Diaspora in the Globalizing World”
- 30.04.2011 Forum of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Business Associations of Armenia and the Diaspora
- 12-16.10.2010 The 5th Pan-Armenian Forum of Journalists bu future tense ile verilmiş
- 13.08.2012 de
- 22.09.2010 Two-day reunion of Diaspora Armenian graduates of Armenian state universities
- 06.09.2010 Pan-Armenian Forum of Artists "Art and Business, Art and the Internet"
- 03.07.2010 Scientific workshop on “The State of Teaching Western Armenian in the Diaspora”
- 02.07.2010 “100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide: borderline for establishment of justice” international conference
- 25.04.2010 Scientific workshop on "Issue of Preserving the Features of Armenian Identity in Mixed Marriages"
- 20.04.2010 International Conference "Cultural Genocide"
- 29.10.2009 Euro Caucasian Congress of Cardiology
- 18-21.09.2009 First Pan-Armenian Forum of Lawyers
- 12-14.11. 2008 Conference: “The 1946-1948 Repatriation and its Lessons: The Issue of Repatriation Today”

video-conferences and teleconferences” and “promotion of uniting the nation and repatriation” are also included in the list. Almost half of the 2011 projects are the replicas and/or the continuations of the projects of the former years. Besides, the utterly symbolic and practically hollow projects such as sending RA emblems, i.e., coat-of-arms and flag to Diaspora Armenian institutions and indefinite projects such as “working with Diaspora Armenian communities”, “program for supporting the solution to cultural and educational issues facing Armenian communities in Latin America” and the “program for supporting the integration of Iraqi-Armenians in Armenia” are the new projects of 2011 that are potentially noteworthy. Lastly, establishment of the “Virtual Museum of the Diaspora” is another new project of the year 2011¹⁹⁷. Finally, in 2012, the Ministry did not develop any project that is significantly different from the previous projects.

2.4.1.3 Medals of the Ministry of Diaspora

Another undertaking of the Ministry is the creation of five medals named “RA Ministry of Diaspora Gold Medal”, “William Saroyan Medal”, “Nubar Pasha Medal”, “Komitas Medal” and “Arshil Gorky Medal”¹⁹⁸. The Ministry grants these medals to encourage individuals and organizations to contribute to the development of Armenia-Diaspora partnership and the preservation of the Armenian identity (Medals, 2009-2012). Below, Table 2 presents what specific acts are awarded by these medals.

197 The Virtual Museum of the Diaspora can be visited at <http://www.armdiasporamuseum.com/1-1-Home.html> (latest access 01.09.2014). When the website was launched, it received harsh criticisms for the dramatic deficiencies in this website. For example, one opinion piece in [hetq.am](http://www.hetq.am) on March 15, 2012 with the title “Diaspora Ministry’s Much Heralded Virtual Museum is a Virtual Embarrassment” wrote partially the following:

The website is an embarrassment and should have never been launched in its present state.
I skipped through the English version – atrocious is the first adjective that popped into my disbelieving head. Grammatical mistakes, incorrect place names, poor syntax....where does one begin?
Who conducted the research? Who edited the text? The best one can say is that, in places, the Virtual Museum resembles an adequate copy and past job.
As to factual inaccuracies, well, the list is endless...(Gadarigian 2012a).

For the reply of the editorial board of the Virtual Museum of the Armenian Diaspora to this critique see Gadarigian (2012b).

In fact with such bizarre mistakes and drawbacks, unfortunately, the Virtual Museum of the Diaspora is a typical project of the Ministry of Diaspora.

198 For William Saroyan, Nubar Pasha, Komitas Vardapet and Arshile Gorky, see Appendix 13.

The “RA Ministry of Diaspora Gold Medal	William Saroyan Medal	Nubar Pasha Medal	Komitas Medal	Arshil Gorky Medal
Contribution to Armenia-Diaspora partnership	Contribution to Armenia-Diaspora partnership	Contribution to Armenia-Diaspora partnership	Contribution to Armenia-Diaspora partnership	Contribution to Armenia-Diaspora partnership.
Contribution to strengthening of the relations within Diaspora Armenian communities	Contribution to strengthening of the relations within Diaspora Armenian communities.	“Solving scientific, educational, healthcare, athletic and cultural issues in the Armenian communities”	Disseminating Armenian arts in the Diaspora and prominent achievements in this sphere	Disseminating Armenian arts in the Diaspora and fine arts, painting, sculpture and drawing and prominent achievements in this sphere
Contribution to the preservation of Armenian identity	Dissemination of Armenian culture in the Diaspora and prominent achievements in this sphere	Contribution to preservation of the Armenian identity		
Raising Armenia’s reputation and contributing to acknowledgement of the country through professional activities		Realizing public and benevolent activities in Armenia and the Diaspora		
Implementation of national-public activities				
Achievements in educating and disciplining the young generation of Armenians				

Table 2) Ministry of Diaspora Medals.

As seen in this table, there is an overlap among the specific reasons of the medals. For example, contributing to Armenia-Diaspora partnership is a reason of all the five medals. Likewise, enhancement of the Armenian diaspora communities, achievements in the field of arts, preservation of Armenian identity, and significant involvement in public and benevolent activities in Armenia and the Diaspora are the reasons of different medals. Accordingly, it is not clear which medal is granted for what specific activity. Furthermore, bleak expressions such as “solving scientific, educational, healthcare, athletic and cultural issues in the Armenian communities” is another point that obscures the reasoning behind the medals, as

well as revealing the willy-nilly conduct of the Ministry of Diaspora. Whatsoever, six activity areas can be identified that are rewarded by medals:

- 1) contributing Armenia-Diaspora partnership
- 2) contributing the enhancement of the Armenian diaspora communities
- 3) achievements in the field of arts
- 4) significant involvement in the activities targeting preservation of Armenian identity
- 5) significant involvement in public and benevolent activities in Armenia and the Diaspora
- 6) raising Armenia's reputation and contributing to acknowledgement of the country.

2.4.1.4 Departments and the Divisions of the Ministry of Diaspora

As of 11.11.2012, in addition to administrative units, the Ministry has nine operational departments, names and responsibilities of which are demonstrated in the below Table 3.

Department Name	Responsibilities
Press and Public relations	Implementation of public and media relations.
Information and Telecommunications	Collaboration with mass media outlets. Cooperation between citizens of the Republic of Armenia and non-governmental organizations of the Diaspora. Information flow between Armenia and Diaspora.
Repatriation and Investigations ¹⁹⁹	Researching, development and implementation of repatriation programs . Conducting investigations on the diaspora communities.
Pan-Armenian Programs ²⁰⁰	Coordination and development of Pan-Armenian programs aiming

199 Among the “goals and objectives” of this department developing and implementing “repatriation programs for Armenians speaking a foreign language and with a foreign belief” is stated (see, Department of Repatriation and Investigations, 2009-2012). It is not clear why the emphasis is put on those speaking foreign languages and holding foreign beliefs. After all, this group is logically the group that is the least prone to repatriation. However, it may be the case that rather than actual repatriation, *hayadardzutyun* (spiritual/mental repatriation. Turning back to Armenianness) might have been meant, although this cannot be verified. Besides that, what is meant by “foreign belief” is another question, although, this and similar expressions are often uttered by the Minister Hakopyan and used in Ministry’s publications.

200 In the relevant page it is stated that:

The Department of Pan-Armenian Programs...that coordinates the development of Pan-Armenian programs for the Armenia-Diaspora partnership, contributes to the *radicalization and preservation of national identity* in Armenian communities, as well as implements and oversees the mentioned programs. The objective of the department is to create conditions that promote the Armenia-Diaspora partnership, preservation of the Armenian identity, *spiritual unity of the Armenian people, the creation of an Armenian world* and development of Armenian education, science, culture, economy, *youth and sports* (Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia 2009-2012f).

In the same page, among the “goals and objectives” of the department participating “in the development and implementation of the strategy for Armenian education and discipline and development of culture in the

	Armenia-Armenian diaspora partnership. Preservation of national identity in Armenian communities. Development of a strategy on Armenian education and discipline and its implementation such as developing school curricula and textbooks . Development and coordination of pan-Armenian cultural, sports and youth programs.
Pan-Armenian, International and Church Organizations	Coordination of the collaboration between the Armenian Apostolic Church of the Republic of Armenia and religious organizations of the Diaspora. Investigation and analysis of the religious events taking place in the Diaspora.
Armenian Communities of Europe	Development and implementation of educational, cultural, economic, athletic events, festivals, conferences etc.
Armenian Communities of America	“Protection of national interests, language, culture and educational institutions of the Armenian communities in Europe”.
Armenian Communities of the CIS	Organization of mutual visits, meeting and events for the representatives of Armenian communities of Europe and members of the department.
Armenian Communities of the Near East and Middle East	Assisting the integration of the Armenians in Europe into the social, political and economic life of their host countries. Information gathering about the Armenians in Europe.

Table 3) Departments of the Ministry of Diaspora.

Objectives of the MD departments as they are presented verify that coordination of the Armenia-Armenian diaspora relationship is MD’s main objective. Secondly, organization of the diaspora communities is the accompanying objective and directly related to the claim of “preservation of identity”. Significantly, media appears as an important tool to this end. Utilization of the Armenian Apostolic Church for the political ends is another significant point that has important implications about the polity, philosophy and the practice of the Republic of Armenia. Yet, given that, there are also Protestant and Catholic Armenians the limits and the potential fallacies of the utilization of the Armenian Apostolic Church can be questioned. Besides, considering the ambiguity of the projects, scarce financial and human resources²⁰¹, various problems in the diaspora communities, to what extent the goals of the MD are realistic and achievable is questionable.

Diaspora” and implementation of the “pan-Armenian programs devoted to preservation and development of healthcare and the national gene” are listed. Again, it is open to interpretation what these may refer to. Secondly, the use of the specification “national gene”, which is not an exception within the Armenian statediscourse, and its conjugated usage with “healthcare” strongly implies a mentality of eugenics and racist outlook.

Interestingly, on 29.10.2010, one of the divisions the department was the “Division of Social Issues and Economic Projects”. The responsibility of this division was explained as:

within limits of competence, the division contributes to the implementation of the agreement on “Partnership and Cooperation” signed by the Republic of Armenia and the European Union and the Armenia-European Union plan of actions within the framework of the “New European Neighborhood” program.

This was truly interesting for having no direct relationship with the issues related to diaspora communities, which might be an objective of an office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Anyway, by 12.08.2012, this division is replaced by the Division of Culture, Sports and Youth Programs.

201 The MD website contains the CVs of the minister, deputy ministers, advisors, assistant, press secretary, chief of staff, and heads of the ministry departments and divisions. Accessed on 29.10.2010, these CVs were not written in a standard format and with erroneous English. Furthermore, some CVs contained bizarrely exaggerated information that simply cannot be true. For example, on October 29, 2010, the CV of the Head of

2.5 Summary

The Armenian march towards independence that began by the late 1980s marked the beginning of a new era of the relationship between Armenia and the Armenian diaspora, during which the pre-1991 conduct between the Soviet Armenia and the diaspora has been radically transformed to a new form, at the heart of which, obviously, laid the emergence of the independent Armenian statehood. Complications of the post-soviet state building, as well as the problems of diaspora's adaptation to new circumstances all had their reflections post-independence re-formation of the Armenia-diaspora relationship. As such, the post-independence re-formation of the Armenia-diaspora relationship has been a burdensome process.

The joint declaration of the traditional Armenian diaspora political parties in October 1988 was the first crisis between the Soviet Armenian on the way to independence and the diaspora. With this declaration that met with disappointment and resentment in Armenia, traditional Armenian diaspora political parties proved their at least their incompetence in addressing to the Armenians in Armenia, inattentiveness to their sensitivities, if not their incapacity to comprehend what was really going on the Soviet Union and Soviet Armenia. Approximately two months after the joint declaration, the 1988 earthquake caused a great calamity in Armenia and its effects also reached the diaspora communities. The traditional decades long consolidated communal organizations in the diaspora communities proved incapable to carry out an effective aid campaign mostly for their greater concern for their particular petty interests. This caused an expected discontent among the Armenians in diaspora that prompted the emergence of a new generation of activists soon to become the new generation elite in diaspora, who were relatively impartial to the decades long ideological and political conflicts among the traditional diaspora organizations and more adaptive to new

the Department of Repatriation and Investigations, Armen Yeghiazaryan, who was born in 1977, claims that he is the "author of nearly 40 scientific articles, some analyses and several maps of Armenia's history" (Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia 2009-2012h). Likewise, CV of the head of the Division of Investigation of the same department, Grigor Arshakyan, born in 1982, states, "he is an author of nearly 20 scientific articles and speeches" (Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia 2009-2012i) When checked more than two years later, on November 11, 2012, the same information remains in these two CVs. Besides the claims that cause suspicion about the reliability of the Ministry and the Ministry personals, the fact that the Head of the Division of Relations with Armenian Communities of Western Europe of the Department of Armenian Communities of Europe Natalya Danielyan had studied foreign languages as her major and worked as a French language teacher in public and private middle schools prior to her current position (see Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia 2009-2012j) and that Kamo A. Sargsyan, the Head of the Department of Relations with Pan-Armenian, International and Church Organizations was educated as an engineer and worked as an engineer before he was appointed to his current post (see, Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia 2009-2012k) raise questions on the competence of the personal of the Ministry that hold the key offices.

circumstances. The transformation of the first Karabakh Committee to the second and then the formation of the Armenian National Movement under the leadership of Levon Ter Petrosyan were the concrete steps towards independence that was followed by the Declaration of Independence and the actual independence. Yet, most of the time these steps caused further frictions between the leading cadre in Armenia and the diaspora elite. In the formation and development of these frictions, in addition to the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Karabakh and the consequent difficulties, scarcity of the economic resources, inexperience and unpreparedness of the elite at both sides, different ideological and political perspectives of the leading elite in Armenia and diaspora played a major role. The “New Thinking” formulated by Ter Petrosyan’s cadre maintained that a new interpretation of the Armenian history that rests on factual and emotionally detached analysis of the historical events and realist and pragmatic approach had to inform the policies of the Armenian state. As an extension of this perspective, Ter Petrosyan maintained that Armenia and diaspora should remain separate entities and diaspora should not intervene Armenian politics. According to this view, Armenia-diaspora relationship should be limited with the economic aid of the diaspora. This approach found its practical reflection in the 1995 Constitution that banned dual citizenship. The “New Thinking” was met with opposition within both Armenian and diaspora that found its expression with the advent of the “National Ideology”. The “National Ideology” closely linked to the “Armenian Cause” bears the impact of the post-genocide Armenian hegemonic narrative. It rests on the ideas of struggle for survival, lost lands, retributive justice, united and free Armenia. In opposition to “New Thinking”, proponents of the “National Ideology” maintained that the state borders and citizenship should not be dividing lines among Armenians. They sustained the Armenians constituted a single whole and the Armenian state and the Armenians around the world had mutual rights and responsibilities vis-à-vis each other.

The electoral victory of Robert Kocharyan in 1998 also meant the victory of the “National Ideology” over the “New Thinking” and a new and more constructive stage of Armenia-diaspora relationships. The post-1998 Armenia-diaspora reconciliation gained momentum by legalization of the Armenia-diaspora relationship by the 2005 and 2007 constitutional and legal amendments. By the establishment of the Ministry of Diaspora in 2008, Armenia-diaspora relationship entered in a new stage of formalization and institutionalization. Today, both in Armenia and diaspora different proposals are put forward to strengthen the institutional connections between Armenia and diaspora.

CHAPTER 3

THE MAKING OF ARMENIA IN THE ARMENIAN STATE DISCOURSE

As explained in Chapter 1, this dissertation addresses the discursive construction of Armenia within the Armenian trans-state communicative space. To achieve this objective it focuses on three sets of discourse, namely, the discourse of the Armenian state, the discourses of the U.S.A based new-generation diaspora organizations, and the discourses of Armenian diasporic individuals who participate in the homeland trips organized by these organizations. In this chapter, the discourse of the State of the Republic of Armenia is analyzed by exploring the discourses of the *Hayern Aysor*, official electronic daily published by the Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia; Hranush Hakopyan, the Minister of Diaspora; and Serzh Sargsyan, the third president of Armenia.

The Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia began publishing the *Hayern Aysor* as a four-lingual electronic daily on October 10, 2009 “to contribute to the strengthening of relations between Armenia and the Diaspora through the creation of a general field of information”²⁰². Approximately after twenty-one months, *Hayern Aysor* went through formal and content-wise revisions, which may be interpreted as its passage to maturity as a press organ of the Ministry of Diaspora²⁰³. This dissertation focuses on the content of the English edition of the renewed *Hayern Aysor* until 2012 that is approximately the content of the fourteen months of the renewed *Hayern Aysor*.

The discourse of the Minister Hranush Hakopyan is tracked through the transcriptions of the speeches that she delivered in different occasions such as meetings with the representatives of the diaspora communities and organizations, conferences, forums, and ceremonies in Armenia and abroad that are broadcast in the official website of The Ministry of Diaspora of the

²⁰² *Hayern Aysor* is broadcast in Eastern Armenian, Western Armenian, Russian and English languages. See, <http://en.hayernaysor.am/> (latest access 05.12.2012) for the website of the English edition of *Hayern Aysor*. In the official website of the MD the aim of the *Hayern Aysor* is stated as to “always tell about Diaspora Armenian benefactors and their charities; provide information about Armenians and issues of national significance (issue of the Armenian Genocide, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, etc.) from Russian, Turkish, English and French sources in foreign mass media” (Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia 2009-2012g).

²⁰³ The dates of the very early content of the renewed *Hayern Aysor* are not specified. The earliest specified date is January 10, 2010, when an interview with the Atom Mkhitarian, Head of the Pan-Armenian Programs Department of the RA Ministry of Diaspora was published. The electronic archive of the renewed *Hayern Aysor* available in its website starts by October 25, 2010.

Republic of Armenia²⁰⁴. By November 12, 2012 a total of sixty-three speeches that Minister Hakopyan had delivered between July 7, 2008 and August 14, 2012 were available in Armenian language as Word documents with a less than 100 words long abstracts (including the title) in English. The first five speeches were delivered between July 7, 2008 and September 18, 2008 when Hakopyan was the Head of the State Committee on Relations with the Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The rest were delivered by Hakopyan as the Minister of Diaspora. An apparent characteristic of Hakopyan's speeches is their significant likeness in terms of their rhetoric, problematic, thematic and moral message. As such, these speeches are to a very great extent each other's repetitions. For that, in this dissertation only the first thirty-four speeches delivered until 2011 are examined as this analysis proved sufficient to grasp Hakopyan's discourse fully.

The statements and the messages of President Sargsyan are broadcast in the official website of the President of the Republic of Armenia at <http://www.president.am/en/statements-and-messages/> and <http://www.president.am/en/interviews-and-press-conferences/> (latest access 13.06.2014). By November 20, 2012, a total of hundred and nine transcriptions of the statements and messages that President Sargsyan delivered between April 9, 2008 and November 3, 2012 in different occasions in Armenia and abroad were available in English. An important feature of these statements and messages is that on the contrary to the uniformity of Minister Hakopyan's speeches, there is an apparent disparity between Sargsyan's statements and messages that he delivered approximately before and after the last quarter of 2010. Broadly speaking, Armenian state and its policies were the main themes in Sargsyan's statements and messages before the last quarter of 2010. In these texts Sargsyan advocated a rather pluralistic understanding of ethno-national identity and by extension, stressed the imperative of being good citizens of the countries of residence for the diaspora Armenians. A softer rhetoric against Turkey could be detected in these texts, as well. After the last quarter of 2010, however, a primordialist understanding of ethnic identity and an emphasis on the problem of assimilation in the diaspora and security concerns became more noticeable in Sargsyan's statements and messages. This shift was also coupled with a more hawkish rhetoric²⁰⁵. As such, after the last quarter of 2010, President Sargsyan's discourse

204 These speeches are available at http://www.mindiaspora.am/en/Speeches_of_minister (latest access 13.06.2014).

205 The most plausible reason of this shift is the failure of the Armenia-Turkish protocols that were mentioned in Chapter 2. As these protocols caused a great disquiet in diaspora and Armenia, and the Armenian side failed to achieve its objectives, namely, the opening of the land border between Armenia and Turkey and the

approximated the discourse of the Minister Hakopyan in terms of its content and rhetoric. In order to capture this transformation, the first sixty-five statements and messages that the President Sargsyan delivered until 2012 are analyzed²⁰⁶.

In order to reveal the ways in which Armenia is constructed within and by these texts, this chapter tracks themes, concepts, moral claims and the ways in which they are assembled together in the texts. The constructions of the threats, diaspora and Armenian identity are particularly important elements in the construction of Armenia. Therefore, these are also discussed. It is apparent that the three sets of discourse examined in this chapter have different qualities. Therefore, as explained in Chapter 1, analyses of the *Hayern Aysor* and the speeches of the Minister Hakopyan and the statements and messages of the President Sargsyan dictate certain methodological differences. In order to uncover the discourse of the *Hayern Aysor*, through a basic quantitative content analysis, first, what really exists in the *Hayern Aysor* is revealed. The analyses of the speeches, statements and the messages of the Minister Hakop and President Sargsyan, contrarily, did not include quantitative examination of their content, although the formal and rhetorical features of these texts are briefly discussed. As said in Chapter 1, the methodological framework of the Grounded Theory Method guided the analyses.

3.1 The *Hayern Aysor* Electronic Daily

3.1.1 The Old and the Renewed *Hayern Aysor*

A noticeable imperfection of the old website of the *Hayern Aysor* was its low readability because of its poor design and slow internet connection²⁰⁷. The design of the renewed *Hayern Aysor* website is apparently more elegant and has a faster internet speed. Deposition of the old issues in volumes into archives enables retrospective access much effortless. As such, the renewed *Hayern Aysor* is significantly more reader-friendly compared to the old *Hayern Aysor*. However, formal and infrastructural improvements hardly coincide with improvements in the content and the editorial of the electronic daily. The old *Hayern Aysor* had a coverage

establishment of diplomatic relations, it seems that Sargsyan came to the conclusion that instead of being the target of the criticism of diaspora and other political forces in Armenia for the failure of the protocols, it was better to adopt a hawkish rhetoric against Turkey to dissipate the tension.

206 Some of these statements and messages directly address the diaspora. Others do so only indirectly. There are also those, which do not mention diaspora related issues.

207 The slow internet connection of the old *Hayern Aysor* was observed from Ankara and Istanbul in Turkey and Trento in Italy in different times. Each time the *Hayern Aysor* was accessed from one of these three locations the connection speed was significantly slow.

of news, articles, and entertainment that can be grouped under seven categories and twenty-four sections. The renewed *Hayern Aysor* has fewer categories and sections²⁰⁸. Notably, the renewed *Hayern Aysor* does not include the previously existing general knowledge, announcements, children and humor categories. This lessens the diversity and richness of the renewed *Hayern Aysor* compared to its earlier version. The English edition of the old *Hayern Aysor* lacked the necessary mastery of the English language that was evident in the frequent grammatical mistakes and flawed expressions. Secondly, some news were replicated in different dates and under different categories or sections. Lastly, it was not unusual to find several news about the same event, which gave the reader a sense of repetitiveness. In the renewed *Hayern Aysor*, the same incompetency with the English language is still manifest. Likewise, duplication of the news, articles and interviews is still apparent²⁰⁹. As an improvement, editing several news from the same event is not as salient as before. Next, unconventional editorial articles are a feature of the renewed *Hayern Aysor*. Typically, an editorial is an unsigned opinion piece that reflects the perspective of the publication. Many of the editorial articles of the renewed *Hayern Aysor*, however, are signed either by Levon Mutafyan or Lusine Abrahamyan. Some of the editorial articles are simply interviews and biographical pieces, not opinion pieces reflecting on topical social, political or economic matters. Thirdly, some days, more than one editorial articles are published. These atypical features are the solid manifestations of the editorial deficiency of the *Hayern Aysor*. Another noticeable imperfection of the renewed *Hayern Aysor* is the absence of a network of professional correspondents and reporters. Until 2012, a total of eighteen articles were published in the section of diaspora correspondents by the authors based in the USA, Egypt, Russia, Georgia, Germany, Canada and three unmentioned countries²¹⁰. This causes an unproportionately between the relative numbers of diaspora correspondents from different countries and the distribution of the world-wide Armenian communities, which results in biased representation of different diaspora communities²¹¹. In addition, half of the articles of

208 See, Table 1 and Table 2 in Appendix 14 for the categories and sections of the old and the renewed *Hayern Aysor*.

209 Editorial incompetence may be one of the reasons of this fallacy. The other reason may be the intention to inflate the volume of the *Hayern Aysor* to give an impression of an inclusive daily.

210 See, Table 3 in Appendix 14. Three articles without information of the countries of residence of their authors is another example of the haphazard editorial of the *Hayern Aysor*.

211 As Table 3 in Appendix 14 demonstrates, whereas almost 44.4% diaspora-correspondent articles come from the USA, there are just one or no article of correspondents from other countries that host sizable Armenian community. Similarly, whereas 54.9% of the fifty-one reprinted articles were reprinted from the Armenia-based journals and the rest from journals published in USA, Lebanon, Turkey and France, there are no reprinted articles from Russian, Georgian, Iranian, Uzbek journals. See, Appendix 3 for the estimated country-wise population of the world-wide Armenian communities.

the USA-based correspondents belong to Harut Sassounian, who is a known outspoken person contributing to major Armenian journals in the USA²¹². This, in addition to the bias with respect to the unbalanced representation of different diaspora communities, results the in over-representation of certain ideological sections of a single diaspora community. The Egypt-based correspondent is a former participant of the School for Diaspora Armenian Journalists organized by the Ministry of Diaspora, who contributed to the *Hayern Aysor* with her articles on July 14, 2011, July 15, 2011 and August 18, 2011, the first of which was her impressions of the School for Diaspora Armenian Journalists²¹³. From that, it can be seen that the Egypt-based correspondent is an “accidental” reporter. This demonstrates that not all the diaspora correspondents are professionals. The absence of a functioning network of correspondents is also evident from the fact that all the interviews broadcast in *Hayern Aysor* were conducted in Armenia. This basic fact is the reason of another weakness of the *Hayern Aysor* in terms of its inclusiveness in terms of representing not only those sections of the diaspora with little or no connection with Armenia but also who do not have opportunity to visit Armenia.

3.1.2 The Subject-wise and Country-wise Content of the *Hayern Aysor*

As Table 2 in Appendix 14 demonstrates the content of the renewed *Hayern Aysor* is grouped into four categories, namely, persons, news, articles and interviews. The persons category is composed of biographical articles about the renowned persons. News are predominantly composed of community events such as conferences, art or book exhibitions, religious and commemorative events in remembrance of the genocide, Sumgait events, and the Armenian Independence Day celebrations. Next, mutual visits between Armenian state officials, foreign state officials and the prominent members of the diaspora communities, and Ministry of

212 Sassounian has been the publisher of the English-language Armenian weekly *The California Courier* since 1983. Importantly, most of Sassounian’s articles are rigid critics of Turkey. This rigidity, however, renders his articles unthoughtful commentaries, which often approximate hate speech. In fact, Sassounian is an ideal typical Armenian nationalist public figure in the Weberian sense, who takes the Turk and Turkey as the ultimate and eternal enemy and build her/his carrier on quasi-intellectual quarrel with this enemy.

213 The School for Diaspora Armenian Journalists is a program of the Ministry of Diaspora that seeks to “train journalists working for Armenian mass media in the Diaspora and journalists recommended by the Armenian communities who are preparing to work for any mass media outlet of the given community”. The program includes lectures on “Armenian-Turkish Relations: Current Stage”, “Armenian-Azerbaijani Relations” and “Genocide Studies” that aim to provide the trainees with “theoretical and practical knowledge: on these topic “from well-known and highly experienced journalists of Armenia and the Diaspora, state and public figures”. In addition, the program also seeks to acquaint the trainees with “the key issues of Armenia’s domestic and foreign policies” (Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia 2009-2012e). As this official introduction reveals, this program seeks to indoctrinate the prospective journalists and educate them as the spoke persons of the Armenian state, rather than providing the trainees with professional training.

Diaspora programs constitute the second largest group of the *Hayern Aysor* news²¹⁴. Articles in the *Hayern Aysor* are predominantly biographical pieces about the lives and the careers of the passed away and contemporary Armenians in Armenia and diaspora mainly in the field of arts and literature. Homeland impressions of diaspora Armenians constitute the second largest group in the articles category. Finally, articles on Turkey, together with articles on diaspora communities constitute the third largest group. Yet, Turkey, genocide and Azerbaijan related articles together constitute the largest group²¹⁵. Notably, a romantic approach and exaggerated rhetoric are apparent features of these articles. This, however, results in provocative, yet uncritical, unrealistic, rhetorical texts and mediocre and dull narratives. Interviews published in the *Hayern Aysor* can be grouped into two. A hundred and six interviews with diasporans form one group. These interviews are framed around the issues related to identity preservation, Armenian language, culture and schools, mix-marriages, and assimilation, in addition to conditions of the diaspora communities and the communal events, Armenia and diaspora relations, homeland perceptions of the diaspora Armenians and Armenian politics, and finally the lives and the careers of the interviewees. Interviews clustered under Ministry of Diaspora, Armenia, Repatriates, and Renowned People sections constitute the other group²¹⁶. Lives and careers of the interviewees and Armenia-diaspora relations are respectively the two most frequently mentioned subjects in these interviews. Overall, community events, lives and careers of the people, Armenia and Armenia-diaspora relations, diaspora and identity preservation in diaspora, and the Turk are repeatedly raised subjects in *Hayern Aysor*.

According to imprecise official statistics of the Republic of Armenia, approximately one third of the worldwide Armenian population lives within the borders of Armenia. As stated by rough and unverified information, Russia hosts a quarter, the USA around 15%, France around 5%, Georgia 2.5% to 6 %, and Ukraine between 1% to 2.5% of the global Armenian

214 See, Table 4 in Appendix 14 for the number and percentage of the news with respect to sections of the news category.

215 See, Table 5 in Appendix 14 for the number and percentage of the articles with respect to their subjects. Note that, many items categorized as articles are in fact interviews. This is another verification of the absence of editorial class.

As mentioned in footnote 39, the post-genocide hegemonic Armenian political discourse typically do not distinguish Turkish and Azerbaijani identities. Rather, these two are the constituents of the Turk, the ultimate and eternal enemy of the Armenian.

216 As regards to the second group of interviews, between October 1, 2010, when the first interview in the renewed *Hayern Aysor* website was published, and December 31, 2011, a total of 71 interviews, 11 of which were replicas of each other, were published. See, Table 6 in Appendix 14 for number and percentage of these 71 interviews with respect to their subject matters.

population. Argentina, Iran, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Lebanon and Syria host around 1% of the worldwide Armenian population each²¹⁷. Analysis of the origin and the subject of the news in the *Hayern Aysor* demonstrates that Armenia related news comprise the majority. Next, Armenian communities in the USA, Turkey, Russia, France, Georgia, Lebanon, Ukraine and Argentina, respectively, receive the highest attention²¹⁸. As regards to the articles, Turkey is the most commonly referred country followed by Georgia, Russia, Syria, and the USA²¹⁹. Finally, diasporans from Russia, France, Australia, the USA, Syria, Ukraine and Turkey are the most frequent interviewees of the *Hayern Aysor* interviewers²²⁰. Overall, there is a loose proportionality between the worldwide distribution of the Armenian communities and the country-wise coverage of the *Hayern Aysor*., although Turkey is over represented, a fact that can be explained by the particular image of the Turk and Turkey in the Armenian collective psyche and the political instrumentalization of the Turk in the Armenian ethno-national construction.

To sum, amateurish and haphazard editorial of the *Hayern Aysor* reflects the ambivalent approach of the Ministry of Diaspora, hence the Republic of Armenia, to the diaspora. Second, unproportional representation of Armenia and diaspora communities, which results in over and under representation of different communities hardly coheres with the proposed aim of creating a common informational field to enhance communication among Armenia and the diaspora communities. Third, what can be labeled as Armenia-centeredness and Turk-centeredness are distinguishable patterns in the *Hayern Aysor*. Fourth, Armenia and Armenia-diaspora relations, identity preservation in diaspora, and the Turk are the main political contents of the *Hayern Aysor*. In fact, these three are the main elements through which the imperative of the construction extra-territorial Armenian ethno-nation is propagated within the following frame: At the face of the danger of assimilation and cultural extinction (the topic of diaspora and identity preservation) and the threats coming from the foe and the consequent danger of physical annihilation (the topic of the Turk) Armenians should get united around Armenia (the topic Armenia and Armenia-diaspora relations). In the rest of this

217 There are frequent criticisms claiming that the statistics broadcasted by the Armenian establishment tend to show the population of Armenia more than it actually is in order to hide away the problem of emigration. The unofficial opinion is that population of Armenia is somewhere around two million. See, Appendix 3 for the rough estimates of country-wise population of the Armenian communities around the world.

218 See, Table 7 in Appendix 14.

219 See, Table 8 in Appendix 14.

220 See, Table 9 in Appendix 14.

section, these points will be detailed by the help of paradigmatic examples from *Hayern Aysor* coverage.

3.1.3 The Discourse of the *Hayern Aysor*

3.1.3.1 *The Turk*

Hayern Aysor's unproportional coverage of Turkey-Turk related issues needs explanation beyond approximately the seventy thousand Turkish-Armenians and another ten to fifteen thousand illegal Armenian workers in Turkey (see, Ozcan 2010)²²¹. Rather, it is the unproportionally vast space that the Turk occupies in the Armenian collective psyche as the ultimate other and the polar opposite of the Armenian that conditions *Hayern Aysor*'s coverage of Turkey-Turk related issues. Furthermore, political instrumentalization of the Turk by the Armenian elite to achieve unity among Armenians has to be acknowledged in order to understand *Hayern Aysor*'s broadcasting policy. Thirdly, positioning the Armenian and the Turk within a framework of Manichaeic duality, *Hayern Aysor* utilizes the Turk as the constitutive other of the Armenian. That is also one of the reasons of the significantly derogative characteristics attributed to the Turk.

First and foremost, the main characteristic of the Turk within the *Hayern Aysor* is being the ultimate other of the Armenian upon the alleged perpetual enmity between the two. One of the striking displays of this is the editorial article on August 26, 2011 that reflects the impressions of Veronica-Artur Haroyan, a thirteen years old Bulgarian-Armenian girl, a gymnast and a

221 The current Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, in January 2010 at a press conference with the then Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Gordon Brown in London referring to the Armenian lobby that seeks the recognition of the 1915 events as genocide stated "there are one-hundred and seventy thousand Armenians in Turkey. One-hundred thousand of them are citizens of Armenia and work illegally. Then, if it goes like that what will I do? If necessary, I will tell to that one-hundred thousand "come on! Back to your country"" (Yusufoglu 2010). The Turkish Daily Hurriyet columnist Gila Benmayor in her column on 19 February 2010 wrote in 2000 the then Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller mentioned thirty-thousand Armenian migrants. In 2005, the then Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullah Gul (the recent President of Turkey) claimed around forty-thousand Armenians, and in 2007 the then MP Yasar Yakis uttered the number seventy-thousand (Benmayor 2010). What lies behind these statements is Turkish policy to use the possibility of the deportation of the illegal Armenian workers as an asset to put pressure on Armenia as the above mentioned speech of Erdogan clearly demonstrates. That is why Turkish ruling elite tend to exaggerate the number of Armenians in Turkey. What is notable regarding this tactic, however, is the fact that Turkey is also a migrant-sending country particularly to Western European countries, which is one of the implicit issues between Turkey and the EU.

participant of the Ari Tun program²²². The last paragraph of this article reads as the follows²²³:

Veronica says she can rejoice over her prizes and achievements and dream that she will not only live in Armenia, but also perform under the Armenian flag.

“I have participated in numerous international tournaments, but *the most important tournament for me was the one in Turkey where I was able to win a Turk. To be honest, I didn't want to go, but my grandmother told me to go and win.* How could I have rejected my grandmother's request? I went and scored the gold and bronze medals. When I grow up and become stronger, I will definitely perform under the Armenian flag and score many medals.” (Abrahamyan 2011a, emphasis added).

Given that Turkey does not have a high reputation in gymnastics, the pride of this thirteen-year old girl is hardly one of winning a vigorous opponent. Haroyan's initial reluctance and her grandmother's encouragement indicates that for her going to Turkey for a tournament was much more than simply attending a sports competition. What is left as the explanation of Haroyan's inner-conflict is what the Turk signifies to her. Obviously, to this young girl the Turk signifies the ultimate enemy.

Two basic characteristics attributed to the Turk as the ultimate other and the existential enemy of the Armenian are being the genocidal victimizer and the uncivilized oriental nomad. Reproduction of the post-genocide hegemonic Armenian historiography and the engineered social memory is the essential tool of the *Hayern Aysor* to construct the Turk “as the “genocidal victimizer”. Editorial articles on March 10, 2011 and July 11, 2011 are the paradigmatic examples of the use of historiography to this end. The first editorial article quotes an article titled “Karabakh and Turkey's genocidal attempts” written by the director of the Armenian Genocide Institute Museum Hayk Demoyan that elaborates the Turkish policy on Karabakh. An excerpt from this article states the following:

At least three times in history Turkey has tried to commit genocidal acts while striving to implement the policy of total extermination and deportation of the Armenian population from Karabakh, director of the Armenian Genocide Institute Museum Hayk Demoyan writes in his article titled “Karabakh and Turkey's genocidal attempts.”

222 See, footnote 194 for the Ari Tun Program.

223 In the *Hayern Aysor*, there are many other examples of construction of the Turk as the enemy that could be quoted. However, this quote is important for demonstrating a thirteen-year old kid's perception of the Turk, which reveals the importance of socialization in the perpetuation of the ethno-national stereotypes.

Triple genocidal attempts and defeats of Turkey in Karabakh from the local Armenians must have a clear message to Ankara: *Turkey must recognize the Genocide committed against Armenians and many other nations in the 'Pax Ottomanica'* since, the rewriting of the history is necessary to make 'zero problem' with its own history and memory since Realpolitik is not a solution *for the country's current national identity crisis.*

For Turkey there are not other alternatives” (Demoyan 2011).

In this text, Demoyan, holding a Ph.D. from the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Armenian National Academy of Sciences, refers to Pax-Ottomanica that signifies the 16th and 17th centuries when the Ottoman Empire was at the height of its power and established economic and social stability in its territories. Unconventionally, however, Demoyan extends the Pax-Ottomanica to the early 20th century when the Ottoman Empire had already lost its might and eventually collapsed, and places the 1915 events within this era. Demoyan mentions the “defeats of Turkey in Karabakh”, which is a groundless argument for the simple fact that Turkey never attempt at a military operation in Karabakh. Hazy and chimerical arguments such as attempts of Turkey to “commit genocidal acts” “at least three times in history” and the genocides to “many other nations in the ‘Pax Ottomanica’” are unjustified arguments that need to be proven by scholarly research. Lastly, the propagandist nature of Demoyan’s proposal cannot go unnoticed.

The second editorial article on July 11, 2011 quotes a long excerpt from the work of Samson Karyan with the following introduction:

Doctor of historical sciences, Professor Samson Karyan has released a work entitled “Nakhijevan”, which presents the history of this ancient Armenian region, *particularly the atrocities of the Turks and the Azerbaijanis* (Hayern Aysor 2011b, emphasis added).

The final part of this article states:

Whatever happened in *Armenian-Azerbaijani relations*, the first blow would go to Nakhijevan, and that is what happened during the *Armenian-Turkish clashes* in 1905.

The same things happened in Baku-the same clashes between police officers and Turk(SIC!) leaders, the same armed assaults, the same attacks by the Turks, the same theft and losses. For three days, from 12 May to 15 May 1905, the massacres, fires, robberies and destruction of churches were taking place in front of the authorities...All of the Armenians’ belongings were confiscated, and only 4 out of the 182 Armenian churches were saved from destruction.

The same violent acts took place in Nakhijevan.

Dozens of homes were set on fire and 400 Armenians died in Nakhijevan city. This was all headed by the leaders of Nakhijevan.

The fire spread from Nakhijevan to Sharur-Daralagyaz, Zangezur, Karabakh and other provinces. In the small provinces, where there were less Armenians, there were more atrocities,” as stated in essays on the history (emphasis added).

In this article, similar to the previous one, partial, purposeful, unspecified and substandard narration of historical events based on a particular focus on “the atrocities of the Turks and the Azerbaijanis” and the blunt arguments about the repetition of the same events results in an only a benighted and amateurish narrative²²⁴. However, it is this kind of indelicate and unscholarly replicas of the post-genocide hegemonic Armenian historiography through which already crystallized stereotypes, fears and hatred are kept alive. By reproducing narratives of this sort, *Hayern Aysor* consolidates the post-genocide hegemonic image of the Turk²²⁵.

224 What Karyan names as Armenian-Turkish clashes in 1905 is commonly named as The Armenian–Tatar or Armeno-Tatar war by the scholarly community to refer to inter-ethnic clashes between Armenians and Azerbaijanis between 1905-1907, although the latter naming is also problematic for the fact that Tatars are a separate Turkic ethnic group located in Eurasia region. The result of the clashes was around three-hundred Armenian and Azeri villages destroyed and a total of three thousand to ten thousand lost souls at both sides. As mentioned, it is quite a typical phenomenon in the Armenian world to employ the nouns Azerbaijani, Turk, Turkish interchangeably. However, it is striking that a doctor of history does so, too, in an allegedly scholarly work.

225 The quotes below are two other striking examples of the historiography of the same sort that is hardly based on carefully studied and verified facts and that includes exaggerations, over-generalizations, and politically-loaded and libelous expressions. In the first quote, the author oddly argues Turks invaded Iran to eliminate the Iranian-Armenians. Besides, the sophism of this argument, history did not record any Turkish invasion of Iran in 1917, at all. The second quote argues that the Ottoman Sultan Abdulhamid II. appealed to Afghan and Iranian rulers to deport Armenians by citing “unknown sources”. The grotesque argument that needs explanation, however, is the reason of the Ottoman Sultan to worry for the well-being of the Afghan state. Secondly, explanation is needed as to why the Afghan ruler would fulfill the request of the Ottoman ruler.

Since ancient times, the Armenians who settled in Persian Hayk, that is, Khoy and the surrounding areas, have lived in good, peaceful conditions along with the neighboring Persians and have preserved their national image (SIC!), faith and customs. The book features the customs and rituals of the Persian-Armenian community. In 1917, the Turkish yataghan(SIC!) interrupted the good and peaceful life as the *Turkish assassins took advantage of the weakness of the Persian state, invaded Iran with the obsession of eliminating the Armenians and massacred the Armenians of Khoy*” (Safaryan 2011)

In 1897, Emir Abdul Rahman issued a decree on deporting all Armenians from the country. The Armenians moved to northern India (M. Setian, *Armenians in India*). Then, it was known that Emir had fulfilled Turkish dictator, Sultan Hamid’s(SIC!) desire to deport the Armenians for being unloyal subjects.

Hamid had also appealed to the Persian Shah with the same request, but the Shah hadn’t paid heed to that. In his book “*Armenians in India*”, *citing an unknown source*, M. Setian informs

Interviews are another instrument of the construction of the “evil Turk”, in which, formulation and wording of the interview questions play a major role. As mentioned above, low professionalism of the *Hayern Aysor* team is a verity that also reveals itself with the biased questions that direct interviewees to a certain direction. However, biased interviews are hardly a result only of professional incompetency. Rather, it can be seen that *Hayern Aysor* correspondents often conduct purposeful interviews. For example, they direct certain questions to their interviewees from Muslim countries that interrogate potential problems and discriminatory policies that they possibly face, something which is not noticeable in the interviews that they conduct with Armenians from Christian countries. Likewise, for instance, in an interview published on August 10, 2011, the correspondent asks the interviewee the relations of the Armenians with other peoples in Germany, however, by specifically pointing out the Turkish community. Obviously, what could be a neutral question, that is, the relations of the Armenians with the other ethno-national groups, takes a very biased character with the specific emphasis on the Turk²²⁶. Besides, some interviews directly refer to the “evil Turk”. The interview conducted with the Armenian-born Netherlands-based painter Serob Darbinyan, in which Darbinyan answers the questions with a passionate nationalist spirit, which, however, leans him towards repeating the typical expressions, images and views that eventually renders the interview an average romantic expression of the love of homeland is a model example of interviews of this kind. Upon, a question on the relations of Armenians in the Netherlands with other peoples, Darbinyan replies as follows:

There are nearly 17 million nationalities in Holland, including Armenians, Russians, Jews, Turks and others...Armenians don't make up a huge percentage. *There are a lot of Turks and, as always, that presents a danger...*They have tried to disturb my exhibitions and damage my paintings several times...It is difficult (Avagyan 2011b, emphasis added)²²⁷.

that the Armenians who moved to northern India had taken a large collection of very old manuscripts from Kabul” (Hayern Aysor 2011a, emphasis added).

Besides, the quotes from “scholarly” works, political analyses and opinion pieces are also functional tools in the construction of the “evil Turk”. In this regard, Harut Sassounian’s (see, footnote 211) articles deserve a particular attention. For an example of such articles, see the reprinted article from Armenian-French *Nouvelles d’Arménie* at <http://en.hayernaysor.am/1306840540> (latest access 13.12.2012).

226 Another striking point is that the interviewer asks about the relations of Armenians with the Turks as two groups, instead of the personal relations of the interviewee with the individual Turks. This reveals the use of the ethno-national categories in meaning-making processes.

227 By nationalities, Darbinyan means the population of the Netherlands that is estimated as 16.832.975 by 09.01.2014 (Statistics Netherlands 2014). This is another evidence of the absence of mastery of English language by the *Hayern Aysor* editorial team.

Certainly, statements of this sort that proximate hate speech bring about the difficult question of journalistic ethics on the limits of noninterference, censorship and so on, yet, it can be seen that *Hayern Aysor* does not see anything wrong in broadcasting this kind of statements. Consequently, *Hayern Aysor* helps the consolidation of the image of the Turk as the genocidal victimizer. The imperative of ethno-national unity is claimed upon this image.

In addition to the customary image of the Turk as the genocidal victimizer, *Hayern Aysor* reproduces the image of the Turk as the uncivilized oriental nomad, which is less yet still a salient theme of the post-genocide hegemonic Armenian narrative. Turk as the uncivilized oriental nomad is instrumental for the political passions of the Armenian state for the fact that identification of the Turk as the nomad is used to imply the foreignness of the Turk on the land where she lives. By extension, it is used to indicate the Turkish usurpation of this land from its real owner; the Armenian²²⁸. By framing the matter as such through the foreign vs. native dichotomy, leverage is sought to further the propaganda of “Turkish occupation of the Armenian lands”, the rightful ownership of the land, and the return of the land to Armenia. As such, reproduction of this image serves the political passions of the Armenian state. Secondly, underlining the nomadism and oriental nature of the Turk, her cultural inferiority vis-à-vis the millenniums long settled Armenians sets the ground of the construction of the Armenian as a superior person.

As a typical expression of the oriental nature of the Turk, editorial article on March 9, 2011 on the elections in Turkey states:

The ability of Turkey to fog the truth is known for long, since the times of the Ottoman Empire. One may even say that nothing has changed for over 600 years, except the look of Turkey - from a gown with a hookah to a business suit from the best designers” (Hayern Aysor 2011c).

Through utilizing the clichéd oriental images and symbols such as gown and hookah, this paragraph tells the reader that the Turk may change skin but the flesh remains the same. Notably, this is an expression of the hegemonic perception of the Turk in Armenian society that finds its terms with the popular Armenian idiom “a Turk is a Turk”²²⁹. Importantly, this

228 Notably, the claim of the ownership of the land, besides other things, denies the historical existence of non-Armenian ethnies such as Georgians and Kurds on the land that is claimed.

229 “Dirty Turk”, “as heavy as the dead body of a Turk”, “looking at someone like the Turk looks at a pig”, “even Turk would not do what you are doing”, “as cruel as a Turk” are the other idioms of this sort in the

claim is used to argue further that the Turk does not belong to the Western world, which in the Armenian lexicon means the civilized world. Within this frame, *Hayern Aysor* occasionally publishes articles and opinion pieces that address the Turkey and the EU relations always insisting the impossibility of Turkey's accession to the EU such as the editorial article on March 19, 2011 quoted below²³⁰.

In order to recognize the Armenian Genocide, Turkey has to reconcile herself to the 700-year-old history of its own, this being *what no one can get from Turkey*. There is nothing new in this. Even Europe knows about it and, perhaps, this is why France and Germany are so resolute in the issue of Turkey's non-acceptance into the EU (Hayern Aysor 2011d, emphasis added).

The important point is that, with claims of this kind, *Hayern Aysor* not simply propagates for the isolation of the Turk from the “civilized world”, but also alleges the western identity and belonging of Armenia and Armenians as the polar opposite of the Turk²³¹. However, doing that *Hayern Aysor* traps itself into a dull and proto-racist orientalist discourse that not only humiliates the Turk, but also the entire “orient”, which, indeed, geographically and historically, Armenia is a part of as a demonstration of the socio-political schizophrenia of the Armenian elite. Lastly, despite the multiple examples of articles and interviews that assert the genocidal, uncivilized, oriental nature of the Turk, however, an important nuance also exists in some of the content of the *Hayern Aysor*; sections of the Turkish civil society, which recognize the 1915 events as genocide, seek to inform the Turkish society about these events, and urge the Turkish state to officially recognize the Armenian Genocide are identified as the “good Turks”, revealing the centrality of this event as a cognitive meaning making category.

Armenian language. An interesting Armenian idiom is “Turk is nothing but his words are golden”, which, unlike the usual, can be interpreted as implying the wisdom of the Turk.

230 Another article on October 13, 2011 similarly argues: “During his term as president, Sarkozy led a clear-cut policy and did everything possible to not let Turkey join the European Union and put the future of this part of the world at risk” (Mutafyan 2011a, emphasis added). One of the striking points in the idea expressed in this quote is the ethnocentrism that perceives the self-related issues as the issues of others, as well. Such ethnocentrism, however, is one of the main causes of the null political analyses. On the other hand, by placing the genocide debate within the framework of universal human rights, Armenian elite seeks the sympathy of the non-Armenians. Furthermore, by this way Armenian elite aims to draw a line between the civilized humanity and the savage Turk, and consequently designate the Turk as the enemy of the entire humanity.

231 See, the *Hayern Aysor* article on November 11, 2010 at <http://en.hayernaysor.am/Raffi-Hovhannisyan> (latest access 08.06.2012). In this article emphasis on the atrocities of the “Muslim Turks” against the “Christian Armenians” and Christian groups that reproduces the orientalist and culturalist categories is used as another means to prove the Western identity of the Armenians.

3.1.3.2 The Diaspora

By and large, *Hayern Aysor* reproduces the hegemonic perception of diaspora as an economic, political, and social asset by highlighting its role in providing financial support and investment to Armenia, lobbying in the parliaments of the foreign states and supra-national organizations, and introducing Armenian culture to non-Armenians. In addition, also parallel to the hegemonic discourse, *Hayern Aysor* habitually underlines the “threat of assimilation” as a distasteful but inevitable reality of the diasporic existence that eventually leads to the ethno-national extinction. Notably, instead of designating assimilation as an innate social reality, *Hayern Aysor* speaks of it quite emotively with words like “pain”.

Hayern Aysor highlights two modes of assimilation; 1) cultural assimilation and 2) genetic assimilation. Adopting the cultural traits of the country of residence, forgetting or disusing the Armenian language, leaving off the Armenian Church are denoted as the symptoms of cultural assimilation. Losing racial purity particularly through mix-marriages is considered as genetic assimilation. As an effect, *Hayern Aysor* frequently reflects on the evils of mix-marriage and the role of women in identity preservation and ethno-national survival. Importantly, genetic assimilation is often presented as the first step towards cultural assimilation. This is, in fact, an expression of associating culture with race, hence the imagination of the Armenian ethno-nation as a denoted racial community.

Upon these quasi-sociological arguments, diasporic existence is identified as a state of disconnection with the ethno-national roots and existential foreignness²³². In fact, this attribute constitutes the ground of identification of Armenia with Armenianness and of the claim of the imperative of having strong ties with Armenia. Framing the matter as such sets the ground of the claim of the imperative of repatriation.

An interesting and salient characteristic of the interviews with diasporans is the apologist statements of the interviewees. These apologist statements can be grouped into two as those that bring up daily/practical difficulties of the life in diaspora and those that imply rather the existential incompleteness of the diasporic life. Notably, whereas daily/practical difficulties of

232 Among many examples, see the interview with Jasmin Dum Tragut, the Head of the Department for Armenian Studies at Mayr-Melnhof Institute for Eastern-Christian Studies of Austria at <http://en.hayernaysor.am/1306589988> (latest access 13.12.2012) for a replication of this understanding by an academician.

the life in diaspora such as adaptation problems in a new country are mentioned principally by the post-1991 emigrants, existential incompleteness of the diasporic life is mostly referred to by the members of the old diaspora. First group typically remark that not everything is great in the countries they live in and highlight the “need to survive” and marriage with foreigners as the reasons of the reluctant emigration from Armenia²³³. On the other hand, a sense of non-belonging to the country of residence is the main point of the claims of the second group²³⁴.

Hypothetically, a kind of psychological defense mechanism conditions these apologetic comments. As to the post-1991 emigrants, claiming hardship in foreign countries is arguably a way to relieve the feeling of guilt of leaving the homeland for a better life that is conditioned by the dominant nationalist discourse in Armenia. As to the members of the old diaspora, a desire to prove the ethno-national belonging seems to be the main drive behind such claims. Yet, at the final analysis both types of apologetic comments are instrumental for the Armenian elite that hope to create a bright image of Armenia and facilitate a sense of attachment to Armenia. As such, these comments are instrumental to strengthen the hegemonic association between Armenia and Armenianness. The cumulative effect of these is the emergence of a hierarchy between Armenia as the homeland and the diaspora as an “incomplete sphere of life”.

3.1.3.3 Armenianness

Giyom Perie’s article on the self-discovery of the “Islamized Armenians”²³⁵ that was published in the French *Le Monde* magazine and reprinted in *Hayern Aysor* on June 4, 2011

233 Notably, apologist claims of this sort are also the indirect reflections of the widespread conviction among the Armenian youth about the better living conditions in other countries that motivates them to search for ways to emigrate to Western countries.

234 The diary of sixteen years-old Lebanese-Armenian Georg Asadurian published in Armenian-Lebanese *Aztag Daily* and reprinted in *Hayern Aysor* on October 20, 2011 quoted below is one of the examples of the *Hayern Aysor* content that gives this message.

I am 16 years old. I was born in the United States, but I currently live in Lebanon. I am a dual citizen, but have one homeland, and that is Armenia. It is irreplaceable. The homeland is like a parent-you only have one. . .

The members of our group looked so beautiful in their white shirts with the “Ari Tun” logo on them. Our mothers often tell us “Ari Tun” (Come home), but only here is where I understoodo (SIC!) that the real home is the homeland, the safest corner, better yet, a familiar place for all of us no matter what happens.

Come home because another’s home can never be yours (Asadurian 2011).

235 Publication of Fethiye Cetin’s book *Anneannem* (My Grandmother) in 2004 is the milestone of the recent popularization of the “Islamized Armenians” as both a popular and an academic topic in the Armenian world. Ruben Melkonyan, a well-known and outspoken professor in the Department of Turkology at the Yerevan State

that states partially the following is a paradigmatic article that reveals *Hayern Aysor*'s conceptualization of Armenian identity.

Yildiz Onen is an activist of the association of human rights defenders and he agreed to testify.

Onen was born in Derik of the Kurdish region located in Eastern Turkey. The woman says she was raised as a Kurd. Her grandmother was the daughter of a wealthy Armenian merchant and survived the Armenian Genocide with one of her sons. Thousands of Armenian girls will tell you the same story. Onen was kidnapped by the Kurds, married and converted. Yildiz Onen says she was born as a result of that. The grandmother raised two sons-one with Armenian traditions and the other as a Kurd. The Muslim Conservative(SIC!) father never had an Armenian brother and only after Hrant Dink's assassination did he start thinking that he should be feeling Armenian (Perie 2011).

Besides the preposterous expressions in this essay²³⁶, the critical point is the claim that after the assassination of Hrant Dink²³⁷, the "Kurdish son" awakened to the Armenianness of his

University is arguably the most important name in Armenia whose recent research focuses on, in his terminology, the crypto and Islamized Armenians. Melkonyan, during an interview with the author of this dissertation on July 30, 2011 identified himself as a strict Armenian nationalist and said he is a sympathizer of the ruling party Republican Party of Armenia. In fact, Melkonyan is a typical example of the Armenian state-linked organic intelligentsia that perceives itself as a buckler of the Armenian Cause. As such, his research, besides its repetitiveness, that is, publishing on the same topic almost always with the same arguments constitutes an example of the merge of the ideology and scholarly research those results in the instrumentalization and serious weakness of the latter. For the online articles of Melkonyan in English, see the webpage of the Noravank Foundation at <http://www.noravank.am/eng/> (latest access 09.01.2014). Noravank Foundation was founded in 2000 "by the decision of the RA government and according to its Charter the incumbent prime-minister is the Head of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation"(Noravank Foundation n.d.). As such, Noravank Foundation is a state-linked research institute, rather than an independent think-tank. Another name who studies the "Islamized Armenians" is the French sociologist and journalist, Laurence Ritter, wife of an Armenian photographer Max Svazlian, who lives in Yerevan and supervises the Caucasus Institute Journalism Department. In 2012, she published a book on "Islamized Armenians" in French titled *Les Restes de l'épée : Les Arméniens Cachés et Islamisés de Turquie*. For an interview with Ritter on her book published in Turkish-Armenian weekly AGOS see, Gasparyan (2012).

236 First, in Turkey there is no organization called "Association of Human Rights Defenders". Most probably, the article refers to the "Human Rights Association" or the "Human Rights Foundation of Turkey" (for the websites of these organizations see, <http://www.ihd.org.tr/english/> and <http://www.tihv.org.tr/index.php?english-1>, latest access 09.01.2014). Second, referring to Yildiz Onen as "he" then as "woman" raises serious doubts about the integrity of the article. Although, in Turkish there are some unisex names such as Armagan (Gift), Bilge (Wise), Deniz (Sea), Yildiz (Star) is an obvious female name that no one who is familiar with Turkish would confuse with a male name. Third, in Turkey, law on surnames was passed only in 1934 and before this date, people were identified by their own names and the names of their father or family epithets. Arguing, "Onen was kidnapped by the Kurds" confuses the reader whether the article refers to Yildiz Onen or her grandmother. Fourth, the statement that "the grandmother raised two sons-one with Armenian traditions and the other as a Kurd" is entirely a delusive argument for it was simply impossible for the grandmother to raise one of her son's with Armenian traditions in a Kurdish family. Fifth, the last sentence is not understandable, but can just be interpreted. It seems that Yildiz Onen's father is the "Kurdish son" of her grandmother. The allegation that the "Kurdish son" "never had an Armenian brother" probably means that he did not know his mother was Armenian

mother, and hence his own, and began to think “he should be feeling Armenian”. Besides the question how one feels Armenian, this plot gives the message that it is an imperative “to feel Armenian” even if the person is culturally non-Armenian. Statements like “you cannot live without your culture” or the imperative to learn Armenian, “people recognize you through your nation. The life a person lives is a reflection of his nation” and mystified expressions like “unbreakable and invincible spirit of the Armenian people” or the claim of “God-given” characteristics of the Armenian nation such as diligence, creativity, habit of hard working, courage, patience, hopefulness are discursive means that are used to impose such an imperative²³⁸. Besides, *Hayern Aysor* frames ethnic identity as a natural and innate trait and attributes genetic and racial features supremacy in the identification of the individuals. This becomes the background of the idea that Armenianness is the foundation of the selves of the Armenian individuals and the most natural defining aspect of their personalities²³⁹ as another reason of the imperative to attach oneself to Armenianness. Consequently, assimilation is framed as the loss of personality that renders one a lesser individual. This constitutes the ground of the cliché that Armenians shall clinch to their Armenian identity.

and his brother was the “Armenian son”. This, however, refutes the previous claim that one of the two brothers was raised as an Armenian. As such, this article is also a paradigmatic example of the disappointingly oblivious editorial of the *Hayern Aysor*.

237 Hrant Dink (1954-2007) was a Turkish-Armenian columnist and the editor-in-chief of the bilingual Turkish-Armenian weekly *Agos*. He was gunned down on 19 January 2007 in Istanbul by Oğün Samast, who was then seventeen years old. The assassination of Dink caused a major reaction in the Turkish society. On 23 January 2007, around a hundred-thousand people marched at the funeral of Dink carrying banners in Armenian, English and Turkish writing “We are all Hrant, We are all Armenians” that particularly caused disquietude among the nationalist circles. The funeral of Dink was recorded as one of the biggest public demonstrations in the history of the Republic of Turkey. Following his assassination, numerous commemorative events were organized in Istanbul, other cities in Turkey and abroad. In May 2007, Hrant Dink Foundation was established by his family and friends. Hrant Dink was the most well-known and beloved Turkish-Armenian public figure in Turkey in the recent years for his advocacy of the Armenian-Turkish friendship and criticism of both Armenian and Turkish nationalisms. For that, however, he was also coded as a traitor by both Armenian and Turkish nationalists. Yet, after his assassination Armenian nationalists began identifying him as an Armenian hero and the 1.500.001st Armenian martyred in reference to the alleged 1.500.000 souls that were annihilated during the 1915 events. See, footnote 11 for a note on the number of the casualties of the 1915 tragedy.

238 Notably, this kind of statements result in an over-arrogant representation of the “talents” of the Armenians. This arrogance can reach a level that even the present day problems in Armenia and diaspora are explained by the “Armenian people’s perfection”.

239 Conceptualization of the ethno-national identity as natural and innate to the individual is also the background of the construction of the Turk as an essential enemy of the Armenian. Moreover, this conceptualization sets the ground of the association of race and culture, and cultural and genetic assimilation mentioned above. Note that, Yildiz Onen’s father is half-Armenian-half-Kurdish. However, he thinks he shall be feeling Armenian, not Kurdish, which needs explanation. “Feeling Armenian” is one of the clichés mostly uttered by the diaspora Armenians. Arguably, however, this cliché is an unconscious expression of alienation.

The claim of the naturalness of the ethno-national identity is also strengthened by moral claims supported by impulsive arguments and terminology such as “Armenian genes”. For example, editorial article on April 8, 2011 informs the readers about a “round-table discussion on the role of Armenian women in the Diaspora” on “the exceptional role of the Armenian woman in the life of the nation”. This article quotes Minister Hakobyan stating the following in this discussion²⁴⁰:

Phenomenon of the Armenian woman is not yet fully studied, but she definitely is the conservator of *Armenian genes*. Majority of Armenians live in the infinite Diaspora, which endangers Armenian identity, culture and language. In this world of globalization more and more important becomes the role of Armenian woman as a bridge between Armenia and her sons. *It is in the hands of the Armenian woman to help the youth preserve their national identity*. That is why it is so important to unite the non-governmental organizations of diaspora women (Hayern Aysor 2011e, emphasis added).

Naturalistic understanding of ethnic identity correlates with framing Armenian identity as an objectively definable entity, although *Hayern Aysor* represents it also as a subjective self-identification. Speaking the Armenian language, faith in the Armenian Apostolic Church²⁴¹, holding Armenian traditions, participating in the Armenian communal life are frequently mentioned as the elements of Armenianness. Besides, *Hayern Aysor* underlines Armenian language and culture, “notable Armenians” and natural structures such as the Mount Ararat as the symbols of the Armenianness. Yet, over and above, the genocide is designated as the ultimate signifier of Armenianness. For example, Taniel Hakobyan, sculptor and a professor of the Yerevan State Academy of Fine Arts in an interview answers the question “you are the inheritor of a genocide survivor, but in your works it seems as though the topic of Genocide is not reflected. Why not?” as follows:

Yes, one gets the impression that I haven’t touched upon that topic, *which is sacred for Armenians*. However, that is not true. I have several works,

240 *Hayern Aysor* editorial article reports also the speech of Svetlana Poghosyan, holding a PhD in History in this event as follows: “The Armenian woman gives more attention to the growth and upbringing of her family rather than to her own figure and career. Nevertheless, she also manages to play an important role in the social life of her nation”. Importantly, such impulsive arguments are functional for the reproduction of traditional gender roles as a sign of the conservative elements in the construction of the Armenian ethno-national identity.

241 Importantly, identifying faith in the Armenian Apostolic Church as an aspect of Armenian identity disqualifies Catholic and Protestant Armenians as “correct Armenians”. Nevertheless, traditional Christian Churches are granted a certain degree of legitimacy as a consequence of the reluctant acceptance of the irreversibility of an historical fact. This is why the same hesitant tolerance is not granted to non-traditional faiths, but they are coded as threats to Armenian identity. For interviews disclosing these points see, Abrahamyan (2011b) and Avagyan (2011a).

particularly busts that portray Armenian people who underwent suffering and who remember those terrible scenes. I must say that Armenian sculptors are not obliged to emphasize the word “genocide” when selecting their works. *We approach the topic no matter what we sculpt because the topic is inside of us. It is part of our biographies and we can’t free ourselves from it.* Show me just one Armenian family that doesn’t have any connection to the Genocide. Even Armenian families in Eastern Armenia felt the pain of the massacres, and that is why we are linked to our historical fate and everything that happened. *The type of Armenians is so special. It emanates from history and the history is reflected in them* (Mutafyan 2011c, emphasis added).

Similarly, the interview with Antonia Arslan, an Armenian-Italian professor of literature at the University of Padua and the author of the novel *The Lark Farm* (2004) that narrates the Armenian Genocide allegedly based on her family’s story, published on May 03, 2011 is another example of the emphasis on the centrality of genocide in the making of the Armenian identity. In this interview Arslan states:

We Armenians are everywhere outside the homeland and each of us has a story to tell about our ancestors who survived the genocide. We have a painful past and it is not by chance that whenever we want to say something nice to each other, we say “tsavt tanem” (let me take your pain). We have always felt that pain and share it with the world (Asbarez 2011b).

In the latter parts of the interview Arslan says “I represent the third generation of my family. I wanted to share the pain by telling about the life of my family, people, events and situations that people understand”. The crucial point in these words is that Arslan starts her family history from 1915. As such, she designates 1915 as the Hegelian moment of *Aufhebung* where a history finished and another history started. This reveals the omnipotent significance of the genocide in the self-perception of the Armenians. As the genocide is given the pivotal place in the construction of the Armenia identity, it also becomes the outer-face of the latter²⁴².

242 In this interview Arslan also states:

I am happy that people know about Armenians and their history in Italy, which has an Armenian population of 2,000. The book made Armenians respected and honored in Italy. Sometimes people with typical Italian names such as Giuseppe Rossi approach me and ask, ‘Perhaps I am Armenian because I feel that way’. I used to be naïve and say ‘Probably not’ and laughed. Now I say, ‘Read all possible sources about Armenians and perhaps you will find your roots.

Likewise, Serob Darbinyan quoted above states “the Dutch love the Armenians. They are well aware of the entire history of the 1915 Armenian Genocide. The Dutch are very kind, sensitive people. They can share your concerns and pain and even extend a helping hand in case of need” (Avagyan 2011b).

3.1.4 *Hayern Aysor*'s Conceptualization of Armenia

Taken as a whole, two conjoined but analytically diverse conceptualizations of Armenia can be abstracted from the content of the *Hayern Aysor*. First, the *Hayern Aysor* content that is written with a realistic and critical outlook attentive to economic problems, corruption, practical absence of rule of law, emigration, low level of professionalism and limited socio-economic opportunities represents Armenia as a tangible country with its ups and downs. This realistic and critical outlook coincides with a sense of optimism as a moral imperative and the further moral claim of the duty to assist Armenia. As such, this approach, instead of leading to disillusionment and a consequent disaffection with Armenia, encourages ethnic Armenians to bolster the progress of Armenia. Overall, the framework that constructs Armenia as a tangible country leads neither to an absolute appreciation of Armenia nor to a complete alienation from Armenia.

Opposite to Armenia as a tangible country, *Hayern Aysor* frames Armenia also as an Olympian conceptual country, in other words, as an idea/ideal, which stands over and beyond the daily concerns, and the good and the evil. This framework attributes Armenia a kind of sacredness to which social, political and economic criteria do not apply. As such, *Hayern Aysor* attaches Armenia a transcendental essence, which, in the words of a repatriate quoted in the editorial article on February 9, 2011 “can't be good or bad” but “the only one” where Armenians should live in. In fact, “being the only one” is the critical adjectival defining Armenia, unveiling of which helps to grasp better the dynamics of the construction of Armenia as a conceptual country, an idea/ideal.

Expressions of learnt nostalgia²⁴³ for an exclusively Armenian social environment in the interviews with diasporans that is crystallized in the cliché “everybody speaks Armenian in Armenia” is one of the factors of the identification of Armenia as the “only one”. Secondly, a sense ownership of the land as the below quote from of an Ari Tun participant Ani Sargsyan demonstrates is another factor of attributing Armenia such a special status.

I am already bored of living in Russia where I don't feel at home. Even though there are many Armenians living in Russia, we feel the need for the air

243 The term nostalgia refers to craving for things, persons or experiences in the past. As such, nostalgia can be defined as longing of the self for her past. However, in the case of the diaspora Armenians the longing is for the past that is not the past of the longing-self. Rather, it is a longing for the past of the ancestors that the longing-self learnt from narratives of different sorts. For that, “learnt nostalgia” is a better term to identify the psychological state of the diaspora Armenians.

and water of the homeland. Armenia is different. *No matter how good it is in a foreign country, it's not yours* (Abrahamyan 2011c, emphasis added).

Thirdly, *Hayern Aysor* entails an organic link between the soil and the Armenians by associating the former directly or indirectly with distant and/or close ancestors²⁴⁴ that forms the basis of the idea of the roots of the Armenians planted in the Armenian land²⁴⁵. This together with the frequently expressed claim of familiarity with Armenia by the diasporans who visit Armenia even for the first time facilitate a sense of belonging that becomes another reason of perceiving Armenia as the “only one”.

An important outcome of the construction of Armenia as an Olympian conceptual country through these lines is to frame Armenia also as an object of desire and longing²⁴⁶ and by extension an object of fantasy and fetish that renders Armenia an untouchable that needs to be conserved from the abusive waves of the outer world. This undertaking leads further to refusal of accommodating the idea that Armenia is a country among the one hundred and ninety-two others as the below quote exemplifies:

Armenia might become a typical country for me in a couple of years, but I try to make sure that doesn't happen. Armenia is sacred for Diaspora Armenians. Many come and leave disappointed. I have also felt disappointment, but have come to the conclusion that Armenia is ours and that the hardships are transient (Abrahamyan 2011d, emphasis added).

244 Editorial article on June 29, 2011 cites Zori Balayan, one of the leaders of the first Karabakh Committee mentioned in Chapter 2, that reflects nicely the supposed relationship between the soil and the ancestors as the follows:

Centuries before the publication of the text in the Bible, Kolofontsi had clearly written the following about life and death: “Everything originated from soil and will eventually turn into soil”. That is why we must constantly claim that we are not only demanding land from the Turks, but the homeland, and that the vandals didn't simply destroy the khachkars, but disrespected the dust on our ancestors that were resting in the land-homeland under those khachkars (Mutafyan 2011b).

245 See, A. Petrosyan (2011) and Avagyan (2011b).

246 For example, Veronica-Artur Haroyan states:

I am happy to be in the homeland. I had been dreaming of this since I was a child. When we were coming to Yerevan, I saw beautiful dreams of Armenia in the plane. When I got off the plane, I was jumping and dancing for joy. It seemed as though my dream was continuing. Never would I have imagined that I would have the chance to visit Armenia. True, I haven't gotten to see Yerevan well enough, but there is no better place than Yerevan for me. I would like to live here, but my parents don't let me. I have heard that my mother would like to speak to my relatives, and I might be able to come and live here (Abrahamyan 2011a).

Framing Armenia through such an idealist perspective sets the ground of the claims of the duties of the Armenians towards Armenia. In an interview published on May 16, 2011, Ara Gochunian, the editor-in-chief of Istanbul-based “Jamanak” daily states:

We are gradually seeing how a person who studied in the homeland returns to his community and applies his knowledge for the preservation of the Armenian language. At the same time, *we consider it our moral duty to pay our tribute to the homeland for the knowledge we have gained* (Abrahamyan 2011e)

In this interview, Gochunian refers to the publication of a book in Armenia that was prepared for publication by “Sevan Dermenjjan”(SIC!)²⁴⁷, a Turkish-Armenian who graduated from the Faculty of Armenian Language and Literature at Yerevan State University, and implies a rather immediate and concrete relationship between the homeland as the basis of the idea of duty, although it is not clear why the duty is not to Yerevan State University but to the “homeland”. The below quote from another interview with a repatriate helps to understand why that is so.

“*Hayern Aysor*”: Are there times when you regret settling in Armenia, Armen?

Armen Minasian: Yes, I sometimes regret. I think it is natural, but that is not the heavy side of the scale.

“*Hayern Aysor*”: How do you feel about the homeland?

A.M.: *I feel that I have a duty...Even if I lived 1,700 years, I wouldn't be able to pay back, just like a son can't pay his parents back. That payback has no borders, weight and size.* (Avagyan 2011c, emphasis added)²⁴⁸.

In this interview, the relationship between Armenia and the Armenians is compared to the relationship between a parent and a child as an extension of the idea of the roots of Armenianness in Armenia. By this way, the idea of an eternal debt of Armenians to Armenia as the mother is developed and duties of Armenians to Armenia is explained accordingly.

3.1.5 Interim Conclusion: The Making of Armenia within the *Hayern Aysor*

Hayern Aysor, the official electronic daily of the Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia is projected to help the creation of a communicative space among Armenia and

247 The passport name of this person Sevan Degirmencioglu. Yet, he prefers to replace the Turkish suffix –oglu with Armenian –yan in his social life, hence introduces himself as Sevan Degirmenciyan. Mr. Degirmenciyan had been the Armenian language teacher of the author of this dissertation in 2008.

248 Here, the interviewee refers to the 1700th anniversary of the adoption of Christianity by the Armenian King Trdat, a vassal of Rome, as the state religion in 301AD.

Armenian diaspora communities to foster stronger affinity among the Armenians in the global scale under the aegis of Armenia. As such, *Hayern Aysor* is one of the key projects of the Armenian Republic as an important ideological apparatus. However, its amateurish and haphazard editorial and absence of journalistic class renders this project null.

The Turk, diaspora and Armenian identity are the most prevalent themes in *Hayern Aysor*. The extensive references to the Turk are an expression of the huge space that the Turk occupies in the Armenian collective psyche. Political instrumentalization of the Turk by the Armenian state elite to permanently remind the Armenians of the dangers facing them and impose certain duties accordingly such as ethno-national unity cannot be overlooked, as well. Moreover, the Turk is employed as the constitutive other of the Armenian. This is another instrumental value of the Turk for the Armenian state. Overall, with the two characteristics *Hayern Aysor* attributes to the Turk, namely, the genocidal victimizer and the uncivilized oriental nomad, the Turk is instrumentalized as the main meaning making tool. Conceptualization of the diaspora both as an asset and a stage of cultural and genetic assimilation essentially gives the same message; the threat of extinction. Taken such steady emphasis of the risk of ethno-national extinction together with the identification of Armenianness as natural and innate trait of the Armenians, hence equating loss of identity as the loss of personality demonstrates *Hayern Aysor* tendency to personalize the alleged communal threats, as well. All these point out the intention of the *Hayern Aysor* to implement a threat perception among Armenians particularly in diaspora to persuade them to get united as an ethno-nation around Armenia by conceptualizing Armenia as the ultimate citadel of the Armenianness. In fact, *Hayern Aysor* chiefly conceptualizes Armenia as an Olympian conceptual country as the land of Armenianness. “An exclusively Armenian environment” and roots of the Armenianness planted in the Armenian soil are the two major claims to build this image. Through the identification of Armenia with Armenianness a sense of belonging to Armenia is sought to be created. An important effect of this framework is also the construction of Armenia as a land of desire and longing for the Armenians that attributes the former a kind of sacredness. .

3.2 Minister Hranush Hakopyan's Speeches

3.2.1 Rhetorical and Thematic Characteristic of Hakopyan's Speeches

Hakopyan's speeches are mainly rhetorical oratories that target uplifting the ethno-national souls, rather than concrete, precise, informative, analytical reflections on social, political economic issues. As such, if only one word was needed to define Hakopyan's speeches, this word would be demagoguery. Impulsive statements and concepts derived from the idealist and fascist ideologies such as spirit and idea are some of the main rhetorical elements in those demagogical speeches. Racist expressions like "mixture of blood", "Armenian blood" and "Armenian gene" are also ordinarily used elements in these speeches. Notably, a corollary of the racist expressions is a significant dose of narcissistic self-love. In fact, a proto-racist outlook coupled with a conservative and patriarchal worldview constitutes the ideological basis of Hakopyan's speeches. Exaggerated statements, over-romantic expressions, repetitions and clichés, including quoting the same words of a number of renowned Armenians and few non-Armenians, and a significant concurrence in the problematic, themes, and the moral messages are the other distinguishable characteristics of Hakopyan's speeches. With these features, overall, Hakopyan's speeches can be safely identified as proto-racist, impulsive, rhetorical demagogueries. Lastly, it is noteworthy that Hakopyan often refers to President Sargsyan as the architect of the Armenia's diaspora policy and the Ministry of Diaspora²⁴⁹. This reveals the propagandist character of her speeches in terms of imposition of the concerns of domestic party politics over the alleged pan-national issues²⁵⁰.

3.2.2 The Foundations of Hakopyan's Discourse: Threat Perceptions and Moral Claims

3.2.2.1 Threat Perceptions

Hakopyan's speeches are founded on threat perceptions. Analytically, threat perceptions in Hakopyan's speeches can be classified into two: 1) those as the outcomes of the evaluation of the actuality, and 2) those generated from within the social memory of genocide. However, distinction between the two is not categorical; by reproducing the anxiety-generating social memory of genocide, Hakopyan generates a certain mode of consciousness constantly calling

249 As argued in Chapter 2, President Sargsyan simply sustained and brought to a higher level the diaspora policy that was formulated by his predecessor Robert Kocharyan. Therefore, the credit of being the architect of Armenia's post-1998 diaspora policy belongs to Kocharyan. On the other hand, it has to be acknowledged that establishment of the Ministry of Diaspora and other initiatives detailed in Chapter 2 during Sargsyan's have been truly important inputs.

250 See, Appendix 15 for some exemplary excerpts from Hakopyan's speeches.

to watch out potential threats in the actuality. As such, she provokes the perception of contemporary events as threats, which otherwise would not necessarily be perceived so. In brief, while threat perceptions are the basis of Hakopyan's speeches, social memory of the genocide is the cognitive terrain on which those perceptions are constructed on.

Hakopyan's speech on September 18, 2008 partially quoted below demonstrates the ways in which she relies on the post-genocide hegemonic ethno-national social memory to craft a sense of permanent state of emergency.

Let us recall the thought of great humanist, a devoted friend of the Armenian people Nansen "Armenian history is a history of endless testing, live testing".

The Republic of Armenia, Artsagh, and Diaspora struggle for their existence every day and every hour (Hakopyan 2008h).

Hakopyan's speech at the international conference "100th anniversary of the Armenia genocide: Borderline for establishment of justice" (2010j) is another example of this stratagem²⁵¹. In this speech, Hakopyan reflects on the "pan-national tragedy, the Armenian Genocide 1915-1923"²⁵² and gives a customary account of the 1915 events by specifically emphasizing the demolition of the Armenian historical artifacts that she refers to as "cultural genocide"²⁵³. Utilizing the 1915 as the triangulation point, Hakopyan takes her audience to a journey through the thousand years history. She mentions the "cultural genocide of the Armenian heritage by Selcuk Turks began in 1170, when the nomad tribe in Syunyants Baghaberd castle was partying around bon-fire burning the 10000 Armenian handwritten manuscripts". Then, she moves to 1947 via 1912-1913 and 1988-1989 then back to 1947, when, according to Hakopyan, UNESCO issued a report on the destruction of the Armenian architectural monuments in Turkey since 1923, and again to 1987 when the European Court adopted resolution on the preservation of the Armenian monuments in Turkey. By this virtual

251 See also, Hakopyan (2009g).

252 As a matter of fact, there is a controversy as regards to the exact dates of the "genocide". Whereas some point the World War I as the years of "genocide", the recent trend in the Armenian historiography is to extend "genocide" from 1915 to 1923. What conditions this trend is to form a ground to claim the illegitimacy of the Republic of Turkey that was founded in 1923 after what the Turkish historiography refers as the War of Liberation or War of Independence led by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk following the occupation of the remaining lands of the Ottoman Empire by the Allies. As mentioned in footnote 11, number of the causalities of the "genocide" alleged by the Armenian historians tends to increase in years, too.

253 "Cultural Genocide" is a recently popularized element of the wider genocide discourse, which presents the demolition of the Armenian artifacts in Turkey as one of the decisive steps towards the completion of the genocide by erasing all the traces of the Armenians from the lands that once they were leaving.

journey in time, Hakopyan identifies the Turk as the eternal enemy. In brief, she uses the past as the explanatory of the present through an ahistorical, de-contextual and retrospective narrative that includes a significant dose of dramatization. Upon this ground, she claims further for the present-day threats.

Upon a perpetuated past, Hakopyan adverts present-day threats at the global, regional and the local/domestic levels. As regards to the threats at the global level, on September 18, 2008 at the meeting with heads of Pan-Armenian media outlets, Hakopyan identified international terrorism, armed conflicts, mass weapons, trafficking of drugs and humans, money laundering, environmental disasters, climate change, scarcity of the natural resources, epidemics, inefficiency of management systems, absence of the deepening of democracy, economic and developmental inequalities among the wealthy and poor countries, demographic problems as the contemporary global challenges (see, Hakopyan 2008h). In a speech on October 12, 2010 Hakopyan identified the twenty-first century as a time “full of contradictions” that “difficult conditions of globalization and liberalization, quickly changing world full of various challenges, terrorism, trafficking of humans, earthquakes, climate change, wars, and catastrophes” (Hakopyan 2010a). However, besides the generic issues, according to Hakopyan what makes globalization and liberalization a vital threat for the Armenian ethno-nation is their socio-cultural effects, particularly the encounter, merge and hybridization of the ethno-national cultures, which Hakopyan perceives as the swallow of the “small nations” by the “big nations”²⁵⁴ (see, Hakopyan 2008l). In her words:

On the one hand people enjoy the benefits and boons of the progress, but on the other hand they feel oppressed, naked and defenseless, alienated from *nature, national spirit, identity, and their specific traditions, customs, national culture and Mother language that usually give sense and beauty to life.*

If today altogether we can make our life more developed and interesting through high-tech, then globalization swallows smaller nations erasing their culture (Hakopyan 2010i, emphasis added).

On October 12, 2010, at the opening of the “5th Pan-Armenian Forum of Journalists with the Theme “Challenges of the 21st Century: Information Security and Armenian Journalism”, Hakopyan recalled the “Turkish and Azerbaijani anti-Armenian hysteria” and the need for united struggle against that threat as she drew attention to the struggle over Karabakh. This

254 Notably, the theme of victimhood as one of the major themes of the post-genocide Armenian ethno-national narrative is perceivable in this complain.

speech is one of the examples of Hakopyan's presentation of the regional threats. In general, she stresses the political situation and conflicts in the South Caucasus, "frequent unstable situations in the neighboring countries" (Hakopyan 2010a; see also, Hakopyan 2008g), Karabakh conflict and the continuing threat of war, and closed borders with Azerbaijan and Turkey as threats at the regional level²⁵⁵. Finally, Hakopyan refers to deficits in the democratization and the scant civil society, corruption, problems in the state management and the persistence of the soviet-mode of thinking, and emigration as the local/domestic threats (see, Hakopyan 2010a; 2008k). Different from the previous ones, local/domestic threats occupy a small portion and are mentioned in passing²⁵⁶.

3.2.2.2 Moral Claims

Upon these threat perceptions, Hakopyan formulates moral claims as another pillar of her speeches and one of the main elements that frames the discursive construction of Armenia. Unity and patriotism are the two generic moral claims in Hakopyan's speeches. To begin with the moral claim of unity, the phrase "10million Armenians" is a cliché in Hakopyan's speeches that not only as an expression of a desired end but also the duty of the unity of the ethnic Armenians all around the globe²⁵⁷. Importantly, the unity of the "10 million" is envisioned despite the state-borders and citizenship status. As such, the unity claim refers to an extra-territorial trans-state phenomenon. Hakopyan (2008d) explained this in one of her

255 For the debates on opening of the borders see, footnote 128. In addressing the threats in the regional level, Hakopyan does not reflect on their causes and possible solutions other than the militarist ones. For example, June 26, 2010 Hakopyan stated the following, which also reveals the average agitative nature of her speeches:

Artsakh is struggling for its freedom and security. The warlike enemy continues its wily and conspirator activities, takes up arms not only against Artsakh but against the whole humanity, civilization. However, preserving the Homeland with such price Armenians should protect the holy land with honor and repel the enemy (Hakopyan 2010h).

256 This is likely the effect of the tendency to hide away the controversial issues in Armenia. It is noteworthy that "persistence of the soviet-mode of thinking" is one of the frequently used explanations of the inconsistencies in Armenia. This, together with expressions like the "frequent unstable situations in the neighboring countries", is an example of the habit of blaming the others for the ills in Armenia and the Armenian world. As regards to the unstable situations in the region, it has to be noted that Karabakh is one of the most challenging problems in the region, a party of which is Armenia. The Javakheti issue in Georgia (see, footnote 101) is another issue in the region and again Armenia is a party in this issue. It is also Armenia that has closed borders with two of her four neighbors, namely Azerbaijan and Turkey. Other challenging issues in the region are Ossetia and Abkhazia, the runaway regions of Georgia. In those problems Russia is the chief actor. Importantly, Armenia is the main ally of Russia in the South-Caucasus providing her a military base.

257 For example, Hakopyan calls out to the audience at the meeting with the heads of the pan-Armenian media outlets as "voice of the stable and powerful 10 million" (2008h). In another speech, she states "therefore, it is time to introduce ourselves to the world by the 10-million Armenian voice, speech and action. We are 10 millions! (Hakopyan 2009f). In Hakopyan's speeches, the most commonly used prefix is "pan" and the adjective is "Pan-Armenian". This is an indirect expression of Hakopyan's imposition of unity as a moral duty.

speeches as “the differences are not essential, but just accidental. So, have no solid bases. The separation as a result of geographical distribution must be eliminated. The real thing is the unity by virtue of blood and gene...” (emphasis added). Importantly, de-emphasizing territoriality and citizenship as the principle criteria of the national community, Hakopyan substitutes these with common “blood and gene” as the cement of the extra-territorial unity of the Armenian ethno-nation. This reveals that Hakopyan’s envisioned extra-territorial ethno-national unity is a race-based one.

As said, Hakopyan justifies the moral claims by alleging threats. Parallel to that routine, she justifies the claim of the trans-state unity of the “10 million” by stressing the threats as the below quote exemplifies²⁵⁸.

Armenians of the 21st century are educated, developed, capable and strong individuals. And we have to inspire our generation, our youth the idea that we are not 3-million nation, we are 10 millions and we have to present to the world with the collective image of 10-million nation. In this case I think *our opponent will act more restrained* and this ideology will lead our youth to Armenia, to Homeland (Hakopyan 2008b, emphasis added. See also Hakopyan 2008c).

Taking into consideration the everlasting reflection of the Turk in the hegemonic Armenian narrative as the ultimate and eternal enemy, not surprisingly, the unity of the “10 million” is conditioned by the threat allegedly coming from the Turk. Hakopyan’s speech on July 23, 2008 that is partially quoted below demonstrates this association.

Make investments in Armenia with the purpose to prevent immigration, to tackle poverty, to create new working places and to strengthen Homeland. Support Armenian people to work in Armenia and live dignified life in our Motherland: you can do it! Invest some percents of your capital in Armenia, get your benefits and it will be of a great help to your compatriots. Come back, come back to Homeland where you do not feel pity but you feel pride. If every Armenian feels duty and responsibility towards Homeland, if every

258 Likewise, on March 3, 2009 Hakopyan (2009h) stated:

We must remember that the 21st century Armenian is not anymore the beaten, massacred, poor genocide survivor of the 20th century. Armenians of the 21st century are educated, successful, financially secure and politically strong. From now on, we must present ourselves to the world through the voice, through the words, through the deeds of a 10 million big people. The capabilities of all Armenians must be multiplied and we must always remember that “The world is home to Armenians, and Armenia is the cradle of Armenians.” As our great painter Martiros Saryan once said, Armenians are like a deep-rooted tree the roots of which are in Armenia, while the branches are in different countries of the world and other nations pick up the fruits of those branches.

Armenian in accordance with his capacities supports Homeland our Armenia will become bright and flourishing. Though Turks and Azeris attempt to keep us in isolation and by this influence us in Nagorno Karabagh issue they will not succeed, since they deal not with 3 million Armenia but with 10 million Armenian world (Hakopyan 2008k).

Whereas “blood and gene” are designated as the biological basis of the unity of the “10 million”, patriotism is appointed as the “collective ideology” to bring Armenians together. This approach is manifested in one of Hakopyan’s speeches on August 18, 2008 at the 3rd “One Nation, One Culture” Pan-Armenian Cultural Festival as follows²⁵⁹.

Armenia, Artsagh, Diaspora will jointly build up our future. In this world that day by day becomes smaller we have to remember that there is one Armenian nation, there is one Homeland, one destiny being fed from the same roots, same gene.

We differ from each other but we are united in the aspect of strengthening our Homeland, in the existence, identification and future of our nation and our people.

In this collective ideology has one word- that is patriotism. And you all that have gathered here today are patriots (Hakopyan 2008i).

As a binding ideology, Hakopyan’s identifies two main dictates of patriotism: 1) Preservation of the ethno-national identity and 2) faith and devotion to Armenia.

I am addressing to all glorious officials gathered here, I am addressing to you, dear sisters and brothers, you are the owners and lords of the Armenian hearth; *with your patriotism and traditionalism* numbers of bridges come together and various projects between Armenia and Diaspora take place (Hakopyan 2008g, emphasis added).

In the above quote, Hakopyan relates patriotism and traditionalism. Although from the quote itself it is not clear what exactly Hakopyan means by traditionalism and what kind of an association she makes between the two, from the rest of the speeches it can be understood that by traditionalism, Hakopyan refers to the loyalty to Armenianness that she puts elsewhere as “each Armenian has her/his moral responsibility towards the homeland and Armenianness. This responsibility is contribution; material or her/his time” (Hakopyan 2010h). Likewise, she designates maintaining the Armenian “spirit, kind, identity, language and culture” (Hakopyan

259 Hakopyan’s speeches are full of agitation to this direction. The following quote from one of her speeches she delivered on 02.28.2009 at the Galoyan Seminary in Toronto, Canada is an example of such agitation: “Dear educators, you reveal for the generations the fact that our immortality and national unification and fulfill the moral idea “patriotism is a crown and corona of mission” (Hakopyan 2009i).

2009d) as an obligation of the Armenians. On this track, on September 18, 2008 at the meeting with the heads of pan-Armenian media outlets, Hakopyan stated²⁶⁰:

Armenia-Diaspora relations got new power and impetus after the independence of the Motherland. At all times the all-purpose sense and actual goal of this cooperation has been the idea of preserving national identity, the consolidation of Armenians of Diaspora around all Armenian Motherland and *remaining faithful to Armenian identity and Armenian genes in Diaspora*. The role of Armenian journalists in this high mission is undeniable and priceless (Hakopyan 2008h, emphasis added).

All in all, Hakopyan identifies preservation of the ethno-national identity as a dictate of patriotism. However, Hakopyan extends this message rather to the Armenians in diaspora than the Armenians in Armenia as she conceptualizes diaspora as an asset²⁶¹, which, however is in a state of jeopardy due to assimilation intensified by globalization and liberalization. However, besides the conjectural factors, she designates assimilation also as a permanent and inevitable reality as she identifies diasporic existence with ultimate and existential foreignness by frequently using the cliché “on foreign land, under the foreign sky” when referring to diaspora²⁶². In this way, Hakopyan draws a dramatized picture of the diaspora that is

260 In another speech Hakopyan stated the following. Here the noteworthy point is that Hakopyan designates preservation of identity and ethno-national survival as a kind of revenge.

They destroyed, took away, erased, “They even cut the tongue from the root, but in vain, the tongue remained”, however they did not manage to gain a victory over the people that is endowed with surprising power of the perpetuity and feasibility. The people that was displaced, orphaned, lost its Homeland, and scattered across the world, suffered a lot but took its revenge by continuing to live and create, struggling for its fair trial through civilized means. The survivals of the Eghern that lost their Homeland built up a new world on the Planet Earth, and formed a new Armenian culture based on the system of the national values whose the most important tragic impetus is the Armenian Genocide with its various consequences (Hakopyan 2010g).

261 Hakopyan’s speech that is partially quoted below reveals her perception of diaspora as an asset on solid grounds.

The Armenian-American community is one of the most organized and most functional communities in terms of institutions. It has played an essential role in Armenia, particularly after Armenia’s declaration of independence. We felt the power, unity and patriotism of the Diaspora during the days of the terrible earthquake with the contribution of every individual and every organization. We felt your presence during the war in Karabakh and the years of the energy crisis. As it was stated by the President of the Republic of Armenia “Armenia is one type of a country without a Diaspora and an absolutely different one with the Diaspora (Hakopyan 2009h).

Hakopyan specifically highlights the role of the diaspora in economic and political spheres. In addition, she emphasizes the know-how of the diaspora.

262 See for example the following quotes from Hakopyan’s speeches.

The main Armenian value is in our Armenian essence. Consequently we have to preserve this essence; we have to preserve the Armenian identity that is being melted on the foreign

eventually doomed to extinction by relying on the customary rhetoric of victimhood even when mentioning, for example, the educational opportunities in advanced countries. As shall be discussed below, Hakopyan often utilizes this conceptualization to claim the existential nativeness of Armenia as the homeland.

Hakopyan utilizes the conceptualization of the diasporic existence as one of existential foreignness and diaspora as a state of eventual ethno-national extinction as the basis of a very critical concept of *hayadardzutyun* that refers to turning back to the Armenianness, which Hakopyan explains as follows²⁶³:

However, this conference demonstrates the beginning of repatriation process of Armenian people of new kind and new quality. *First of all, the repatriation of spirit, heart and thought. We call it “Hayadardzutyun” (coming back to Armenian). Hayadardzutyun to its national identity, its root, and its Homeland.*

Armenian people settled in foreign countries before responding to the idea of home-coming to Motherland, to the call of soil, blood, ancestors’ hearth have to recognize and fully realize their national identity, learn the ancestors’ land, national roots, culture and traditions and live spiritual turning; only after these all they can think about physical repatriation.

They have to reconsider their philosophy of life, their perception of meaning of life, happiness, perception of eternity and temporality. Repatriates should be psychologically prepared for the repatriation to Homeland, clearly understand the existing reality and opportunities, willing to face the difficulties in the country, determined to actively participate in the process of developing and strengthening Homeland, with high civil conscience as hundreds of repatriates do that came and settled in Armenia and together with us build up Motherland- Hounanyan, Tufenkyan, Ernekyan, Ralf Yirikyan (Hakopyan 2008a, emphasis added).

lands. We have to take lessons from our complicated and multi-disastered past (Hakopyan 2008h).

Let us glorify all architectures of Diaspora, you dear friends that on foreign land, under the foreign sky continue to remain sucesors of the Armenian spirit and thought, the sucesors of the Armenian architectural heritage (Hakopyan 2009f).

In the foreign land, under the foreign sky you are Ambassadors of the truth and justice, you are Ambassadors of Motherland (Hakopyan 2009b)

263 See also, Hakopyan (2008a; 2008c; 2008d).

Although, in this quote Hakopyan explains *hayadardzutyun* as the preparatory of the physical repatriation, elsewhere she defines *hayadardzutyun* as an alternative to the physical repatriation as the quotes below demonstrate²⁶⁴.

Having 7-million Diaspora it is impossible not to consider the fact of repatriation. *Saying repatriation we do not understand only physical migration, we understand spiritual, heart and thought home-coming.* We believe that meetings, projects, discussions, investments in Armenia is repatriation and we call this phenomenon “Hayadardzutyun” (Come back to Armenian). According to us many and many established Armenians, scientists, specialist left behind their roots, and we have to return these people back to their roots, genes, and Homeland (Hakopyan 2008d, emphasis added)

The third issue is the development and implementation of projects on repatriation. *Saying repatriation we understand not only physical return; saying repatriation first of all we mean return of soul, heart and thought.* We also want to organize a project on repatriation; we have to urge, encourage and bring every Armenian that is far away from his/her roots and history to our community, our family our Homeland; it is obligation of all of us (Hakopyan 2008c, emphasis added).

Overall, the imperative to remain attached to Armenian identity form the basis of the claim of faith and devotion to Armenia as the other dictate of patriotism²⁶⁵. First, by conceptualizing the independent statehood as the concrete evidence and the symbol of the historical victory of

264 From a realist perspective, preservation and consolidation of diaspora is a more reasonable policy than the policy of repatriation, which would mean the demise of an economic and political asset, as well as the possible economic and social problems in Armenia due to the fragility of the Armenian economy and the cultural differences between the repatriates and the natives. In fact, it can be argued that the discourse on physical repatriation is more of a lip service of the Armenian state than a concrete policy.

265 For example, March 03, 2009 Hakopyan (2009h) stated:

Along with other capable Armenian American organizations the Assembly organization has been engaged in lobbying activities for the past 40 years. I would divide those years into two 20 year periods. During the first 20 years, you have fought for restoration of historic truth, that is, recognition of the Armenian Genocide. The following 20 years of activities have coincided with the establishment of an independent Armenia. Armenia’s independence has conveyed new content, new tone and new paths for your activities. Having a free and independent Homeland that our nation dreamed of for centuries is a sense of pride and commitment for you. You spared neither time, nor money, you combined ideas and abilities to support the building of the Homeland and promote our national issues.

Similarly, on September 20, 2010 Hakopyan (2010b) claimed:

I would like to welcome you with warm and love in Motherland. Being here, in our native beloved Armenia is a great pleasure and joy for each of us. I am sure that today, despite the personal and interpersonal feelings that the occasion of this meeting accumulated in our souls the main thing which unit all of us is the endless *love and devotion towards Armenia and Armenian state* (emphasis added).

the Armenian ethno-nation, Hakopyan attributes Armenia the role of the protector of the ethno-nation. On this basis, she urges Armenians to remain loyal to Armenia for their own very physical survival. Secondly, by representing Armenia as the embodiment of Armenianness, she designates the former as the necessary condition of the survival of the latter, as well. By this means, Hakopyan points out Armenia as the necessary entity for the survival of Armenianness both physically and as an identity.

3.2.3 Hakopyan's Conceptualization of Armenia

3.2.3.1 *Armenia as the Victory and the Protector, and the "New Armenian"*

Dear friends,

Let us in the 21st century forget Armenian suffered image and appear in the world with 10 million Armenian voice, saying and action.

We are globalized nation, we will build up our Homeland with the united efforts of 10 million Armenians, and we will have global Armenia.

Let us change our image and appear on behalf of 10 million! (Hakopyan 2008l).

As she does in the above quote, Hakopyan often contrasts the pre and post-1991 eras by identifying the former with victimhood and the latter with victor-hood. Thereby, she decouples the post-1991 "new Armenian", the victor²⁶⁶, from the of the pre-1991 Armenian, the victim, whose ideal-typical image is the post-genocide "starving Armenian". In that, Hakopyan designates independent statehood as the turning point of the Armenian history²⁶⁷.

266 For two examples of associating independence with victory see the following quotes.

You were with us during the destructive earthquake, isolation, energy crises and war over Nagorno Karabagh issue. You were with us celebrating the victory. We are victor- nation, and we have to strengthen this victory in political sense as well" (Hakopyan 2008c).

We have glorious army, army of winners, we have Diaspora scattered across the world backing the Motherland and Armenian hood that will never leave our Motherland in danger. Repatriation of pan-Armenian structures is targeted at strengthening of Homeland (Hakopyan 2010h).

267 As the examples of designating the independent statehood as a turning point in history, see the below quotes.

Our historical wish and VahanTeryan's vision of independent and free Homeland and republic have become reality. Yes, the poet's great prediction (who was also predicting the temporal character of Egyptian pyramids) became true due to the Armenian collective struggle and heroic Spirit glorified in his works since he maintained the Armenian glorious spirit with his patriotic calls (Hakopyan 2008j).

Currently we live an important historical period: our dream has come true; we have free and independent Homeland, the Republic of Armenia (Hakopyan 2009i).

For example, on October 4, 2008 at the meeting with representatives of the Armenian community in Syria, Hakopyan repetitively stated:

We are a winner- nation, and I do not doubt that our third Republic will go to eternity. To us has fallen an exclusive epoch to dispose our fate, to strengthen our free and independent Homeland, to keep and preserve it.
Let us forget about being small, tattered and broken and let us appear to the world with new Armenian image: strong, proud, working, creating, helping each other, respecting each other and being proud of each others success. We will represent ourselves to the world by 10 million Armenian voices, sayings, actions.

Our ordinary denominator is Armenianness; our super numerator is the existence and progress of Armenia (Hakopyan 2008g, emphasis added)

As such, Hakopyan conceptualizes independent statehood both as the symbol of collective struggle, heroism and the eventual victory and as the actual protector of the Armenians²⁶⁸. Consequently, she demands unconditional support of the Armenians to the independent Armenian statehood²⁶⁹.

3.2.3.2 Armenia as the Embodiment of Armenianness

At one occasion, Hakopyan stated “from Armenia I brought the proud and majestic stance of Ararat, billows’ murmur of Sevan, the call of Genocide victims’ souls, and blessing of Holy

We have overcome a long and hard historical path full of losses and achievements. We brought into life our dream: we have free and independent state- the Republic of Armenia. It is time to get united around the Armenian statehood for developing and strengthening it. Science, education and culture are mortar and cement for it- the most standing columns of the “Armenian house” (Hakopyan 2009e).

268 See, Hakopyan’s speech that is partially quoted above.

I have to mention that we are united when there is a pain, when there is a sorrow, while earthquake, war and while promoting 1915 issue. We are obligated to strengthen current Armenia. Poor and weak one is never taken into account. Only strong is taken into account. Accordingly, let us strengthen Armenia. Strong Armenia can settle Nagorno Karabagh issue easier (Hakopyan 2008b).

269 On September 20, 2010 Hakopyan said:

I would like to welcome u with worm and love in Motherland. Being here, in our native beloved Armenia is a great pleasure and joy for each of us. I am sure that today, despite the personal and interpersonal feelings that the occasion of this meeting accumulated in our souls the main thing which unit all of us is the endless love and devotion towards Armenia and Armenian state (Hakopyan 2010b).

Echmiadzin” (Hakopyan 2010h)²⁷⁰ despite the fact that Mount Ararat is in Turkey and the events referred to as genocide occurred in Ottoman-Armenia, not in Russian-Armenia, which is the present-day Armenia. Importantly, this is not a simple mistake. On the contrary, Hakopyan very intentionally connects Mount Ararat, Genocide and other signifiers of Armenianness to Armenia in order to entail a liaison between Armenia and Armenianness. In that way, she does not only seek to consolidate the symbolic relevance of Armenia but also construct Armenia as the epitome of Armenianness²⁷¹. Likewise, Hakopyan employs the mother-child analogy by designating Armenia as the mother and the Armenians in Armenian and diaspora as the children as the below quote exemplifies²⁷² for the same end.

Armenians have sacred symbols such as Motherland, language, Ararat mountain, Echmiadzin, love as a pray towards the Armenian gene. *Homeland gives enormous power to its children*; national political ideas come to life, the ideas of one home, one Homeland and consolidation with Diaspora. Culture is one of the elements that requires consolidation of worldwide spread Armenians. Our culture ties Armenians with their roots; bridges the past, present(SIC!) and future of the Armenian people; our culture is the strong guarantee of Pan-Armenian unity. Culture is the shortest and smoothest way to bring people closer; culture is has strong power, it is an

²⁷⁰ Mount Ararat, Lake Sevan, the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, as well as the Genocide are the popular ethno-national symbols, in addition to few others such as the Armenian alphabet and its creator Mesrop Mashtots, The Battle of Avarayr (Battle of Vartanantz), pomegranate fruit and so on.

²⁷¹ As an example, on September 20, 2010 addressing the diasporic youth studying in Armenia, Hakopyan stated:

All of you while being in Armenia with hundreds of young Armenians from Diaspora more or less managed to recognize the real homeland, traditional Armenian family, the Armenian state and its problems. Returning to your home countries you became the Ambassadors who came from Homeland to Diaspora to spread Armenian National ideas and Armenian identity. Being the base of forming the Armenian National consciousness our habits, moral, psychological and cultural values steel you, contribute to fiery soul of Armenians who resurgent on their native land. Thus, I think you refound yourself, your roots and your nature here. I want to believe that even now while living in far-away, you can support and nourish the fire, the flames of which have never to put out. The Armenian people are centuries-old tree the roots of which are in native land while the branches overloaded by fruits belong to the whole world. I hold this comparison to emphasis once again, that we are one whole, one planet, one tree as it was mentioned and our primary task is to bring back its outstretched branches, the heavy harvest of which symbolize the force, patriotism and spiritual imponderable wealth of our compatriots living in the Diaspora (Hakopyan 2010b).

²⁷² See, also the below excerpts from Hakopyan’s speeches.

The second principal attitude is that Armenia does not belong only to Hayastantsi, it belongs to all Armenians, and thus such issues as development, strengthening and others related to Armenia should be resolved by joint efforts. “First of all currently *Motherland needs the experience and knowledge of its children*. Nowadays we need unity more than ever. We should use our diversity in the language, religious, cultural, political, and ideological spheres; we have to use the Diaspora’s network, capabilities, opportunities and experience in order to strengthen Armenia” (Hakopyan 2009c, emphasis added).

Newly independent Armenia is a Mother for all Armenians and is willing to host and support all its children (Hakopyan 2008a).

army that not destroys but builds up the harmony of ideas and feelings (Hakopyan 2008i, emphasis added).

Application of the mother-child analogy signals also an organic association between Armenia and the Armenians. In fact, Hakopyan implicitly yet regularly underscores the organic ties between Armenia and the Armenians mostly by relying on the close and distant kinship ties. For example on July 23, 2008 at the meeting with the Union of Armenians of the Russian Federation Hakopyan stated:

In Homeland each of you have your own or native hearth, parents, relatives, friends, memories of childhood, sacred remains buried in the soil. For this reason the land is not just land, the country is not just country. The comprehension of this is the perception of Homeland. You should realize the form and value of your responsibilities and duties towards Homeland make out by your own your capabilities in the issue of preservation of Armenian land and spirit. Armenia is a Homeland of all Armenians; and not only those that live in should be devoted to it but also all those Armenians that are spread across the world (Hakopyan 2008k).

In this quote, Hakopyan implies an organic link between the Armenians and Armenia not only via kinship and friendship ties but also via the “sacred remains buried in the soil”. By this way, a genetic/organic link is claimed both between Armenia and the post-1991 emigrants and also between the former and the old diaspora²⁷³. Moreover, particularly through the emphasis on the “sacred remains buried in the soil”, Hakopyan attributes Armenia a kind of sacredness. This sacredness helps to frame Armenia as a source of Armenian *élan vital*²⁷⁴.

273 Hakopyan relates the Armenian homeland, Armenian cultural heritage, Armenian identity and the Armenian genes. This, in fact, reveals the second consequence of establishing genetic/organic ties with Armenia: ascribing the Armenian culture a genetic/organic nature. Such a genetic/organic understanding of culture, however, obscures acknowledgment that culture is a dynamic phenomenon that changes true time consequent to the interactions of different people and also the transformation of the socio-economic infra-structure and defines an unchanging authentic Armenian culture and identity.

See also the below quote from Hakopyan’s speech on November 23, 2008 for the talk on the roots.

I would like to remember here the words of our great painter Martiros Saryan “Armenians are like a deep-rooted tree the roots of which are in Armenia, while the branches are in different countries of the world and other nations pick up the fruits of those branches”. That is true, being in various countries, in various communities we see, realize and feel that Armenians wherever they live they construct, develop, establish themselves, and along with being among the best citizens of a certain country they remain faithful to their roots and Homeland (Hakopyan 2008c).

²⁷⁴ See for instance the following quotes from different speeches of Minister Hakopyan.

I am sure the energy of Biblical Ararat and Armenian soil, air and spirit of our Homeland should give you new impetus and power for your humanitarian vital activities by maximum strengthening your difficult but thankful mission (Hakopyan 2009a).

You came home, came to your Motherland, and your country. You are welcome here!

In addition to the symbolic and real value of Armenia, the alleged organic ties between Armenians and Armenia become another pretext of the claim of duties of Armenians to Armenia by the transubstantiation of the averred duties to the ancestors to the duties to Armenia. Interestingly, as the basis of the duties to ancestors, and by extension to Armenia, both the victimhood and the triumph of the ancestors are accentuated by Hakopyan. In other words, Hakopyan stresses the current generations' debt to ancestors by stressing both the sacrifices of the ancestors in troubled times for the survival of the Armenian ethno-nation and their labor to bring glories as the below quote demonstrates.

The Republic of Armenia, Artsagh, and Diaspora struggle for their existence every day and every hour. The nation that takes its roots from ancient times, that is the 1700-year bearer of Christian values, whose writ and literature take root from the 5th century; Mesropyan genius light has accompanied us for centuries, it never becomes old and rusted vice versa it is crystallized and purified. Soon we will celebrate the 500th anniversary of the first Armenian published book, and the 215th anniversary of the first edition of «Azdarar». And we, *the bearers of this huge cultural heritage have duty towards our Motherland, future generations and Diaspora.*

Armenia-Diaspora relations got new power and impetus after the independence of the Motherland. At all times the all-purpose sense and actual goal of this cooperation has been the idea of preserving national identity, the consolidation of Armenians of Diaspora around all *Armenian Motherland and remaining faithful to Armenian identity and Armenian genes* in Diaspora. The role of Armenian journalists in this high mission is undeniable and priceless.

I am sure these days will be unforgettable in your life. You will get power from Armenian soil, water, sun and you will take warmness and light from here to your communities, to your educational institutions, your families and you will enflame the Armenian fire that always has to accompany you like inextinguishable pharos (Hakopyan 2010f).

Dear compatriots

Masters of a word,

With love and warmness I am welcoming this already traditional Pan-Armenian Writers' Conference that is implemented for the 5th time; this year it is conducted in the framework "One Nation, One Culture" Festival. I am sure that the successors of the Armenian literature scattered across the world will get new creative charges, ideas, feelings in the Motherland and this will bring to the new positive impetuses in development of the Armenian literature.

As famous Charets said:

"Song takes birth from a country

Not from sounds or words".

No doubt, Armenian literature has been a citadel of the people and basis of Spiritual Armenia (Hakopyan 2010g).

I am sure you will take energy and motivation from soil, water and sun of the Motherland for new victories (Hakopyan 2010e).

What do we have today? *We have free and independent Homeland that our grandfathers were dreaming of for centuries long*; Homeland that passed a hard and startling period of earthquake, war, ups and downs of democracy. We have Artsagh issue, the warlike threats are constantly proclaimed by the president of Azerbaijan every day (Hakopyan 2008h, emphasis added).

Last but not least, Hakopyan in various ways implies that each Armenian “that achieved any success first of all is obligated to his/her blood, gene, and Armenianhood” (Hakopyan 2008d). By defining the very Armenianness of the Armenian individuals as the decisive factor of their success, she claims latter’s permanent fidelity to the former. All these coming together, Armenia as the embodiment of Armenianness is conceptualized as the entity that merits the highest loyalty of the Armenians.

3.2.3.3 Armenia as the Organizer of the Diaspora and the Builder of the Extra-territorial Armenian Ethno-nation

One of the pertinent messages of Hakopyan is that only a “powerful homeland” can help the organization of the diaspora communities on solid grounds and to create “Spiritual Armenia”; the unity of Armenia, Karabakh and the diaspora to pursue pan-national goals. As such, Hakopyan ascribes Armenia the duty to organize the diaspora communities and assigns it as the main factor of the trans-state ethno-national unity²⁷⁵. However, according to Hakopyan, the prerequisite of a powerful homeland is the powerful Armenian state. Moreover, only a powerful Armenian state can consolidate the diaspora communities on safer grounds, achieve unity and be the engine of the realization of the pan-national objectives. Therefore, she claims every Armenian, despite her citizenship, has to take on the responsibility of consolidating the Armenian state²⁷⁶.

275 On July 23, 2008, in her address to Armenian-Russian at the meeting with the Union of Armenians of the Russian Federation, Hakopyan stated the following as an example of this point.

Nowadays admiring your achievements, your willingness to get unified and strengthen Homeland, I would like to underline that I value a lot the role of your community and I consider it as keystone of Armenia-Diaspora cooperation. The settlement of your community’s problems is in paramount importance in the aspect of developing Armenia-Diaspora cooperation. Therefore I think the advancement of Homeland is very important for the Armenian community in Russian Federation in the aspect of proper self-organization and occupation its proud place and role in pan-Armenian structure (Hakopyan 2008k).

276 Hakopyan expresses this idea as follows:

In the conditions of global challenges we are well aware that the strengthening and improvement of Armenian statehood is firstly conditioned by the joint Diaspora’s capabilities. However, the contrary is not less important; the main tasks of various institutions and structures of Armenia, in particular newly established Ministry of Diaspora, are the consolidation of Armenians from Diaspora spread across the world, promotion and advancement of Armenian identity, language, culture and preservation of Armenian kind (2008k).

Importantly, the self-appointed duty of Armenia to organize the diaspora has more than merely apparent practical implications. As a corollary of the duty to organize the diaspora, Hakopyan appoints Armenia also the duty to organize communal life in diaspora and bring the Armenians back to Armenianness²⁷⁷, which, in the final analysis, gives Armenia the right to decide and impose the correct way of Armenian life, behavior, thinking and even feeling. For example, at the conference on “Preservation of the Qualities of the Armenian identity in Mixed Marriages” on April 25, 2010 that was mentioned above Hakopyan identifies assimilation as the chief threat that the Armenia face and the mix marriages as the fastest track to this undesired end. Hakopyan alarms against the mix marriages, however with a hint of respect to the decision of the Armenians that choose to marry non-Armenians as she says “however, a life remains a life and feelings win” after stating that “the generation of Genocide survivors could not tolerate the phenomenon of mix marriages of their children and attempted to hamper it by various means”²⁷⁸. As such, assigning Armenia the duty and the right to organize the diaspora communities signals totalitarian tendencies as Hakopyan sees no problem in making public speeches as a state official on the private lives of the individuals.

3.2.4 Interim Conclusion: The Making of Armenian within Minister Hakopyan’s Speeches

With their impulsive claims, concepts derived from idealist and fascist philosophy and ideology, proto-racist and conservative outlook, romantic and narcissist self-perception, and exaggerated, repetitive and propagandist rhetoric, Hakopyan’s speeches are not more than political demagogies. The backbone of these speeches is the alleged threats that the Armenian

²⁷⁷ On August 18, 2008, in her speech at the 3rd “One Nation One Culture” Pan-Armenian Cultural Festival, Hakopyan quoted the speech that the President Sargsyan gave in the same festival as follows:

This festival is an event to learn from each other, to take power from each other, to love each other more, *to become more Armenians*. It is a festival where it is not easy to differentiate participants, guests and audience (Hakopyan 2008i, emphasis added).

In another event she stated:

Professional associations will not only find successful Armenians who have forgotten their identity, but also return them to the Armenian community, their roots and deal with repatriation issues. Let us formulate agenda, search for and find Armenians, let us return them to their roots. Let us empower the essence of Armenianhood. We must all be happy for our successes and beware of our mistakes and failures. Our main resource is our competitiveness, Armenians spread around the world, you - the Diaspora, your institutions, Armenians in every corner of the world (Hakopyan 2009h).

²⁷⁸ Interestingly, in this speech Hakopyan uses also biological and militaristic analogies as follows:

The biggest challenge that we face nowadays is the assimilation that engrosses the children of the Armenia people cutting down the branches of our genealogical tree. Each Armenian that realizes his/her national identity is obligated to become a soldier and devotee of the preservation of the Armenian identity at least within his/her family, in particular if his/her second half is the representative of another culture. This issue becomes more imperative if they live not in Armenia but in Diaspora (Hakopyan 2010i).

ethno-nation faces, which are the adjuncts of the post-genocide Armenian ethno-national narrative. As such, a perpetuated anxiety derivative of a perpetuated past that seize the present is the basis of Hakopyan speeches. Threat perceptions sets the appealing ground of the moral claims of trans-state unity of the ethnic Armenians around the globe and patriotism that demand the preservation of the Armenian identity and loyalty to Armenia as the binding ideology of the Armenians.

Upon this background, Hakopyan conceptualizes Armenia as the land of Armenianness by affirming organic links between the two, and by extension, the Armenians. In that, Hakopyan also contrasts the existential foreignness that she attributes to the diaspora and the existential nativeness of Armenia. By that, she envisages Armenia as the last fortress of the Armenian ethno-national identity. Secondly, by contrasting the pre-1991 victimhood and post-1991 victor-hood in which she designates the independent statehood as the triangulation point, Hakopyan highlights the symbolic and actual value of Armenia as the protector of the Armenians. Finally, she attributes Armenia the role of the organizer of the diaspora communities. Doing that, she does not simply refers to institutional issues but the cultural ones as she implies Armenia has the responsibility and right to teach correct Armenianness to the Armenians in diaspora. Doing that, Hakopyan implies that Armenia is the main factor for the Armenian ethno-national unity at the global scale.

3.3 President Serzh Sargsyan's Statements

3.3.1 Securitization of the Armenia-Diaspora Relationship

Similar to the speeches of Minister Hakopyan, President Sargsyan's statements are by and large agitative and hardly analytical pieces that mainly speak to the emotions rather than the intellect of the audience. Repetitions and the use of clichés are also common in these statements. One difference, however, is that Sargsyan's statements are rather short and less rhetorical compared to the speeches of Hakopyan. A significant portion of Sargsyan's statements speak of ordinary and generic historical narrations²⁷⁹.

279 See for example, Sargsyan's address at the meeting with the Armenian-Iranian community on April 14, 2009 for a standard narrative of the Armenia-Iran relations at <http://www.president.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2009/04/14/news-34/> (latest access 09.01.2014). Sargsyan's speech at the meeting with journalists from Diaspora on October 16, 2010 includes an example of the habitual political and historical narration on the "Turkic enemy" (see, S.Sargsyan 2010c). Lastly, see Sargsyan's (2010d) speech delivered at the reception in the Tavricheski Palace dedicated to the 300th anniversary of the Armenian community of Saint Petersburg on June 19, 2010 in which he simply tells the history of St.Petersburg for an obscure reason.

On September 25, 2011 in Los Angeles, USA at the reception dedicated to the twentieth anniversary of independence, Sargsyan stated:

On September 21, the Armenian television was overwhelmed with exciting and very impressive reports from the regions of Armenia and from all over the world. One cannot help the excitement watching, for example, reports on the celebrations held by you, the LA community. One cannot help the feelings of pride and gratification watching the young men toasting to the independent homeland tell the whole world that *if there is an encroachment upon the Armenian land, they will reach the defense positions in a matter of hours from a place so far away as America*. One can only watch and repeat in his mind, “God bless you, guys.” (S.Sargsyan 2011b, emphasis added).

This excerpt is an example of the spirit of Sargsyan’s statements after the last quarter of 2010 that is specified by threat and security perceptions and the themes of struggle and survival, which are largely the derivatives of the post-genocide hegemonic Armenian historical narrative. In fact, with this kind of statements, after the last-quarter of 2010, Sargsyan regularly reminds the Armenians of the perpetual threats that Armenia and Armenians face. Thusly, Sargsyan’s statements serve as constant reminders of dangers to sustain a sense of state of emergency that impose on Armenians in Armenia and diaspora certain obligations.

Threat perceptions as one of the main pillars of Sargsyan’s statements fall into two groups: 1) the generic conjectural threats and 2) the Armenian-specific threats. Global economic and financial crises and the internal problems of Armenia are the generic conjectural threats Sargsyan refers to occasionally in passing and in a nonspecific way. On the other hand, Armenia-Turkey relations and the Karabakh problem are designated as the Armenian-specific threats. In specific, normalization of the relations, opening of the land border, establishment of the diplomatic relations between Armenia and Turkey, the recognition of the 1915 events as genocide by the international community and Turkey, and the independence and the international recognition of the unrecognized *de-facto* Republic of Nagorno Karabakh are highlighted as the Armenian-specific concerns.²⁸⁰

Although Sargsyan refers to contemporary political problems when indicating the Armenian-specific threats, he relies particularly on the deep-seated fears that the hegemonic post-genocide Armenian ethno-national narrative reproduces. Specifically, he stresses the struggle

280 See, Sargsyan (2011b; 2011c; 2009b; 2009d; 2008a; 2008c; 2008f)

for survival as the main feature of the Armenian history and implicitly claims this struggle persists today as the main issue of the Armenian ethno-nation and Armenia itself²⁸¹. As a result, Sargsyan monitors the contemporary political issues through the prism of a security framework and tends to interpret what otherwise could be interpreted as conjectural political challenges as existential threats in a way veiling their political nature. This, however, leads to metaphysical interpretations and the subsequent mystification of the adversaries and their transformation into “the enemy” as an enigmatic entity. Not out of the routine, the Turk that is attributed essential characteristics such as “Armenophobia” and “anti-Armenian fascism” is nominated as this “the enemy” (see for example, S.Sargsyan 2010c; 2010e)²⁸². Eventually, particularly after 2010 the Turk in Sargsyan’s statements is evolved into a signifier of evil, however this evil is defined.

281 For example, on September 19, 2011 at the “Panarmenian(SIC!) Conference of the Leaders and Representatives of Diaspora Organizations”, Sargsyan stated the following as an example on the ways in which he attributes victimhood and struggle for survival as the main characteristic of the Armenian diaspora:

Diaspora is not a new phenomenon in our centuries-long history, however after the Mets Eghern it acquired quite a different nature. The Armenians had to withstand the test outside their cradle, on the “alien and desolate roads”, had to withstand the test of assimilation and degradation and had to prove their viability in most different circumstances. The almost hundred-years long history of the Armenian Spyrk is a history of struggle and victory, unavoidable setbacks and exceptional willpower... The Armenian nation has shown to the world an exceptional example of survival, even though many reputable figures were considering the Western Armenians out of the historical picture (S.Sargsyan, 2011d).

Metz Eghern (alternatively, Medz Yeghern, Mets Yeghern, Metz Yeghern) that means “Great Catastrophe” is a term that is used to refer to the 1915 tragedy. The usage of this term, however, causes debates among Armenians; some criticize the usage of this term and sustain the imperative of forwarding the term genocide, which implies legal and political consequences.

Few days later, on September 25, 2011, in Los Angeles at the reception dedicated to the 20th anniversary of independence, Sargsyan stated the following that identifies the struggle for survival not simply as a phenomenon of the past, but also of today.

Indeed, we still face many problems. We have not yet reached lasting peace and have to spend great sums to provide for the security of our country and our people. The Turkish-Azerbaijani duo is waging a campaign against our country across the world, in all international fora, and we have to respond...

Our times are symbolized by freedom; freedom which is achieved through competing and cooperating. There is a competition between individuals and competition between businesses. There is a competition between economies and competition between states. The more competitive we are, the greater freedom we will enjoy.

As a people striving for freedom and as a nation that has achieved 20 years of free and independent statehood, we continue and will continue to compete. We compete with all in everything. The ability to succeed in this eternal competition hinges on the strength of one’s back, the feeling of a friend and sibling fighting side-by-side with you for the victory. I believe that we are covering each other’s backs in this fierce competition. We are side-by-side for creation and construction. We are side by side for defending our freedom; side by side for being even more free (S.Sargsyan, 2011b).

282 See, S.Sargsyan (2011c; 2010a; 2010b; 2010c; 2010e; 2010f; 2009a).

3.3.2 Armenian Ethno-National Unity and the Mode of Cooperation

On October 10, 2009, in his address to the people of the Republic of Armenia and to all Armenians, Sargsyan referring to the feverish debates on the Armenia-Turkey protocols stated the following:

The debate included a large variety of issues not related to the Armenian-Turkish negotiations but concerning the whole Armenian nation. This process caused and triggered a new, engaged discussion on the place and the role of Armenia and the Armenians, the present and the future of Armenia and the Armenians. As a result, the world saw and understood that, when it comes to the normalization of the Armenian-Turkish relations, they have to deal not just with Armenia with its three million population, but with the ten million Armenians. And let no one ignore the fact that, contrary to any slogans, the Armenian nation is united in its goals and is strong with its sons and daughters. And let no one try to split Armenia and our brothers and sisters in the Diaspora in presenting their concern over the future of Armenia as an attempt to impose something on the Republic Armenia (S.Sargsyan 2009b).

Similarly, again referring to the protocols, on April 12, 2010 in Washington, USA Sargsyan stated²⁸³:

In recent months we have witnessed Turkey's doomed attempts to drive a wedge between the Motherland and Diaspora and to create an impression that Armenia and Diaspora have two different opinions. Today, we together and once again rebuff those bizarre delusions. There is no divergence between opinions in the Motherland and the Diaspora; there is one united Armenian nation and it stands for its just cause (S.Sargsyan 2010f).

283 See, also Sargsyan's following statement partially quoted below:

This year's fundraising holds special significance. Not only Armenians all over the world but also the international community are still reckoning on the process of signing of the Armenian-Turkish protocols. It is no secret, that this reckoning is controversial. Today, both Armenia and Spyurq have found themselves in the center of attention. Nowadays, our each step is being assessed not only by our brothers and sisters in Diaspora, but also by our friends and foes. We have things to prove to ourselves, as well as to the world.

1. We must prove that there is no rift in the Armenia-Spyurq relations, that in this historic and critical moment we stand shoulder to shoulder and have engaged with the utmost dedication in the mission of moving our country forward;
2. We must prove that the Armenian nation will spare nothing to build a new and flourishing Shushi, that we are worthy of our victories and worthy of great honor to be the masters of the ancient capital of Artsakh. Gardener takes care of his garden. The gardener of a neglected garden is contemptible.
3. By this fundraising we also have to prove once again that Artsakh is our land today and will be forever. We have to disappoint all those who think otherwise.
4. This is an excellent opportunity to manifest the ability of the Armenian nation to unite around our national goals, its power, and its being a serious factor in our region (S.Sargsyan 2009a).

Spyurq or spyurk is the Armenian noun for diaspora.

Disappointment and the great schism in the Armenian world following the Armenia-Turkey protocols in October 2009 loom as the milestone of Sargsyan's increasing reliance on the hegemonic post-genocide Armenian historical narrative and the bolder emphasis on the Turkish enemy. It can be seen that harsh criticisms to the protocols coming from different sections of the Armenians both in Armenia and diaspora and Turkey's reluctance to ratify these protocols in its parliament convinced Sargsyan to revise his discourse. In order to avoid further criticisms and decay of his image, he began to argue that schism among Armenians was indeed Turkey's plan. Doing that, he relied upon the historically consolidated fear of the Turk and genocide. Subsequently, Sargsyan progressively began to employ the "Turkish enemy" as the main reason of the imperative of Armenian trans-state ethno-national unity, which he represents as the strength of the Armenians to overcome the challenges to the ethno-national survival of the Armenians²⁸⁴.

Sargsyan formulates the mode of cooperation between Armenia and diaspora as "the utmost of the Fatherland's capabilities for the Diaspora, and the utmost of the Diaspora capabilities for the Fatherland" (S.Sargsyan 2011b). As this formula demonstrates, Sargsyan construes the Armenia ethno-national unity as an altruistic selfless cooperation or in his words "mutual

284 For example, on September 24, 2008, Sargsyan at the official reception hosted by the Embassy of Armenia to the US, Permanent Mission of Armenia to the United Nations and leading Armenian-American organizations in the United States paradigmatically stated:

I want to thank the entire Armenian-American community, all organizations functioning here and individuals, who through their pro-Armenian undertakings consistently bring their input to the resolution of the problems facing Armenia and Artshakh, condemnation of the Armenian Genocide and reinstatement of historical justice, and the resolution of the NK conflict. I assure you that these days nothing passes unnoticed. It is for the whole world to see that this ancient nation, which has passed crossroads of history, is unified in its resolve and is united in its deeds. I note it with joy, as an Armenian who is aware of the lessons of our history and is proud of it. It is that very unity provides strong foundation for success. Today, we need unity more than ever. Just take a look on what's going on around our country, in the region and in the constantly shrinking world. Armenia, like a small boat has again found itself in the very midpoint of turbulence. A war right next door, closed borders, problems with external communications, convoluted regional relations, clashing interests of great powers – this is the world Armenia faces today. And under such circumstances we must solve not survival related issues, but development related issues. And we must solve them together (S.Sargsyan, 2008c).

In this quote, NK refers to Nagorno-Karabakh. In an earlier occasion Sargsyan on the same track stated:

This kind of meetings and gatherings always serve as an impetus and compel us to work harder on All-Armenian issues. Together with the Diaspora, shoulder to shoulder, we are strong, we feel more powerful in Armenia and, I am confident, you feel the same, knowing that you have Armenia standing behind you (S.Sargsyan 2009d).

See also, S.Sargsyan (2008e).

complementarity” (S.Sargsyan 2011d). Importantly, this conceptualization is not only based on but also is a constitutive of the comprehension of the Armenian ethno-nation as a sectional yet a unitary entity that dismisses particular interests of the sub-national groups and advocates all-encompassing ethno-national ones. As such this formulation can be regarded as a reflection of the organistic-corporatist understanding of the Armenian ethno-nation²⁸⁵.

However, framing the Armenia ethno-national unity as an organistic-corporatist one barely stands with Sargsyan’s emphasis on the reciprocal benefits of the Armenia-diaspora cooperation. That is, while on the one hand Sargsyan stresses all-inclusive interests of the entire nation, on the other hand, identifies particular and reciprocal interests of the sections of the Armenian ethno-nation. Yet, again, these particular interests merge at the point of struggle for survival. This not only reveals the cognitive/ideological mode of the Armenian trans-state ethno-national unity but also its securitization.

On September 25, 2011, in Los Angeles at the reception dedicated to the 20th anniversary of independence, Sargsyan stated the following:

Dear Friends,

I am confident that efforts to resolve problems faced by our common Homeland will reinvigorate both Mother Armenia and the Diaspora. It will help preserve the Armenian identity in all Diaspora communities, no matter where they are. It will bring us closer to a just resolution of the Artsakh issue. It will reinforce the foundations of our independent statehood. It will fortify the roots of our eternity tree, and nurture the crown of our freedom and independence tree.

²⁸⁵ The below quote is a demonstration of the organistic-corporatist understanding of Sargsyan.

Dear Compatriots,

I am confident that the Conference will greatly promote the development of the Armenia-Spyurk cooperation *for the benefit of the Armenian nation’s peaceful and prosperous future...*

The Armenian nation is bonded together with its *national aspirations and Armenia’s destiny*. All our thoughts, emotions sometimes even anger and outbursts, heated disputes and serene discussions, silent work and manifestations of protest – all they eventually have one purpose – to make sure that the Armenia of tomorrow is a better country, more powerful, more beautiful, more attractive, to see the Armenian nation more united, more cohesive and well-organized. *We are united not only by our roots but also by our common goals...*

I think, it wouldn’t be redundant to repeat that Spyurk (SIC!)²⁸⁵ and Armenia should become *each other’s extension*. Spyurk – politically and culturally, scientifically and in terms of health care and sports should be nurtured by the Motherland and in its own turn should nurture Armenia. It doesn’t mean that it will become a faceless adjunct of Yerevan; it means *mutual complementarity* (S.Sargsyan 2011d, emphasis added).

I say this with the utter conviction, *because the Republic of Armenia is the only real guarantor of the sustainability of the Armenian nation*. No other force will assume this responsibility for us (S.Sargsyan2011b, emphasis added).

This quote accurately reveals Sargsyan’s conceptualization of Armenia as the ultimate savior/defender of the globally dispersed Armenian ethno-nation as to why diaspora shall provide its support to Armenia. Sargsyan eminently stresses that a strong and prosperous Armenia is the prerequisite of the comfort and physical security of the diaspora, which is why, according to Sargsyan “in every corner of the world every son and every daughter of our nation wants to see Armenia strong and prosperous, stable and thriving” (S.Sargsyan 2008f)²⁸⁶. He continues in the same statement:

At the same time, I am also sure that from now every Spyurk community will feel the support of our state. Armenia will be much more efficient in supporting cultural and educational initiatives in large and small communities as well as those aimed at the preservation of the Armenianhood.

²⁸⁶ On the same track, on September 24, 2008 in the USA, Sargsyan stated:

Dear Compatriots,

The Armenian Diaspora is diverse, multi-confessional and multi-lingual. But first of all and most of all the Armenian Diaspora is multi-potent. *And as controversial as it may sound, the Armenia Diaspora, while more powerful than ever, is living today through the most difficult times in its history and needs care and attention. Without care and attention, in fifteen or twenty years that powerful Diaspora, the envy of the world, may undergo assimilation.* And who, if not the reborn Armenian state– the Republic of Armenia, can and must bring care and attention to the Armenians spread all over the world.

It is true that the state is built by its citizens. Yet, at all times, and especially in calamitous times, the unwearied Diaspora stood by the hayastantsis and the artsakhis, whose sufferings, lives and blood drew the borders of the Armenian state. *The time has come when the victorious citizens of Armenia must become unwavering support for their compatriots and fellows Armenians all around the world.* For years, the Armenian Diaspora has been providing invaluable support to the development of the Armenian statehood in the face of contemporary challenges. And it will remain as such if in return for everything it has given it receives what it needs. *The citizens of Armenia, the Armenian state must have something to offer the Armenians worldwide. And it has nothing to do with the principle of reciprocity at all.* The capacity of the Armenian nation is the amalgamated capacity of all Armenians. It should not be taken from one place, to grow in the other. It must grow everywhere. One part should not become stronger at the expense of the other. Armenian wealth does not belong to the Armenians only. The interaction between the various groups of Armenians should not result in the division and redistribution of the Armenian wealth but in its augmentation and consolidation. The Armenian “balance sheet” must burgeon (S.Sargsyan 2008c, emphasis added).

As this quote reveals, Armenian diaspora is identified as in a state of despair despite its might. In fact, it is this designation on which Sargsyan constructs the Armenia-diaspora relationship and the identities of both entities as shall be shown below. See also, S.Sargsyan 2011d; 2010c; 2008a).

The role of the Spyurk in the maturing of our state and development of our economy has been great. The time has come when the increasing possibilities allow to state that not only Spyurk has a role in Armenia's advancement but also Armenia has a role in solving Spyurk's problems. I want to assure you that from now on this principle will be in the core of Armenia-Spyurk cooperation.

Sargsyan along the side of the routine identifies diaspora as an asset of Armenia in three main domains, namely, economy, social diplomacy and inter-state relations. As regards to economy, Sargsyan points out ethnic Armenian businesspersons abroad as the main prospective foreign investors²⁸⁷. He points out the "honest and creative labor" of the diaspora Armenians, who "fortify good name of the Armenians" that implies the role of the Armenian diaspora as an asset in the field of what can be called social diplomacy²⁸⁸. Lastly, Sargsyan refers more boldly to the role of the Armenian diaspora communities in Armenia's inter-state relations as lobbies (see, S.Sargsyan 2010a; 2009d; 2008d; 2008f)²⁸⁹.

Notwithstanding the hypothetical might of the diaspora, on the other hand, Sargsyan not only by deliberating on the "tragic history" that caused the diasporization of the Armenians (see, S.Sargsyan 2010d) but also by delineating the diasporic existence as a state of despair, underlines the victimhood and fragility of diaspora. The latter is stressed most in reference to the assimilatory trends that the diaspora is supposed to fight against as the below quote demonstrates.

Yet, Spyurk is also our pain and our concern because on the foreign shores we daily encounter problems and challenges. There is an imperative to keep the new generation Armenian-speaking, sticking to its roots, close to the Motherland, just keeping them Armenian which is countered by the ocean of

287 Realistically, when Sargsyan addresses the ethnic Armenian businesspersons, he does not speak only to their nationalist sentiments, but also to their wallets by stressing the prospective economic benefits. See, S.Sargsyan 2008a; 2008c; 2008f; 2011d).

288 This speech is one of the speeches that were deleted from the official website of President of the Republic of Armenia. Yet, it can be accessed at <http://news.am/eng/news/38404.html> (latest access 09.01.2014).

²⁸⁹ Notably, diaspora as an asset in social diplomacy and as lobby often goes together as the below quote demonstrates

We realize that your share in today's high level Armenian-French relations is significant. First of all, it is thanks to you that Armenians and Armenia are not alien words for the French people. Thanks to your repute as exemplary citizens of France, many, many Frenchmen hold esteem and trust in Armenians and consider Armenia a friendly state. You are a unique bridge between the two nations and two states, and I want that bridge to always be strong and solid. It is also my sincere wish that your children and their generations follow your example – be worthy citizens of France and hold high their Armenian identity, bringing their input to the Armenian-French friendship and partnership (S.Sargsyan 2011a).

circumstances, conditions, and temptations. We should admit that that ocean has brought also some losses, which unfortunately and unavoidably will happen again. The(SIC!) minimize these losses is the most important task for the entire nation. I believe that the best means and the most efficient immunization against the evil of assimilation is empowerment of Armenia and earning of a great international repute. The level of Armenia's recognition in the world may bring back to the Armenian nation even those who have moved away, if he or she will have an opportunity to be proud of the homeland, of the achievements of the compatriots and, finally, of the Armenian identity (S.Sargsyan 2011d).

Framing the diaspora within these lines constitutes the ground of the argument why Armenia should support diaspora to guarantee its existence. For example, on April 12, 2010 in Washington Sargsyan stated²⁹⁰:

Living abroad and united in your concern with the Armenian problems and protection of our interests you remain an *unassailable power; you are also an important component of Armenia's international credence. This is well-understood both by those who are our friends and those who are not.* Through your posture and determination you prove that all those calculations that the Armenian nation can be eliminated by scattering it all over the world, were wrong. Every Armenian, regardless of the continent one lives in, will become a drop of water that wears away the stone. We've hit that road. The executioners of our nation left us with no other choice. We will flourish; we will wear away the stone of indifference, cynicism and duplicity. To that end we have enough patience, faith, and determination (S.Sargsyan 2010f).

What is notable in this scheme is victimhood of the Armenians and diaspora turn out as the precondition of the construction of Armenia as the protector of the Armenian ethno-nation. In other words, the protector role of Armenia is alleged on the grounds of the victimhood of the Armenian ethno-nation. Since the Turk is the ultimate victimizer, it can be seen that Armenia as a statehood is conceptualized as a guardian against the Turk, too.

What is important in this framework is that sectional interests of the Armenian nation are eventually linked to the future of Armenia and the "common goals" of the Armenians are defined on this basis. Accordingly, Armenia is designated as the entity that enables and sustains the Armenian ethno-national unity. In other words, as Sargsyan expresses as in the quote below, Armenia becomes both the end and the means of the unity of the Armenian

²⁹⁰ See also, S.Sargsyan (2011b; 2011c; 2010c).

ethno-nation by setting the pan-national agenda and common goals for the Armenian ethno-nation.

The Armenian nation is bonded together with its national aspirations and Armenia's destiny. All our thoughts, emotions sometimes even anger and outbursts, heated disputes and serene discussions, silent work and manifestations of protest – all they eventually have one purpose – to make sure that the Armenia of tomorrow is a better country, more powerful, more beautiful, more attractive, to see the Armenian nation more united, more cohesive and well-organized. We are united not only by our roots but also by our common goals (S.Sargsyan 2011d).

3.3.2.1 *The New Armenian*

Similar to Hakopyan speeches, the “new Armenian” is a noticeable theme in Sargsyan's statements. However, it is also noticeable that Sargsyan attributed different characteristics to the “new Armenian” before and after the last quarter of 2010. Before the last quarter of 2010, Sargsyan highlighted being a cosmopolitan and good citizen of the country of citizenship as the defining features of the “new Armenian” and denoted diversity among the Armenians as a strength. As an example, on September 24, 2008 in the USA, Sargsyan rhetorically asked “do we realize that cultural, linguistic and confessional diversity is not a deficiency, which has to be conquered, but an advantage which gives us unique opportunities?” (S.Sargsyan 2008c). He continued stating:

First, we should formulate and define the new Armenian identity. Identity which should become our beacon in the new century. *The new Armenian identity should be person-centered, freedom-centered, and rights-centered.* An identity based on freedom and rights is most appealing and empowering. It can support *Armenians' integration in the societies of their respective countries and to help in succeeding with the mentality free of internal complexes and contradictions.* It may help integrate as an Armenian, as a free person, as a citizen committed to the success of his or her country of residence. An Armenian with such mentality is the best citizen of his or her country, its pillar. Hence, a good Armenian is a good citizen of the United States, Russia, or Georgia. Hence, a good Armenian is competitive always and everywhere, a bearer of the competitiveness of a competitive nation – with the values he creates, with the goods he produces, and with the services he provides. Pride is the backbone of the Armenian identity. The Armenian pride is anchored on competitiveness. Are Armenian citizen and the Armenian in general competitive? They must be!

Yet, Sargsyan also stressed the importance of loyalty to Armenia and the Armenian state despite the citizenship status. In Sargsyan's words, the "new Armenian" was supposed to be "a new generation totally integrated and successful in the society of the country of their residence, but at the same time infinitely devoted to their historical motherland and their Armenian identity". According to Sargsyan, this was the key of Armenians' future success (S.Sargsyan 2008a). Put differently, while defining the "new Armenian" as a competitive, creative, productive citizen of her country, Sargsyan underlined loyalty to Armenia that shall be over and beyond linguistic, religious, cultural and ideological/political differences as the chief marker of the "new Armenian"²⁹¹. Hence, in the speech that was quoted above Sargsyan stated:

For centuries Armenia has been the harbor of dreams of the entire nation. And it has to be, since the key to the Armenian identity is the Armenian state. There is no alternative. Unity and accord to withstand tragedies and their consequences wither with time. The time has come to turn a tragedy-centered Diaspora into the Armenia-centered one. The world is our habitat, Armenia is our home. Armenia - the land of wonders.

The Armenian identity should not be intricate and mysterious. It has to reject linguistic, religious, cultural, partisan, or ideological divides. The English-speaking, Turkish-speaking, Russian-speaking, or Armenian-speaking Armenian; the Apostolic, Catholic, Protestant, or Muslim Armenian; the Socialist or Democrat Armenian; the Nationalist or Liberal Armenian – they are just Armenians. The Armenian identity should not be limited by the boundaries of its own "true" fraction, trying to preserve its secluded purity. Diversity is the key to continuity, while secluded species come to extinction. The Armenian identity is an umbrella for diversity. Tolerance fortifies Armenian diversity. Are we tolerant? We should be! We have to be!

Nature leaves no alternative to development, or rather the alternative is decline, downfall, and oblivion. Nothing stays unchanged. Preserving Armenian identity is not enough, to withstand assimilation it is necessary to evolve. Hence, we should consolidate our efforts for development and aim at creating a modern "Armenian world". We should be able to achieve self-organization of the different segments of our Diaspora around the Armenian identity (S.Sargsyan 2008c).

Notably, by the last quarter of 2010, emphasis on the civic/political aspects of Armenian identity and diversity and integration of the Armenians in their host countries began to yield to an emphasis on the ethno-racial aspects of the Armenian identity. For example on September 23, 2011, notwithstanding his previous emphasis on diversity of the Armenians,

²⁹¹ See also, S.Sargsyan (2009d).

Sargsyan pointed out not only the past and future but also the “genes” as the ground of unity among Armenians²⁹² and the preservation of the particular traits of the Armenian identity as a major policy imperative. Likewise, for example on September 9, 2011, Sargsyan called to Armenian journalists from Diaspora to do show their best performance “aimed at the realization of national goals”, which he defined as “the necessity to assist in addressing national issues, particularly, for the task of the world-wide preservation of the Armenian identity” (S.Sargsyan 2010c. See also, S.Sargsyan 2011a)²⁹³. Importantly, Sargsyan’s accommodation of a biological/racist outlook coincided with the robust emphasis on “Turkey’s hostile actions against Armenia” and “the true nature of Turkey” that points out this was not just a rhetorical twist but a fundamental policy change²⁹⁴. All in all, loyalty to Armenianness and Armenia are presented as the chief qualities of the “new Armenian” after the last quarter of 2010.

292 Sargsyan delivered this speech at the reception held by the Republic of Armenia’s Permanent Representation to the United Nations, Embassy of Armenia to the US and Armenian-American organizations. In this speech, Sargsyan stated the following:

It is quite natural because we are united *not only by our genes*, our past, our history, but also because we are united by today and most importantly by tomorrow, by our future. The future which we will create together, all of us. The prosperous and thriving Armenia of our common dream should become a reality through our common efforts (S.Sargsyan 2011c, emphasis added).

²⁹³ In this speech Sargsyan further stated:

I understand all too well that to publish, preserve and disseminate Armenian periodicals in foreign countries requires great sacrifice; it also means to become organizers and leaders of community life, to engage in the preservation and spread of our amazing mother tongue, hold on to the Armenian identity and Armenian spirit, to have individual profile, national roots, Armenian mentality and eventually to become safeguards of spiritual, historical and cultural heritage of different parts of our nation, promoters of national values, re-inventors of national traditions and facilitators of national development.

In advocating the preservation of the Armenian identity, Sargsyan stresses the preservation of the Armenian language. For example on September 19, 2011, he stated:

For many centuries, the language actually substituted the homeland. Preservation of the Armenian identity abroad emanates from the vital interests of the Republic of Armenia. It’s not a solely Diaspora problem; and we do realize that. The Armenian language and national identity are indispensable prerequisites of our nation’s eternity. Let’s try to agree, all of us, the entire nation that in the Armenian families we speak Armenian only. The Armenian teenager must keep the Armenian language sacred, must be vigilant, conscientious and realize that along with speaking many languages, one should not forgo one’s native language, especially now, when high technologies make distant learning possible (S.Sargsyan 2011d).

294 See also, S.Sargsyan (2010g) for another example of essentialization of the Turk.

3.3.3 Sargsyan's Conceptualization of Armenia

3.3.3.1 Armenia as the Savior/Defender of the Armenian Ethno-nation

As said, particularly after 2010 President Sargsyan's statements approximated the speeches of Minister Hakopyan. Likewise, his conceptualization of Armenia also converged to the conceptualization of Hakopyan. Accordingly, two conceptualizations of Armenia can be abstracted within Sargsyan's statements that fit to those of Hakopyan. First, in Sargsyan's statements Armenia crystallizes as the savior/defender of the Armenian ethno-nation. Second, especially after 2010 Armenia is represented as the ethno-racial homeland of the Armenian ethno-nation.

Security perceptions and the political status of Armenia, namely, independent statehood, together form the ground on which Armenia as the savior/defender of the Armenian ethno-nation is constructed within and by Sargsyan's statements. Sargsyan's congratulatory speech on 10th anniversary of Union of Armenians of Russia on December 17, 2010 demonstrates this clearly as follows:

It is true that by the whim of destiny, the majority of our nation lives outside the Motherland, the Motherland which many tried persistently to tear apart and cut up. And the only possible way to put an end to those recurring incidents was to reestablish our independent statehood. *Today, the Republic of Armenia is the main guarantor of the Armenian nation's existence, preservation, and development; it is also our national hearth whose security and prosperity depends on us.*

Reestablishment of independent statehood is not an easy task but it is the greatest honor which our nation assumed willingly and deliberately, bearing full responsibility for the achievements and difficulties alike. We assumed that task because it is the only lasting and durable means to preserve ourselves. From the very first difficult days until now our brothers and sisters from Diaspora have been with us, standing by us.

The entire world-spread nation united over our reestablished statehood. Thanks to that very unity we were able to prevent premeditated genocide against the people of Artsakh, support the just cause of the people of Artsakh to exercise their right for self-determination and assist in warding off the attacks of the superior numbers of the adversary. We don't put ourselves above anyone but will allow no one to abase us (News.Am 2010)²⁹⁵.

295 This speech was also cancelled from the Presidency website. For similar expressions see, Sargsyan (2010b; 2008f).

Classification of Armenia as the savior/defender of the Armenian ethno-nation entails Armenia as the *sine qua non* of the eternity of the Armenians as an ethno-nation²⁹⁶ and this, in return, becomes a logical basis to argue for the connection of the future of the Armenian ethno-nation with the future of Armenia. Following this track, the independent statehood of Armenia is often referred to with terms such as preciousness²⁹⁷, dream²⁹⁸, victory and pride²⁹⁹. Through such references Armenia is also attributed a symbolic value, as well. In this way, two

296 On July 14, 2008, Sargsyan claimed:

Dear Fellow Citizens,

I will not talk today of the means of bringing our efforts together, or about state-private sector cooperation, or new approaches to Armenia-Diaspora relations, or All-Armenian Bank, or other things. I am talking today about the Armenians and about our Motherland Armenia. There is no a third party here. There are you and your past, you and your future, your children's future... I am confident my appeal will find its response. I am confident you do realize that we are mortal but Armenia is immortal.

Long live Armenia and long live the Armenian people! (S.Sargsyan 2008e).

297 For example, Sargsyan November 5, 2008 at a Meeting with the Representatives of the Armenian-Belgian community stated:

We should leave a different Armenia to future generations – an advanced, democratic and peaceful Armenia. When I say “we”, I mean the citizens of the Republic of Armenia and the entire Armenian nation, all those who consider Armenia their home, all those who proudly tell their children and grandchildren from cradle that they are Armenians, that they have a Motherland at the outskirts of Ararat, and we will leave that Armenia to future generations since nothing more everlasting or precious can be left (S.Sargsyan 2008a).

298 See, for example Sargsyan's speech at the meeting with the Armenian-Iranian community on April, 14 2009 that is partially quoted below.

We are promised nothing from above – our past was given to us and our present is earned with blood and sweat, our blood and our sweat, not others'. Today we are turning into reality the All-Armenian dream – we are building the Armenian state. We are trying to do it remembering words of wisdom of the great Rudaki:

Make the foundations of your house strong

Strong foundations will protector and guard (S.Sargsyan 2009c).

On 25.09.2011 in Los Angeles at the reception dedicated to the 20th anniversary of independence, Sargsyan also said:

Armenia is the country that we all, our parents and grandparents have dreamed of. Armenia is the home for our children and grandchildren, the foundations of which we are continuously strengthening. Armenia sincerely loves all her children and never discriminates between them.

Our dream come true is 20 years old. Today, free and independent Armenia is 20 years old, and today there can be no greater pride and joy for the Armenians (S.Sargsyan 2011b).

299 On September 24, 2008 in The United States argued:

One year ago, on the American soil, addressing our Armenian compatriots I said that the time had come for the Armenian people to celebrate new victories. I said that each and every one of us is an owner of the Armenian statehood, and all together we take part in its creation. It is a source of great pride for every Armenian soul. I want to repeat it again today and to reiterate that the regained independence does not mean that our struggle is over... Just days ago we celebrated our historic victory of the 20th century - the 17th anniversary of the Armenian independence. The celebration was nationwide - both in Armenia and beyond (S.Sargsyan 2008c).

See, S.Sargsyan (2009a) for the Sargsyan's reflections on the Karabakh war.

modes of seemingly different discourses that rest on a romanticized narration of the past based on victimhood and the *reel* politik discourse on today and the future that rests on threats merge within a single discourse. This connection helps to build a comparatively holistic narrative about the Armenian independent statehood that employs romantic and realist themes together.

3.3.3.2 Armenia as the Ethno-national Homeland

Sargsyan in his address to the “citizens of the Republic of Armenia and all Armenians” on July 14, 2008 at the “Bazeh” All-Armenian Youth gathering in Jermuk stated the following:

Dear Friend,

Allow me to call you friend, as it is the way among us, Armenians. I want to talk to you about Armenia and about you.

I am confident that the warm memories of the childhood, kind and smiling eyes of familiar and unfamiliar grandpas are calling you home. I know, the madness of the Parisian bohemian life, your achievements in New York, respectful glances of your Moscow friends and your own complacency constantly bring you back to your grandma and grandpa, “Come home, boy”. It all comes back to sunny smiles of your mom and dad, to your exhaustion from playing at the children’s grounds, all of these call you - “Come home, boy”...You need your roots, to build your well-being upon them, and your maturity, and the life you’ve created. You need that bond tying you to your childhood, tying you to your birthplace, to your backyard, to your aged grandma and grandpa, to your concerned friends and family.

I am sure that while telling you a fairy tale, your grandma would say that the Armenians are like trees, you can uproot them but if the roots are undamaged, they will bear a new stem and a new tree will grow.

Our home and our childhood are our land. Whether they are good or bad, they are ours. We have deep roots here. Winds and storms, the earthquake and injustice axed our tree. We know where the roots are, we can bear stems again because different sun, different water, and different winds made us stronger. We are strong. A little love and juices of the roots will give birth to a bounteous tree.

Let us stand up for our home, the garden of our childhood needs a rainbow colored merry-go-round. Our grandmas and grandpas need us to untwine the canvas of their lives for us. Our backyards need us even if just once a year. As for our land and water...well, they need nothing. Just love your home and your backyard and then the Motherland itself will be loved (S.Sargsyan 2008e).

This rhetorically powerful and emotionally loaded speech is an exemplary of the ways in which Sargsyan asserts organic ties between Armenians and Armenia in a strikingly similar

manner with Hakopyan. Analogous to Hakopyan, Sargsyan does not only refer to post-1991 emigrants that have real ties with Armenia via kinship and family networks but also the old diaspora in the USA and France that does not have such real ties by substituting those with imagined ones through the ethnic ancestry. Doing that, the mother-child analogy, within which Armenia is designated as the mother of all Armenians dispersed throughout the world is frequently utilized. For example on September 25, 2011, Sargsyan stated³⁰⁰:

Armenia's most precious asset is her worthy children, blessed with free will. Today, children of Mother Armenia are scattered throughout the world... Armenia is the country that we all, our parents and grandparents have dreamed of. Armenia is the home for our children and grandchildren, the foundations of which we are continuously strengthening. Armenia sincerely loves all her children and never discriminates between them (S.Sargsyan 2011b).

Importantly, Sargsyan also refers to the sons and the daughters of the nation (see, S.Sargsyan 2009a; 2008f) which may be interpreted as the absence of significant conceptual difference between the homeland and the nation that equates these two by giving Armenia a strictly national character. Overall, within Sargsyan's statements and messages Armenia is framed as the eternal homeland of the Armenian ethno-nation. As such, Armenia is designated as the heart of the ethno-national unity³⁰¹.

A circle has neither a beginning nor an end. Its every point is a starting point and also its last point. But any circle has to have a center which is equally close to and remote from all its points – it is the center of gravity. The center of gravity for any Armenian anywhere in the world is Armenia – the

³⁰⁰ For the mother-child analogy, see also the below excerpts from Sargsyan's statements and messages.

Armenia is home to her citizens and to the Armenians living all over the world. This apparent truth compels us to work together to make our Motherland bloom. I want in particular to address our businessmen and well-to-do Armenians. Be more active and imaginative in your undertakings to advance Armenia. This is my request to all of you. Look at these young people: they are full of loyalty and sparkle. Let's not only talk to them but also show them our work. *Let us bring them up as good Armenians, devoted sons and daughters of the Motherland* (S.Sargsyan 2008e, emphasis added).

Armenia's most precious asset is her worthy children, blessed with free will. Today, children of Mother Armenia are scattered throughout the world (S.Sargsyan 2011b, emphasis added).

Above everything else today our Motherland needs knowledge and experience of her sons and daughters (S.Sargsyan 2008c).

³⁰¹ See also <http://www.president.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2009/02/03/news-29/> (latest access 22.11.2012).

Motherland and her daughters and sons are equally close and equally remote from her. It will continue to be that way. Long live the Republic of Armenia! Long live the Armenian nation! I am very grateful for this warm reception, and I am proud of you and very much grateful for your support. Be assured that Armenia with the Diaspora is one country and quite another - without it. Our brothers and sisters are doing their best to make Armenia a modern state, and I thank you for it (S.Sargsyan 2008c).

3.3.4 Interim Conclusion: The Making of Armenia in Sargsyan's Statements

Although there are rhetorical differences between President Sargsyan's statements and Minister Hakopyan's speeches, their thematic content and moral coda are significantly akin. In fact, both texts are the derivatives of the same worldview, assumptions and objectives. In these texts, traces of the "National Ideology" can be noticed as their ideological foundation.

The manifest characteristic of Sargsyan's statements is their eventual reliance on threat perceptions essentially emanated from the post-genocide hegemonic Armenian ethno-national narrative. The constant identification of the diaspora as a state of jeopardy and calls for attention to the "white massacre" and the inevitable extinction of the Armenians as an ethno-national group and, particularly after 2010, reliance on the "Turkish foe" to imply the danger against the very physical survival of the Armenians are the two main menaces alleged in Sargsyan's statements. Correlated to that, themes of struggle, particularly for survival, prevail in these statements with the eventual outcome of the sense of a state of emergency. Upon the affected state of emergency, Sargsyan proclaims the imperative of the trans-state unity of the ethnic Armenians as the ultimate shield of the Armenians that shall be built upon an altruistic selfless approach. Along this line, Sargsyan conceptualizes Armenia as the protector/savior of the Armenian ethno-nation and the ethno-racial homeland of the Armenians. Doing that, he conceptualizes the independent statehood as the ultimate strength of the Armenians for their cultural and physical survival. As such, he annexes the future of the Armenians to the future of Armenia with strong ties. This framework is used to argue for the duties of the Armenians in diaspora to the homeland.

3.4 Conclusion

The main category that structures the entire discourse of the Republic of Armenia can be identified as risk that crop up on threat and security perceptions. Put differently, threats and security concerns are the bottom line of the discourse of the Armenian state in reference to

which other issues are deliberated. In that, the preeminence of the National Ideology that has been dominating the ideological domain in Armenia at least since 1998 can be seen as a major factor. As discussed in Chapter 2, the National Ideology essentially relies on the idea of a mystical and eternal ethno-national struggle for survival and creates an anxious consciousness that constantly monitors threats. However, such apprehension fences the sight to a great deal and encumbers not only realistic, but also up to date conclusions. As such, National Ideology engenders the imposition of *a priori* presumptions on the contemporary fact. The centrality of the risk and the primacy of the threats and security concerns in the Armenian state discourse shall be understood as a result of the mode of thinking and comprehension in Armenia resultant of the hegemony of the National Ideology. Importantly, continuation of the Karabakh conflict, the frequently repeated threatening messages of Azerbaijan, unresolved problems with Turkey such as the absence of diplomatic relations and the closed land-border, and the adverse socio-economic situation in Armenia creates a fertile ground for the reproduction of the National Ideology.

The ablepsy of the National Ideology, its resultant perplexity does not mean it does not have a use-value. Particularly, the threat and security perceptions proffered not only reflect historical fears of the Armenians, but also intensify them. As such, they become beneficial means to persuade Armenians to submit themselves to a protector. In fact this is the core asset of the threat and security concerns in the discursive construction of Armenia within the Armenian state discourse, which also gives Armenia its distinctive identity. The Turk as a categorical threat to the very physical existence of the Armenians and assimilation as a definite threat to the very existence of the Armenianness are the aspects of the danger of total extermination of the Armenian ethno-nation within the Armenian state discourse that helps to frame Armenia as the last line of defense, the ultimate fortress of the Armenian ethno-nation. As such, within the Armenian state discourse, Armenia emerges both as the real and symbolic garrison of the Armenianness, the further fortification of which is an imperative of all Armenians within or outside of it.

Besides the construction of Armenia as the garrison of the Armenianness through the threat and security perceptions, a strong organic link between Armenia and Armenianness is framed within and by the Armenian state discourse Armenia that constructs Armenia the soil of Armenianness. In this construction, the effect of the National Ideology is also observable. However, in addition to the National Ideology, the effects of the Soviet Nationalities Policy

can be unnoticed. The Soviet Nationalities Policy was based on *razmezhevanie*, i.e., national-territorial delimitation to create precise national territorial units and *korenizatsiya*, i.e., nativization that promoted titular nations in administrative and cultural domains in their republics. The result of this policy was the strong association of the national identity with the national territory. The majority of the contemporary Armenian state elite, and particularly the three persons whose discourses were examined in this chapter were once Soviet bureaucrats. It can be argued that in their identification of Armenia with Armenianness the socialization and education they got in the Soviet Union is a latent factor.

CHAPTER 4

THE U.S. BASED NEW GENERATION DIASPORA ORGANIZATIONS AND THE DISCOURSE ON THE “ARMENIAN HOMELAND”

As mentioned in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, socio-political upheavals in the Soviet Armenia in the late 1980s trembled also the socio-political and socio-cultural structures in the diaspora. As discussed in Chapter 2, the 1988 earthquake in Armenia has been a turning point in this regard as this disaster revealed the failure of the existing diaspora organizations to leave aside their particular organizational interests and carry out effective aid campaigns together. The resultant discontent among Armenians in diaspora found its practical reflection in the advent of a new generation elite and organizations. The independence of Armenia accelerated this trend. Following the discourse of the Armenian State, this chapter examines the discourses of new generation diaspora organizations. To this end, it focuses on four U.S. based new generation diaspora organizations, namely, Birthright Armenia (BR/DH)³⁰², Armenian Volunteer Corps (AVC), Christian Youth Mission to Armenia (CYMA) and Land and Culture Organization (LCO).

Certainly, since the last twenty-five years or so new elite and organizations have been flourishing in different diaspora communities. Yet, this chapter focuses only on the U.S. based new generation diaspora organizations for the fact that Armenian diaspora in the USA is the most influential section of the contemporary global Armenian diaspora, hence a major actor for the reasons explained in Chapter 1. To summarize, as early as 1830s Armenians began to settle in the United States, although large waves of immigration to the United States began by the 1890s and after 1915 during the World War I. These immigrations led to the consolidation and institutionalization of the Armenian diaspora in the USA. Secondly, immigration of Armenians particularly from the Middle East by the second half of the twentieth century enlarged significantly the Armenian-American community. This provided a safety belt against cultural assimilation and helped the demographic strength of the Armenian-American community. In addition, newcomers, typically as the bearers of nationalist views, helped the reproduction of the post-genocide hegemonic Armenian ethno-national narrative and the

302 Birthright Armenia's abbreviation BR/DH stands for the name Birthright Armenia/Depi Hayk that it uses in its emblem. In Armenian *depi* means “to”. Hayk is the ancient Armenian name of Armenia that was used before the adoption of the contemporary name *Hayastan*. Hence, *Depi Hayk* means “to Armenia”. However, it is a matter of interpretation why Birthright Armenia prefers Hayk to Hayastan. One possible interpretation is that with the name *Depi Hayk*, BR/DH intends to imply not just a trip to Armenia but also a trip to the very roots of the Armenianness.

perpetuation of the “National Ideology” and the “Armenian Cause”. Further, they helped the reproduction of the leadership strata of the Armenian-American community. Thirdly, the facts that USA is the super-power in the globe and the lobbies, including ethnic ones, are legitimate and established actors in American politics multiply the importance of the Armenian diaspora in the USA.

Besides being U.S. based new generation diaspora organizations, the primary distinction of the BR/DH, AVC, CYMA and LCO that enable one to group them together is their specific mission, namely, organization of trips to Armenia for the diaspora Armenians, particularly the youth. As such, these organizations exemplify the new generation diaspora organizations that adopt themselves to post-1991 reality of independent Armenia to pursue their socio-political objectives that can be named as the indoctrination of the youth, consolidation of the diaspora communities and extra-territorial ethno-nation building along the Armenia-diaspora nexus, as shall be clear below. Next to these fundamental characteristics, several other common features of these four organizations can be identified. First, all these organizations are registered as 501(c)(3) non-governmental organizations in the USA³⁰³, except the AVC, which is legally a non-governmental organization registered in Armenia. However, the AVC’s legal status is simply a formality; the AVC, like the other three, is founded by Armenian-Americans and all the members of the board of directors of the AVC reside in the USA. As such, the administrative center of the AVC is the USA. Hence, all these four organizations are U.S. based NGOs. Third, BR/DH, AVC, CYMA were established in 2004, 2000 and 2001, respectively. The LCO, on the other hand, was founded in 1987, that is, before the earthquake in 1988 to pursue cultural preservation in the diaspora, but shifted its focus after 1991. As such, these four organizations are the examples of the new institutionalization in the diaspora as the effect of the independence of Armenia. Fourth, the organizational *modus operandi* of these organizations are significantly identical. They utilize pilgrimage and/or volunteer work for varying intervals as the forms of Armenia trips. Although U.S. based organizations, they open their doors to Armenians as recruits from all around the world. Fifth, sisterhood defines the relationship among these organizations, in which the BR/DH plays the central role as a kind of umbrella organization that provides financial support and supplementary services to the participants of the other organizations, who meet certain criteria.

303 The 501(c)(3) non-governmental organizations are nonprofit organizations that use their income only for the continuation and advancement of the organization. At the same time, in addition to unpaid volunteers, those organizations may have paid staff.

In order to examine the organizational discourses of the BR/DH, AVC, CYMA and LCO, their websites and electronic publications such as newsletters, press releases and campaign news available in those websites are analyzed. Not surprisingly, the content of these websites are mostly on the technicalities of their programs. Although neither revealing the technicalities of the Armenia trip programs nor providing factual information about those organizations is among the objectives of this chapter, these are analyzed as the elements of the organizational discourses for the fact that while these organizations explain what and how they do, they also disclose why they do, which is an important factor in the discursive construction of Armenia. In the analyses, particular attention is paid to the mission and vision statements, organizational mottos, moral codes of these organizations and the ways in which these are justified. Finally, the ways in which these organizations view themselves and their mission, and by extension, the diaspora are paid attention, since the construction of diaspora is a constitutive of the construction of Armenia. While performing the analyses, the methodological principles explained in Chapter 1 are followed.

In the rest of this chapter, websites of the BR/DH, the AVC, the CYMA and the LCO are analyzed in sequence. In each section, first, the general organization structure and *modus operandi* of the organization are inspected. Doing that, particular attention is paid to the ways in which Armenia trips are justified. Finally, the ways in which Armenia is constructed within and by the organizational discourses is disclosed. Next to the individual analyses of the organizational discourses of the BR/DH, the AVC, the CYMA and the LCO, in the conclusion section findings of the analyses are brought together to expose the overall picture that emerges from the aggregate of the individual organizational discourses.

4.1 Birthright Armenia

Birthright Armenia is a U.S. based 501(c)(3) non-governmental organization. It was established in 2004 by the initiation of Edele Hovnanian, an Armenian-American who has been an active member/headwoman of various Armenian diaspora organizations, in addition to her professional career in the real estate sector in New Jersey, where she currently lives. Presently, the BR/DH runs two offices, the headquarters in Wynnewood, PA, and an office in Yerevan, Armenia.

The BR/DH staff is composed of the members of the Board of Directors and the Advisory Committee, and the staff in the Yerevan office. By January 07, 2013 members of the Board of

Directors were Edele Hovnanian, Linda Yepoyan, the executive director, and Anoush Rima Tatevossian. The senior members of the Board of Directors, Hovnanian and Yepoyan, have abiding personal connections in Armenia. Tatevossian had been a BR/DH participant in 2004 (see, Birthright Armenia 2012a)³⁰⁴. By July 1, 2013, Yerevan staff was composed of five personnel; Sevan Kabakian, the BR/DH country director, Diana Babayan, administrative specialist and volunteer coordinator, Hayk Vardanyan, operations specialist, Marianna Vardanyan social media and PR coordinator, Tigran Gevorgyan, host family and language program coordinator³⁰⁵.

The Advisory Committee is composed of Michael Aram (USA), Fr. Mesrop Aramyan (Armenia), Dr. Aram V. Chobanian (USA), Atom Egoyan (Canada), John Marshall Evans (USA), Mark Geragos (USA), Dr. Vartan Gregorian (USA), Arsinée Khanjian (Canada), H.E. Vartan Oskanian (Armenia), William Parsons (USA), Serj Tankian (USA), Bedros Terzian (France), Ralph Yirikian (Armenia). Notably, the advisory committee consists of personnel not only from the USA and Armenia, but also from Canada and France. Membership of

304 Prior to her assignment to the BR/DH Board, Tatevossian served as the director of the Armenian Volunteer Corps in Armenia between 2006 and 2007. Tatevossian's case is another evidence of the sisterhood among the organizations that are examined in this chapter. As a matter of fact, members of the Board of Directors are all female Armenian-Americans holding bachelor's or a higher university degree.

305 By September 7, 2012, Asqanaz Hambardzumyan and Arpine Kozmanyany were present in the Yerevan team filling the posts of Hayk Vardanyan and Tigran Gevorgyan. However, in its earliest phases, Yerevan staff was composed of only Sevan Kabakian and Nairi Melkomian, former being the executive director and the latter executive assistant. The increase in the number of the staff and the diversification of their responsibilities prove the organizational advancement of the BR/DH. Melkomian was born in England and lived in Iran for eleven years. In 1991, she moved to Yerevan with her family. She has a BA in history from the Yerevan State University and a MA in political science and international relations from the American University of Armenia. Kabakian was born in Lebanon and lived in the USA over twenty-five years. He holds a MA in aerospace engineering from the University of Southern California. As to new members of the Yerevan staff, they all hold BA or higher degrees from Armenian or foreign universities. Alas, there is no information as regards to their country of birth and citizenship.

It appears that, especially Kabakian and Melkomian, in addition to the members of Board of Directors are the prototypes of "the good diasporic Armenian" and role models for the BR/DH participants for having strong connections with both Armenia and the Armenian communities and organizations in their country of residence. They exemplify the "good Armenian" who is connected to the "great cause", i.e., contributing to the development of Armenia and building of the extra-territorial Armenian ethno-nation. Being repatriates and diaspora community leaders, they are the right examples for the Armenian youth that the BR/DH foresees to help to indoctrinate. With respect to that, the brief bio of Kabakian quoted below stands noteworthy.

Sevan Kabakian, has always been a *great enthusiast of Armenian youth*. Born in Lebanon, he has lived in Los Angeles for over 25 years. While there, he has worked with the local Armenian Youth Federation badanees (Juniors) in Glendale, aiming to *instill in them a sense of pride, duty and responsibility towards Armenian issues*. *Sevan strongly believes that a material connection to Armenia is a vital and irreplaceable source of strength for Armenian youth living in the Diaspora* (Birthright Armenia 2012b).

Note that, Armenian youth Federation is the youth organization of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation that was established by Karekin Nejdeh mentioned in Chapter 2. This is an evidence of the continuity rather than categorical rupture between the new and the old elite.

Checked latest on December, 28 2013, Shoghik Chilingarian is presented in the webpage as the sixth staff in the Yerevan office as the alumni program coordinator.

celebrities Egoyan, Khanjian, Tankian, who, in addition to their career in cinema and music, are active campaigners for the recognition the genocide, is also another noteworthy aspect of the composition of the Advisory Committee³⁰⁶. Thirdly, Vartan Oskanian's presence, who served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs between 1998-2008 and is still an important political figure in the Armenian politics is another notable fact³⁰⁷.

The main objective of the BR/DH is to provide financial support to the youth of Armenian origin between 20 and 32 years of age all around the world who involve in volunteer programs in Armenia organized by different organizations by covering their travel expenses. To clarify this point the BR/DH states, "as a reminder, Birthright Armenia is not an internship program by itself. Rather, it cooperates with internship programs by complementing their services with a host of other programs and benefits" (Birthright Armenia 2012c)³⁰⁸. The main sister organization of the BR/DH is the AVC. Yet, the BR/DH collaborates also with twenty other diaspora-based and Armenia-based organizations³⁰⁹. In addition to financial support, the

306 Atom Egoyan is a renowned Armenian-Canadian film director. He was born in Cairo, Egypt on 19 July 1960 into an Armenia-Egyptian family that migrated to Canada in 1963. Aside from his artistic career, Egoyan teaches at the European Graduate School and is a faculty member of the University of Toronto. Egoyan was awarded Canada's highest civilian recognition, the Officer of the Order of Canada in 1999 (European Graduate School 2007-2012). The Ararat (2002), starred by Arsinee Khanjian and Charles Aznavour, is Egoyan's famous historical drama on the 1915 tragedy. For a critical analysis and an MA thesis on this movie see, Daldal (2007) and Bagramyan (2006), respectively, despite some objectionable conclusions of the latter.

Arsinee Khanjian is an Armenia-Canadian actress and wife of Atom Egoyan. Khanjian was born in Beirut, Lebanon on 6 September 1958 into an Armenian-Lebanese family. In 1975, she migrated to Montreal, Canada with her family. Khanjian began her professional career in acting in 1984 by starring in Atom Egoyan's film *Next of Kin* (Tribute 2013).

Serj Tankian is an Armenian-American singer, song-writer, composer. In addition to his solo works, he is the vocalist of the world-wide renowned rock band System of a Down. Tankian was born in Beirut, Lebanon on 21 August 21 1967 into an Armenian-Lebanese family and migrated to the USA at age seven. As an activist, Tankian founded the Axis of Justice Non-profit Organization with Tom Morello of the Rage Against the Machine/Audioslave. On 12 August 2011, Tankian was awarded the Prime Minister's Memorial Order Medal for his contribution to the campaign of the recognition of 1915 events as genocide and his success in music (Asbarez 2011a).

307 For Oskanian, see footnotes 7 and 77.

308 In "Our Vision and Mission" the BR/DH states, "Birthright Armenia envisions a powerful, broad-based network of organizations and individuals committed to making service to and experiences in Armenia an essential rite of passage afforded to all young Armenians across the world" (Birthright Armenia 2012d). This reveals the network-building mission of the BR/DH as an important aspect of diaspora and nation building, as shall be discussed below in the text.

309 The Diaspora-based organizations that the BR/DH collaborates are 1) Armenian Church Youth Organization of America, 2) Armenian Assembly of America, 3) Armenian General Benevolence Union Yerevan Summer Intern Program, 4) Armenian Youth Federation, 5) Armenian Youth Federation Western Region Youth Corps, 6) Christian Youth Mission to Armenia (Western Diocese), 7) Diaspora-Armenia Connection, 8) Fund for Armenian Relief, 9) The Fuller Center for Housing Armenia, 10) Land and Culture Organization.

The Armenia-based organizations that the BR/DH collaborates are 1) Armenia Tree Project (ATP), 2) Yerevan State Medical University, 3) Armenian Young Lawyers Association, 4) Bars Media, 5) International Center of Human Development (ICHHD)

BR/DH also undertakes host-family living arrangements and several other services such as formal and informal educational and cultural activities including excursions, Armenian language courses, forum and lecture series and customization. Excursions are organized for the participants of the Armenia trip programs on weekly basis to historical and natural sites in Armenia. Language courses provide language training to both beginners and advanced speakers. Forum lectures aim to provide the volunteers with information on different sectors and organizations in Armenia ranging from business to arts. Customization, lastly, aims to bring the volunteers and the locals together in their leisure activities (see, Birthright Armenia 2012e). Through these activities, BR/DH seeks to implement a truly immersion type Armenia trip through which diasporic Armenian youth could attain a deeper experience of Armenia than a touristic trip offers.

All these activities and trainings are the elements of the second-step, that is, “in-country” program of the BR/DH. In addition to the in-country program, the BR/DH undertakes “pre-country” and “post-country” trainings and activities. The “pre-country” training takes place before arrival to Armenia and is composed of on-line Eastern Armenian language tutorial that seeks to ensure basic level of proficiency in the Eastern Armenian language³¹⁰. Taking this training is a prerequisite to apply to one of the internship programs that Birthright Armenia sponsors. Following the termination of the internship in Armenia, the BR/DH encourages the alumni to take part in and lead communal affairs and projects in diaspora and Armenia. This is named “post-country” program and consists of involvement in the community and organizational activities, assistance and facilitation of alumni speaking forums “to inspire future participants, promoting Armenian economic, cultural ties, strengthening diaspora Armenian organizations and community life” (Birthright Armenia 2012g). Complementarily

6) SOS Children's Village, 7) Women's Resource Center, 8) National Competitiveness Foundation of Armenia (NCFA), 9) Our Lady of Armenia Boghossian Educational Center (Gyumri and Tsaghgadsor), 10) TUMO Center for Creative Technologies.

Although it has no direct organizational partnership with the American University of Armenia and Arizona State University, the BR/DH gives links to the MBA Program at the American University of Armenia and Arizona State University Melikian Center 4-week Intensive Summer Armenian in Yerevan without further information besides short introductions to these programs (see, Birthright Armenia 2012f).

310 Eastern and the Western Armenian languages are the two forms of the contemporary Armenian language. The Eastern Armenian Language is the official language of the Republic of Armenia and is spoken in Armenian and Karabakh. Western Armenian Language is the variant matured in the Ottoman Empire. Today, Western Armenian Language is spoken by Turkish-Armenians and the majority of the Armenians in diaspora. However, the Western variant of the Armenian language is in a state of extinction as this language ceases to be a daily language in every passing day. In most cases, Eastern and Western Armenians are mutually comprehensible, although the author of this dissertation has heard cases of utilization of English in the conversations between Eastern and Western Armenian speakers, who found using a third language easier for communication.

As the case of the pre-country Eastern Armenian Language tutorial of the BR/DH implies, it is likely that Eastern Armenian Language is likely to become the Armenian Language in the near future.

to the objectives of the post-country program, the BR/DH runs a special fund under the name “Next Step” to support the alumni who comply with the principles of the BR/DH and bring proposals for continued involvement in Armenia (see, Birthright Armenia 2012h)³¹¹.

Importantly, the merger of the pre-country, in-country, and post-country programs makes the BR/DH something more than a mere volunteer support program. This, indeed, is parallel to BR/DH’s conceptualization of the Armenia trip; rather than a one-time homeland trip, the BR/DH conceptualizes the Armenia trip as the beginning of a life-long journey to Armenianness. As such, physical travel to Armenia is the pivotal but one-step of the virtual passage to Armenianness through the transformation of the self, as shall be detailed below.

Although cooperates with different organizations, even historically rival ones such as the Armenian General Benevolence Union that historically has harmonious relations with the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party and the Armenian Youth Federation of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation³¹², the BR/DH highlights that it seeks organizational autonomy, especially with respect to financial issues. For that, the BR/DH seeks to diversify its “funding from multiple sources including contributions from individuals within the global Armenian community, corporate sponsorships, private foundation grants, and income-generating special events”. To this end, BR/DH states it has “donors who have committed to covering (SIC!) all of our overhead and administrative expenses, and fundraisefrom (SIC!) individuals and private foundations for the necessary remaining funds to cover all program related costs” (Birthright Armenia 2012c).

The BR/DH identifies the young diasporans as the primary beneficiaries of its activities. Yet, it highlights that the existing diaspora organizations, Armenia and the diaspora are also among the receivers, as the below quoted answer to the question “who benefits from Birthright Armenia?” demonstrates:

Young diasporans, existing diasporan institutions, the Homeland, and the Diaspora all benefit from Birthright Armenia.

The primary beneficiaries, of course, are the young diasporan adults who seize this opportunity of a lifetime and make the journey to Armenia to reconnect with their Armenian identity by tracing their ancestral roots,

311 See the same page for the eligibility criteria for applying the Next Step Fund.

312 See, Appendix 5.

exploring the country, making new friendships, and feeling a part of the movement to build our nation state...

A different dynamic exists in Armenia with an increased influx of young enterprising diasporans from all parts of the globe. Picture the collaborations taking place with local counterparts of youth, the businesses on the ground that benefit from increased consumption, the better understanding of each others' similarities and differences when diasporans and Armenian counterparts put their minds and energies together on a worthwhile project, and the job creation that results from all of the above.

The Diaspora benefits as well, as the future leaders of our local communities around the world will have a solid commitment and sense of belonging to the homeland (Birthright Armenia 2012c)³¹³.

The eligibility criteria for program participation are as follows:

- 1) Four-week minimum volunteer service in Armenia.
- 2) Being of Armenian heritage (at least one grandparent must be fully Armenian)³¹⁴.
- 3) Being between the ages of 20 and 32 years and at least a graduate of a secondary school³¹⁵.
- 4) At least high school diploma.
- 5) For the former citizens of Armenia, proving they left Armenia before the age of 12 by official documentation.

In addition to five these criteria, additional criterion to be eligible for the travel fellowship is eight-week minimum volunteer service, which should be completed outside of Yerevan during June, July and August or eight weeks of service outside of Yerevan during other months³¹⁶. One person is eligible for travel fellowship only once. For those who are already in Armenia when accepted into the program are eligible only for the half of the roundtrip airfare

313 The BR/DH in this quote identifies all the sections of the Armenian ethno-nation as the beneficiary of its activities. This is, in fact, an indirect manifestation of the prospect of ethno-national building.

314 The condition of "at least one grandparent" can be perceived as the disposition of objectification of the Armenian identity that is also a salient disposition of the Armenian state elite discussed in the previous chapter. Besides, why the criterion is "at least one grandparent", rather than, say, one parent or any other thing remains obscure.

315 The BR/DH provides a list of programs with links to their websites, which accept participants who are as young as thirteen years old. This reveals the BR/DH's strong belief in the necessity of experiencing Armenia for the diasporic Armenian youth. The listed programs are The Ministry of Diaspora of Armenia Ari Tun Program, AGBU Young Explorers, Land and Culture Organization, Our Lady of Armenia Summer Camp, The AYP Youth Corps, Diaspora Armenia Connection (Birthright Armenia 2012i).

316 Hosting nearly 1.300.000 residents, Yerevan houses approximately the half of the total population of Armenia, Yerevan is not only the administrative capital, but also the economic and cultural center of the country. Given the uneven developmental pattern in Armenia, the Yerevan city center appears as the relatively developed Western face of the country, which is hardly representative of the whole country. Therefore, BR/DH's perspective to bring the volunteers out of Yerevan demonstrates its will to introduce the reality of Armenia to the volunteers as much as possible.

(Birthright Armenia 2012g)³¹⁷. Those who are granted travel fellowship are also required 1) Language Proficiency Certificate³¹⁸, 2) Training and Education Certificate³¹⁹ 3) Internship Service Certificate³²⁰, 4) Continuing Involvement Proposal³²¹ during their stay in Armenia to maintain their fellowship eligibility.

According to the statistical information that was available on May 5, 2010, however not anymore when checked on September 7, 2012 and December 28, 2013, by 2010 approximately five-hundred people benefited from the BR/DH program. 39% of the participants had been from Eastern USA; 29% from Western USA; 12% from Canada; 11% from Europe; 5% from Middle East; 3% from South America and 1% from Australia. 44% volunteered at the NGOs, 26% at the governmental offices, 14% at the international organizations, and 16% at the private companies³²². As these information reveal, Armenian-American youth constitute the majority of the BR/DH participants. Secondly, more than a quarter of the BR/DH participants volunteered at the governmental offices. This reveals BR/DH's connections with the Armenian state and the cooperation, accord between the state

317 Latest checked on December 28, 2013, BR/DH changed these criteria and added some new conditions. It can be seen that as the BR/DH develops organizationally, its programs, requirements etc. change, as well.

318 As stated, prior to arrival to Armenia, the Birthright Armenia fellows are offered an on-line language tutorial. Completing this tutorial is compulsory for those who score less than 80% on the on-line test given by the Birthright Armenia. Apart from that, every bursar is obliged to take an in-country oral test upon arrival to Armenia. Those who do poorer than 80% in the oral test has to attend language course, which is five hours per week. By the end of their stay in Armenia, these bursars have to pass another oral test in order to retain travel reimbursement eligibility.

319 It is compulsory to attend a half-day orientation program on basic Birthright Armenia requirements and some practical matters related to the Birthright Armenia program and life in Armenia. Besides, fellows are asked to attend minimum the 50% of the informal gatherings and forums organized by the Birthright in Armenia, which are the part of the educational/cultural training that the Birthright Armenia conducts.

320 Participants are obliged to complete a minimum thirty hours per week of volunteer work at their place of internship, in addition to participation in joint volunteer projects. Lastly, every participant must propose a one-to-two pages realistic, sustainable, achievable and not one time event but long-term activity proposal on his/her intended activities to remain involved in Armenian affairs.

321 The detail of the fourth requirement is as follows:

The experience in Armenia is meant to serve as a *basis for life-long commitment to Armenian affairs*. In that context, each participant must submit a 1-2 page proposal on how he/she intends to stay continually involved in Armenia affairs, whether in Armenia or in the Diaspora. The proposal must be a realistic, sustainable and achievable roadmap for the volunteer's post-experience phase. It could involve taking on an active volunteer or leadership role within an Armenian organization or within their community, initiating community activism and awareness, or continued direct involvement in the development of Armenia. The proposal must not be a one time event, rather a foundation for long-term participation (Birthright Armenia 2012g, emphasis added).

As seen, this requirement is directly to involve the bursars into the post-country step of BR/DH program.

322 The fact that the BR/DH places volunteers to private firms in Armenia raises questions on the "political-economy" of volunteer work in Armenia. Although, the good will from within liberal ethics is apparent, from another perspective sending volunteers to private firms means exploitation of the labor of the volunteers for private interests. Secondly, supplying free labor to private firms hardly help the serious problem of unemployment in Armenia.

and non-state civil society actors along the Armenia-diaspora nexus, and active engagement of the Armenian state with the diaspora organizations. Moreover, this can be interpreted as an evidence that the diaspora perceives serving the Armenian state as serving the homeland.

4.1.1 Journey of Self-discovery, Voyage to Nation Building

To recruit participants, the BR/DH draws on two main motifs: 1) nationalism and altruistic morals, 2) benefits of volunteer work in Armenia. As an example of the latter, the introduction of the BR/DH program states the following:

Volunteerism in Armenia is growing. Our homeland is blossoming as a country where young diasporans can have *fulfilling and rewarding work internships. From career-oriented, exciting professional opportunities to community service placements, a volunteer has a myriad of choices.*

Birthright Armenia...give young diasporans a unique and personal immersion experience in Armenia... Through its complementary services and financial incentives, Birthright Armenia offers each and every participant the means and opportunity to experience Armenia like never before.

At Birthright Armenia, we invite you to share your experience and *shape your nation* (Birthright Armenia 2012j, emphasis added).

As this quote reveals, the BR/DH presents career enhancing experience and professional development as the prospects of the volunteer work in Armenia³²³. In addition, the BR/DH hints at also the socio-psychological returns emanate from feeling oneself and being perceived as a nation-builder through contributing to the well-being of the homeland, which is implied as an ethno-national duty. In fact, identifying volunteers as nation-builders is a usable expression of the organizational *raison d'être* of the BR/DH, namely, Armenian ethno-nation building that is projected to be achieved through a series of interrelated ends as the mission and vision statements and the guiding principles, the trio that constitute what can be called the by-laws of the BR/DH, demonstrate.

The vision statement of the BR/DH Armenia states the following three points as its projections:

A significant percentage of Diasporan youth having *personal ties to Armenia*, a better understanding of the social, cultural, economic, and political issues and needs there, and globally *participating in Armenia's development*.

323 Also see the seventh guiding principle of the BR/DH in Appendix 16.

Energized and inspired Armenian homeland youth, committed to remaining in Armenia, as a result of a better understanding of their critical role in nation building and a stronger connection to their Diasporan counterparts. The development of future leaders of the Diaspora with a better understanding of and strong ties with the homeland, promoting the importance of participation in Armenia's development within their local communities worldwide (Birthright Armenia 2012d, emphasis added).

The mission statement of the BR/DH, on the other hand, states:

Our mission is to *strengthen ties between the homeland and Diasporan youth* by affording them an opportunity to be a part of Armenia's daily life and to *contribute to Armenia's development* through work, study and volunteer experiences, while developing *life-long personal ties and a renewed sense of Armenian identity* (Birthright Armenia 2012d, emphasis added).

The BR/DH maintains eleven guiding principles listed in Appendix 16. These principles rest on the idea that “it is every Armenian's birthright to experience Armenia”. According to these principles immersion type programs encouraging “interaction with and participation of locals” are necessary to “foster a greater sense of commitment” and “deeper spiritual, cultural and intellectual understanding of Armenian identity, people and issues” and to create “a sustainable bridge between the Diaspora and Armenia”. These programs are particularly beneficial for the young adults, who are most “open to a journey of self-discovery of their Armenian identity”. These young adults “with strong ties to the homeland and a renewed sense of identity and responsibility” are expected “to take on leadership positions within the Diaspora”. In addition, longer term stay in Armenia is projected to “serve as a unique, career enhancing experience on the road of professional development” and expected to be beneficial to Armenia by creating a “multiplier effect through consumption based economic development”. For these reasons, Birthright Armenia is committed to “creating and providing the tools and opportunities that insure every young Diasporan traveling to Armenia can acquire at least basic communication skills”, to serve “as a clearinghouse that supports and complements existing organizations and institutions, rather than duplicating infrastructures already in place” and to insure to “maintain a high level of quality”. The last principle states “Birthright Armenia believes that the time has come to lay the foundation to encourage repatriation” (Birthright Armenia 2012k).

As these by-laws demonstrate, the BR/DH seeks to strengthen ties between the diaspora and Armenia, contribute Armenia's development and buttress the diaspora communities as interrelated ends. Last but not least, at the core of these projected achievements lies the consolidation of the Armenian identity among the diasporic youth. As said, the prospective result is the construction of the extra-territorial Armenian ethno-nation. As such, it can be seen that the BR/DH envisions an integrated process that begins from the micro level and reaches to the macro level.

The BR/DH justifies its objective to build strong ties between Armenia and diaspora by declaring two causes. First, the BR/DH claims that Armenia needs the support of the diaspora to achieve economic progress and developmental goals. Departing from this point, the BR/DH presents itself, in specific, and the diaspora, in general, as a much-needed leverage to Armenia. Accordingly, the BR/DH brings forward strong Armenia-diaspora relations as an urgent necessity for the progress of Armenia. However, the BR/DH does not perceive the diaspora merely as an economic asset. It also identifies the diaspora as an intellectual/ideological actor that would play a role in the indoctrination of the "Armenian homeland youth" as patriots devoted to the progress Armenia and, by extension, assumes the construction of the Armenia's intellectual/ideological sphere. Along this line, the BR/DH indirectly claims ideological leadership.

Second, what is remarkable within this framework is strengthening of the Armenia-diaspora relations is presented more of a need of Armenia than that of the diaspora. Yet, this does not mean that is a one-way track. The vision statement and the sixth guiding principles of the BR/DH disclose that Armenia trips are envisioned to help to accustom the future leaders of the diaspora communities with strong ties with Armenia and a stronger sense of Armenianness. As such, the BR/DH regards the Armenia trips as a key to acculturate the youth in diaspora as future diaspora leaders as a crucial step of its interrelated goals. In fact, acculturation of the diasporic youth and overcoming the problem of disaffection of the youth from the Armenian communities and communal organizations that generates the topical problem of the communal reproduction, hence survival of the diaspora is a major objective of the BR/DH. As such, the prospect of acculturation of the diasporic youth as diaspora leaders coincides with the prospect of diaspora-building.

As regards to the forecasted communal reproduction, the prospective “post-country” activities of the BR/DH shall be mentioned that aim to keep the BR/DH alumni active and connected, which is expected to help to create and sustain personal relations among the “future diaspora leaders”. This, together with dating, coupling and marriages among the BR/DH alumni as not only the expected but also desired outcome of the personal relations, can be thought of another envisaged dynamic of diaspora building³²⁴. Similarly, encouraging private donations and activities such as hosting a fundraiser do not merely emanate from an economic rational. Rather, these are also the indirect means to strengthen communal ties³²⁵. Finally, by cooperating with the existing diaspora and Armenia based organizations, the BR/DH helps to build and strengthen networks among those organizations³²⁶, the result of which is deepening of the cooperation among different organizations that eventually contributes to the communal reproduction of the diaspora.

First and foremost, however, as the mission statement and the second, third and sixth guiding principles quoted above reveal, the BR/DH drafts both the Armenia-diaspora linkages and the diaspora building upon facilitating the diasporic Armenian youth to reclaim their severed Armenian identity³²⁷ essentially through expatiating the personal ties among the youth in Armenia and diaspora, which is one of the reasons why the BR/DH puts the emphasis on the immersion type programs to encourage interaction between the BR/DH participants and the

324 The Alumni Newsletters of the BR/DH contain notification of the marriages between the BR/DH alumni. This, considering the issue of mix-marriages between Armenians and non-Armenians that disconcert the elite in diaspora and Armenia, can be thought of an implicit encouragement of marriages between ethnic Armenians. The alumni search tool in the website of the BR/DH demonstrates the BR/DH wills for the continuing engagement among the alumni parallel to its concern about the post-country period.

325 The BR/DH explains the importance of hosting fundraising events as the follows:

One of the most intimate and rewarding ways to support Birthright Armenia is by hosting a fundraising event at your home or other venue of choice, and inviting your circle of family, friends and acquaintances to see and hear up close and personal what we are all about. During these exciting events, your guests get to hear engaging, live testimonials from our past volunteers, as well as hear from the Board itself about our impacts to date and future plans.

If you are interested in turning a Sunday brunch, a weekday evening cocktail event or perhaps a Saturday evening dinner, into an inspirational event for a great cause, please contact Linda Yepoyan, Executive Director, for further information on how you can help us achieve our goals and live our mission (Birthright Armenia 2012l).

326 See footnote 308 for the network-building mission of the BR/DH and the eighth guiding principle quote above in the text.

327 Note that, to encourage the prospective donors, BR/DH puts forward the following explanation:

There are so many reasons to support Birthright Armenia's mission. To name a few we help today's young adults exercise their "birthright" to take part in building their ancestral Homeland and, in turn, *strengthen their Armenian identity*, give back to their local communities and make lifelong friends with like-minded young people around the world (Birthright Armenia 2012m).

In this explanation, establishing personal ties among the Armenian youth worldwide is also emphasized that was mentioned above in the text.

locals and on the imperative of mastering Armenian language at the basic level at least to foster communication³²⁸. As such, in return, Armenia-diaspora linkages raise upon personal ties are regarded as an effective means to bring the Armenian youth back to Armenianness. In fact, as mentioned, bringing the Armenian youth back to Armenianness is the bottom line to achieve of the other objectives.

4.1.2 Armenia: The Ultimate Means of Ethno-Nation Building

As seen, what the BR/DH projects is, indeed, a series mutually reinforcing and interconnected achievements at individual, local and global levels. At the individual level, the BR/DH aims to implement a stronger sense of ethno-national identity among the diasporic youth and indoctrinate their counterpart in Armenia as patriots loyal to the “national cause”. This is the fundamental prospect of the BR/DH since the success of the entire project relies on this achievement at the individual level. At the local level, following the engineering of the “correct Armenian youth”, the BR/DH projects to ensure the communal reproduction of the diaspora communities and intensified networks within and among these communities. Additionally, by supplying economic and ideological input, the BR/DH also aims to contribute to economic and ideological construction of Armenia. At the global level, improved Armenia-diaspora relationship is anticipated both as a result and a factor of the achievements at individual and local levels. These mutually reinforcing and interconnected constructions are expected to lead to the eventual target, that is, the construction of the extra-territorial Armenia ethno-nation.

Although in this projection at first glance Armenia appears as one of the ends, it is essentially the condition of the entire master plan as the terrain of the “self-discovery” of the Armenian youth in ethno-national terms and the common “national cause” that brings organizations and individuals together under a common purpose³²⁹. Overall, within the BR/DH discourse Armenia appears the chief condition of the extra-territorial Armenian ethno-nation that unearths the instrumentalization of Armenia in the service of ethno-nation building.

328 See, the fourth and the fifth guiding principles of the BR/DH quoted above in the text.

329 As one of the many expressions of this understanding, the in-country stage of the BR/DH program is explained partially as the follows:

8 weeks to 1 year of volunteer service and participation in the training and education programs, during which participants gain insight into Armenia's potential and the ways they and other diasporans can *be part of Armenia's future* (Birthright Armenia 2012c, emphasis added).

By the extension of being a part of Armenia's future, diasporic youth is expected to become a part of future of the Armenian ethno-nation.

Apparently, conceptualization of Armenia as the terra of Armenianness where diasporans would reconnect themselves with the Armenian identity via the personal contacts with the local Armenians lies at the very core of the instrumental value of Armenia.

4.2 Armenian Volunteer Corps

Armenian Volunteer Corps was founded in Armenia in 2000 as a registered non-profit foundation by the Armenian-American Father Hovnan Demerjian, who taught in public schools in Armenia between 1996 and 1998 as a member of the U.S. Peace Corps³³⁰ and joined the ranks of the Diocese of the Armenian Church in 2003. Demerjian graduated from St. Nersess Armenian Seminary in New York in 2007 and was assigned as a priest to St. Hagop Armenian Church in Pinellas Park, Florida. By July 1, 2013, the AVC staff was composed of three founding members, three members of the board of directors, one executive director and one volunteer placement assistant (see, Armenian Volunteer Corps 2013a). The staff members reside in different towns of the USA except the three, who currently live in Armenia. Except for the volunteer placement assistant, who joined the AVC in January 2012, the AVC staff is composed of Armenian-Americans and one Armenian-Canadian, who had lived in the USA for eighteen years. Like the staff of the BR/DH, the AVC staff is composed of holders of bachelor's or higher university degrees. Also similar to the BR/DH staff, all the senior members of the AVC had lived in Armenia for an extended period prior to the establishment of the AVC. Importantly, two current members of the AVC Board of Directors Edele Hovnanian and Linda Yepoyan are also the current members of the BR/DH Board of Directors. Furthermore, Christine Serdjenian, who is the third member of the Board of Directors of the AVC had been a member of the Board of Directors of BR/DH and Anoush Rima Tatevossian the third member of the Board of Directors of the BR/DH had worked as the Director of the Armenian Volunteer Corps between 2006 and 2007. This explains the very close affinity between the AVC and the BR/DH and their almost identical objectives and *modus operandi*.

According to the information in the AVC website at <http://www.armenianvolunteer.org/about/what> (latest access December 2013), since its

330 The roots of the US Peace Corps trace back to 1960. In 1960, the then Senator John F. Kennedy summoned the students of the University of Michigan to take action to live and work in developing countries. This initiative grew into US Peace Corps officially on March 1, 1961. In its more than forty years of existence, over two-hundred thousand people volunteered in one-hundred thirty-nine different countries in different fields ranging from AIDS education to environmental preservation. For the objectives and some facts about US Peace Corps see its official website at <http://www.peacecorps.gov/fastfacts/> (latest access 28.12.2013).

foundation over four hundred fifty people have participated the AVC programs³³¹. The AVC criteria for the prospective volunteers are rather loose; the only explicit criterion is being twenty-one years or older³³². Besides this prerequisite, AVC volunteers are required to submit approximately \$150 donation and to cover their accommodation and other expenses in Armenia³³³. Theoretically, the AVC welcomes non-Armenians, as well (see, Armenian Volunteer Corps 2013b). Yet, it is apparent that both practically and discursively the AVC targets ethnic Armenians, which is evident in its various online publications, as well as the very name of the organization itself. That is, the name of the organization is Armenian Volunteer Corps, not, for example, Volunteer Corps to Armenia that would indicate volunteers of any ethnic background are welcomed to serve in Armenia, whereas the name

331 On August 19, 2012, in the same webpage the number was “close to 400”. The below table demonstrates the number of participants in years according to the information that was available on 01.04.2011. However, the AVC Winter 2010 Newsletter gives slightly different numbers; for 2002, 16 instead of 17 and for 2005, 38 instead of 37, which does not change the total amount. The AVC Fall 2009 Newsletter informs that, that year the volunteers came from Argentina, Brazil, Canada, France, Lebanon, Russia, Syria and the USA. However, there is no information as regards to the volunteer sending countries for other years. Latest checked on July 1, 2013, the link to the full AVC Winter 2010 Newsletter at <http://www.armenianvolunteer.org/media-connection/7-avc-newsletter-winter-2010> was dead. Likewise, the AVC Fall 2009 Newsletter is not available anymore. In fact, the newsletters earlier than the Winter 2010 and Press Releases earlier than 2009 were not available by latest 05.09.2012. The newsletters and the press releases are one to four pages long publications including general and short information about the ongoing volunteer works, alumni and alumni projects. There is hardly a systematic in those publications. Furthermore, these are no analytic articles, criticisms, action plans and so on. Visuals occupy a large portion of these rather short publications. In brief, newsletters and press releases of the AVC are hardly interesting either for the prospective AVC volunteers and or for the alumni.

Year	Number of Volunteers
2001	7
2002	17
2003	8
2004	23
2005	37
2006	43
2007	37
2008	45
2009	58
2010	65
Total	340

On November 30, 2010 AVC website Alumni and Media Connection- Alumni section, which was not available anymore latest by November 5, 2012, explained the sudden increase in the number of the volunteers after 2003 as follows:

During AVC’s first three years, volunteers were required to commit to one-year assignments. In the summer of 2004, however, AVC began offering short-term projects in addition to long-term assignments; this flexibility afforded many more people the opportunity to participate, and our numbers grew dramatically. This page is dedicated to all our selfless volunteers who came to Armenia and moved mountains.

332 For an interesting note about the age cohort of the AVC participants, see footnote 399.

333 It is in fact that point where the BR/DH gains importance as a financial support provider, also for the LCO and the CYMA participants.

Armenian Volunteer Corps indicates volunteers are forecasted to be composed of ethnic Armenians³³⁴. As to that, one of the AVC Press Releases which has no date and was not available in the AVC website anymore by September 5, 2012 stated, “the Armenian Volunteer Corps (AVC) is a non-profit foundation in Armenia which has been placing motivated and qualified Diasporan Armenians as volunteers in Armenia since 2000”³³⁵. As shall be discussed below, targeting particularly diasporic Armenians is not vain since although implementing volunteer work in Armenia is the outward mission of the AVC, in essence the AVC perceives volunteering in Armenia as a means to burgeon ethno-national unity among ethnic Armenians.

The AVC offers both short-term and long-term volunteer placements. Short-term placements range from one to two months term, while long-term placements range from three months to one year. Volunteers are assigned to one or more of the over two-hundred partner organizations active in Agriculture, Art/Culture/Architecture, Business Management/Development, Community Development/Environmental Issues, Education/Teaching, IT/Computer, Media/Marketing/Public Relations, Medical/Health, Politics/Public Policy/Law, Social Work/Counseling, Writing/Translation/Editing and Youth Work (Armenian Volunteer Corps 2013c). Notably, the AVC does not appointment the volunteers to specific organizations or businesses, but gives the volunteers the opportunity to choose their volunteer placement. This provides the volunteers with the chance to gain experience in the fields that they are interested in or they want to make a career in, which is one of the rewards of AVC volunteerism in Armenia³³⁶. However, the AVC stresses that volunteering in Armenia is not simply a career opportunity. On this track, the AVC warns the prospective volunteers about the hardship of volunteering in Armenia and its requirements

334 However, as the footnote 396 reveals there has been one non-Armenian volunteer from Australia. This shows there might have been other non-Armenian volunteers.

335 See, also footnote 347.

336 Many volunteers regard the chance to volunteer in the field that one wants to gain experience in as an opportunity. For example, in advertising the TEACH program, which is discussed below, the AVC March 28, 2011 Press Release quotes Joseph Hakoopian, a Cornell University graduate in English Literature, who is teaching English in a high school in Yerevan saying:

I wanted to volunteer in Armenia so I could work with students who are leaning English as a language and as a subject matter. Before coming to Armenia, I had taught literature to students in Brooklyn and I had helped international teaching assistants improve their English speaking skills on Cornell University's campus. I had not, however, been able to work with students who were interested in improving their speaking skills while learning about something new. The Armenian classroom provided this challenge (Armenian Volunteer Corps 2011).

As shall be apparent in Chapter 5, this is one of the central aspects of Armenia trips in the formation of the homeland perceptions of the volunteers.

such as open mindedness, ability to accommodate the cultural differences and unexpected circumstances, dedication, flexibility and patience (Armenian Volunteer Corps 2013b). What the AVC, in fact, does is to combine opportunities and duties as the two reasons to undertake Armenia trips. The AVC suggests three types of accommodation in Armenia, namely, host family stay, apartment rental, and staying with family or friends. Yet, the AVC encourages the volunteers to choose host family stay as it believes this maximizes the prospect of getting integrated in the Armenian society and gain a deeper understanding of “local culture and family life in Armenia” and faster improvement of the language skills³³⁷.

According to the information on the AVC website on August 19, 2012, in addition to volunteer placements, the AVC undertook three additional programs named TEACH, I Volunteer and Professional Corps. However, by July 1, 2013, the announcements of the TEACH and I Volunteer programs were omitted from the AVC website. From that, it may be thought that the AVC had dropped these two programs from its agenda. The TEACH that was planned to be launched in January 2013 aimed to bring volunteers to “serve in middle and high schools complementing the existing curriculum and helping to develop leadership, civic responsibility, volunteerism, and global awareness through English language learning”³³⁸. The AVC March 28, 2011 press release presents the TEACH as the follows:

On the occasion of its tenth anniversary serving Armenia through volunteerism, the Armenian Volunteer Corps (AVC) has launched Teach, its most ambitious program to date, helping to improve the quality of education in Armenia through English language learning (Armenian Volunteer Corps 2011).

337 The AVC might wish its participants, Armenian or not, to be acquainted with the Armenian society and culture. However, the prospect of introducing these two to diaspora Armenians as a means of indoctrination, who are typically perceived as assimilated and lesser Armenians seems closer to the real motivation of the AVC in fostering host family stay.

338 The AVC required the following qualities from the prospective TEACH volunteers: 1) being 21 years old or older, 2) being native English speaker, 3) holding bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university, 4) availability for five months of service including training beginning in January 2013, 5) adherence to AVC policies, 6) desirably holding a TOEFL certification, 7) desirably having teaching experience, 8) No affiliation with any country’s intelligence agencies.

The interesting contradiction in the TEACH page was that whereas the program is said to be ten-months long, the applicants are required to be available for five months. In another page where the link to the above mentioned page is, availability for ten months is stated as a requirement. Interestingly, the lists of the requirements in these pages are not identical.

The eighth requirement, i.e., having “no affiliation with any country’s intelligence agencies” was eye-catching and difficult to make sense.

In addition to English language teaching, TEACH volunteers were expected to help local English teachers to improve their course outlines, teaching methods, as well as their English proficiency. Lastly, bringing the “outside world closer to students’ reality, helping to broaden students’ experiences and understanding of the world and region in which they live” is also stated as the side benefit of the program³³⁹ (see, Armenian Volunteer Corps 2011).

“I Volunteer” program was funded by Counterpart Armenia³⁴⁰ and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)³⁴¹. “I Volunteer” aimed to develop a culture of volunteerism and civic participation to enhance stability and development in Armenia by implementing pan national volunteer campaigns and establishing a network of volunteer-involved organizations in Armenia and diaspora to built a communication channel between Armenia-based and diaspora organizations for coordinating their activities. As such, “I Volunteer” was more of an attempt to facilitate organizational cooperation among Armenian organizations and strengthen the Armenian civil society at the global scale.

Lastly, the Professional Corps targets professionals 32 years or older professional with at least five years of professional experience. Professional Corps volunteers are expected to be available full time for a minimum of two weeks to serve at an Armenia-based organization or business. As to finances, Professional Corps volunteer are required to submit a \$150 donation and there is no reimbursement policy for the transportation, living and other expenses. What Professional Corps provide the volunteers with are in-country orientation/cross-cultural training, Eastern Armenian language classes twice a week, forums and gatherings to introduce the volunteer to Armenia, periodic excursions, and home stay living, the last two also for a fee (see, Armenian Volunteer Corps 2013d). However, the AVC provides no further information on the “Professional Corps”. This absence renders the principles and operation of Professional Corps obscure

³³⁹ The same press release also states because not all the volunteers have a teaching background, the TEACH provides volunteers with a training covering different topics “including an introduction to the local curriculum, teaching theory, as well as practical skills such as classroom management and lesson planning”. Then, the critical question is how such inexperienced volunteers would productively help the local teachers to improve their course outlines, teaching methods.

³⁴⁰ See, <http://program.counterpart.org/Armenia/> (latest access 28.12.2013) for the Counterpart Armenia website.

³⁴¹ See, <http://www.usaid.gov/> and <http://www.usaid.gov/where-we-work/europe-and-eurasia/armenia> (latest access 28.12.2013) for the websites of USAID and USAID Armenia.

4.2.1 Moving the Mountains³⁴²

The AVC explains why it does what it does as follows:

As a post-soviet country, Armenia is at a turning point in its history. For decades, while other countries and cultures were globalizing, Armenia's borders were closed to the outside world. Now, as a sovereign state, Armenia has the opportunity to integrate with the rest of the world. Volunteers of diverse ages and backgrounds from all over the world will encourage interaction and the sharing of values and customs, something Armenia has missed out on for far too long.

Volunteering is integral to the building of robust civil societies in Armenia and elsewhere. Each volunteer's service will enhance the empowerment of Armenia's citizens and the strengthening of its communities. Thus, the Armenian Volunteer Corps welcomes as volunteers all persons who are willing to contribute their time and energy to Armenia's future (Armenian Volunteer Corps 2013e)³⁴³.

This statement demonstrates that the AVC undertakes the duty to erect a bridge between Armenia and the world through which the elements of universal civilization would reach Armenia and render it an integral part of the former. As such, the AVC positions itself as an asset for Armenia's socio-cultural development and the AVC volunteers as pioneers bringing universal thought and ideals to Armenia. Accordingly, like the BR/DH, the AVC constructs itself, and by extension the diaspora, as an ideological asset³⁴⁴. Moreover, the AVC

342 "Come Move Mountains" is the motto of the AVC. This motto most probably refers to the mountainous landscape of Armenia.

³⁴³ Under this statement, the following passage is pasted as the "background".

Armenia is one of the most ancient countries in the world with a millennial history. For centuries, this small and proud nation has struggled for survival between the crushing influences of neighboring and distant Empires. Despite seemingly insurmountable challenges, not least of which was the Armenian Genocide of 1915, which destroyed two-thirds of the population of Historic Armenia and dispersed survivors throughout the world, Armenia has managed to survive and return to the path of western culture and values
Volunteerism in Armenia is growing. Come. Move Mountains.

(<http://www.armenianvolunteer.org/about/why>, latest access 19.08.2013)

It remains obscure why AVC attaches this rather trivial passage, which is not associated with the above explanation. Besides, the noticeable point is that this background information is a typical replica of the post-genocide hegemonic Armenian narrative that stresses the victimhood of the Armenians in the hands of the external foes. Same sort of accusation is also apparent in the statement quoted in the text. This can be understood as a confirmation of the continuity rather than a radical rupture between the discourses of the old and the new generation diaspora organizations. That is, although new generation diaspora organizations are in increase, this does not coincide with a same sort of transformation of the old discourse at the same rate. Secondly, as demonstrated in this quote, the AVC stresses the strengthening of the civil society and the citizenry in Armenia rather than the statehood. This is an important point since it reveals Armenia as a country and its well-being is not directly associated with the Armenian statehood, which is often done especially by the Armenian state that results in the strengthening of the securitization framework.

344 An undated press release that was available in the AVC website on November 30, 2010, but not anymore latest by 05.09.2012, makes the following quotations from the former US President Ronald Reagan and the current US President Barack Obama the followings, respectively.

conceptualizes itself as an economic/developmental asset, as well. For example, one of the FAQ that was available on April 1, 2011 in the AVC website was the difference of the AVC from other trips to Armenia. The answer was as the follows:

Unlike other programs, the AVC is not a trip to Armenia, but rather living and working with the people of Armenia. While the commitment required of an AVC volunteer is much greater, so too are the results of *long-term development work*.

As opposed to bringing volunteers to Armenia to undertake its own projects, AVC believes that it is better to build on the existing infrastructure in Armenia to make it stronger and sustainable: therefore, the AVC commits itself to offering *human capital as its contribution to Armenia's development*.

There are many organizations and institutions doing meaningful work in Armenia, and AVC's aim is to match their needs with the skills of our applicants whereby giving volunteers a positive and meaningful experience (emphasis added)³⁴⁵.

Similarly, the "Why We Do It" section in the AVC website on November 30, 2010, which is not available anymore latest by August 19, 2012, stated the following:

Due to historical realities, most particularly the Armenian Genocide, the Armenian people have long been severed from one another, with the majority being dispersed throughout the world. Today, only one-third of the Armenian nation lives within the current borders of the Armenian republic.

The Armenian Volunteer Corps' mission, therefore, is to bring Armenia's most valuable asset – its people – together. The exchange of ideas, values, and experiences between diasporan and homeland Armenians will result in mutual growth and understanding - and *renewed connections between our scattered communities*.

AVC believes that the combination of human and capital resources of Armenians worldwide is the best way to help rebuild and strengthen our homeland.

No matter how big and powerful government gets, and the many services it provides, it can never take the place of volunteers.

The need for action always exceeds the limits of government.

Although the AVC mentions the world civilization, universal values and norms and so on, it is clear that by these the AVC means the Western civilization. The social background of the AVC staff may explain the equation of universal civilization with Western civilization. However, this does not change the western-centric essence of the AVC's approach that attaches the non-Western world lesser value. This approach is parallel to the Armenian state discourse explored in the previous chapter.

³⁴⁵ Although deleted from the AVC website, this statement can be found at <http://www.experts123.com/q/how-does-the-avc-differ-from-other-trips-to-armenia.html>, latest access 28.12.2013).

Moreover, as Armenia rejoins the international community as an independent nation, the Armenian people wish to *reconnect with all humanity*. Thus, AVC welcomes as volunteers all persons who are willing to contribute their time and energy to aid in Armenia's development. Volunteering is integral to the building of *robust civil societies* in Armenia and elsewhere. Each volunteer's service will enhance the empowerment of Armenia's citizens and the strengthening of its communities (emphasis added).

Notably, in these quotes identification of the AVC volunteers as human capital goes parallel to the claim of bringing this capital together for the benefit of Armenia. In this way, the prospect of homeland-building merges with the prospect of construction of the Armenian ethno-nation. In other words, homeland building and nation building are conceptualized as the one and the same process. In this regard, identifying the work of the AVC as an "exciting process of nation-building" in the last sentence of the AVC October 30, 2007 press release quoted below is not an American terminological fault of using the terms nation and state interchangeably³⁴⁶.

AVC aims to help Armenians in the Diaspora and Armenia reap the benefits of *working together for the common goal of building a strong country and nation*. Since 2001, AVC has assisted scores of volunteers in finding fulfilling placements in schools, non-profit organizations, churches, and businesses. *AVC volunteers gain new insight into their own identity, growing and developing personally and professionally, while sharing in the exciting process of nation-building* (emphasis added).

The AVC projects to reach objective of ethno-nation building by activating the micro-dynamics at the individual level. That is, the AVC considers providing the volunteers with the opportunity to gain a better comprehension of Armenia, gain experience about different aspects of the "Armenian life", and eventually to build personal relationships in Armenia as the pivotal means to realize the ethno-national construction (see, Armenian Volunteer Corps 2013c)³⁴⁷. In that, the AVC foresees a reciprocal interaction between the diaspora and

346 In fact, the first sentence of the quote reveals that the AVC identifies nation as a separate entity. The August 25, 2009 AVC press release too stresses the "human resources of the Armenian nation" and implies the need to unite this resource as the follows:

AVC Board of Directors member Alex Sardar describes Melkonian as "an energetic and experienced leader who will bring vision and continued passion to our operations. Shari has decades of experience in the trenches of the Armenian American community, in Los Angeles, New York, and Boston and she is certain to lead with great vigor a *pan-national effort focused on maximizing the indispensable human resources of the Armenian nation*".

347 The AVC expresses this idea as the follows:

Armenia youth according to which both sides would become each other's instructors and the apprentices at the same time. However, the same reciprocity disappears when it comes to comprehension of the Armenian identity that is also one of the prospective results of the AVC programs. For example, to encourage the host family stay instead of home rental or other types of accommodation, the AVC makes the following point:

Those who live with a local host family during their service maximize their experience by immersion in *everyday Armenian life*. Volunteers gain a deeper understanding of local culture and family life in Armenia by staying with a host family...

We recommend the home stay option for all volunteers - especially those not fluent in Armenian, as it provides a means of quickly improving one's language skills (Armenian Volunteer Corps 2013f, emphasis added).

In this quote, everyday life in Armenia is identified as the "everyday Armenian life". Similarly, the May 13, 2010 AVC press release quotes an AVC volunteer saying "we want to better understand our identity and we want the entire community in South America to better understand our identity" (Armenian Volunteer Corps 2010) as an aspect of the AVC program in Armenia. By putting the matter as such, the AVC equates the life style in Armenia with authentic Armenian life style. Consequently, the AVC regards stronger personal relations between volunteers and the local as a solid means to introduce correct Armenianness to the volunteers. However, in comparison to other three organizations that this chapter examines, this idea is less salient and less systematic within the AVC discourse.

4.2.2 Armenia: The Symbol of the Historical Justice and the Guarantor of the Survival of the Armenian Ethno-Nation

Compared to other organizations that are explored in this chapter, the AVC website is less rhetorical and boasts fewer explicit statements that distinctly clarify AVC's conceptualization

AVC strongly believes that the exchange of ideas, values, and experiences between Diasporic and homeland Armenians provides for their mutual growth and understanding, and that the connection of human, informal, and capital resource of Armenians worldwide is the best way to help rebuild and strengthen our homeland.

This passage is an excerpt from one of the publications of the AVC which is not available by July 1, 2013. However, it was cited in the website of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation Western United States Central Committee's official publication *Asbarez* at <http://asbarez.com/56111/an-armenian-volunteer-corps-volunteer-helps-the-growing-it-sector-in-gyumri-this-halloween/> (latest access 28.12.2013).

In fact, activating micro dynamics at the individual level is the major reason of encouraging the volunteers to host family stay. Also, note that this quote verifies that the main target of the AVC is the ethnic Armenians in diaspora. Likewise, the passage from October 30, 2007 Press Release quoted above in the text that states providing the AVC volunteers with the opportunity to gain "new insight into their own identity" is another evidence of this sort. Finally, note that like the logic of the BR/DH, the AVC also identifies the achievements in the individual level as the basic step for further achievements.

of Armenia. Consequently, the construction of Armenia within and by the organizational discourse of the AVC follows a relatively indirect route. This results in the emergence of the possibility of multiple interpretations as regards to the final discursive construction of Armenia.

By the emphasis on bringing the human capital together for the benefit of Armenia, the AVC constructs Armenia both as a medium and as a means for the unison of the Armenians worldwide that is projected to be achieved in two different levels: 1) at the institutional level by creating a network of pan-national volunteer organizations and 2) at the individual level through the unison of the diaspora youth from different countries and the youth in Armenia in Armenia. Alumni reunions and activities are also assigned as the practices that would result in the prospective consolidation of the diaspora communities³⁴⁸. Secondly, the AVC presents Armenia as the territorial container of the correct form of Armenianness, yet not in absolute terms as it also stresses the need to accommodate cultural differences between the volunteers and the Armenians in Armenia that implies the AVC recognizes the existence of diverse modes of Armenianness in Armenia and diaspora. Still, within such an ambiguous discourse, Armenia is attached a symbolic value as the embodiment of the correct Armenianness, although frail. Overall, the AVC constructs Armenia both as an instrument for the extra-territorial Armenian ethno-national construction and as the loci of Armenianness.

Yet, arguably, within the AVC discourse the real value of Armenia lies elsewhere. The *raison d'être* of the AVC quoted in pages 197 and 198 together with the background info quoted in footnote 343 are the pivotal passages in this regard. These passages refer to the misfortunes of Armenia as a post-soviet country, whose ties with the Western world have been cut off under the Soviet rule and the Armenian people, who, for centuries, struggled to survive at the face of difficulties and most importantly the “Armenian Genocide of 1915”. Importantly, a similar passage existed in the homepage of the AVC on November 30, which was not available anymore latest by August 19, 2012, which was as follows:

³⁴⁸ The AVC Summer 2006 and Spring 2007 newsletters includes passages on this point. However, these newsletters were not available anymore by 01.07.2013 as explained. See, also the December 21, 2009 press release at <http://www.armenianvolunteer.org/media-connection/press-releases/2009/37-creative-ways-to-participate-in-toy-and-school-supply-drive>, latest access 01.07.2013). The AVC Spring 2008 Newsletter, too, informs the wedding of an AVC volunteer with an Armenian of Armenia. Dating and marriages are mostly overlooked yet an important component of the establishment of the ethno-national unity.

Following centuries of nearly continuous foreign domination, a free and independent Armenia was reborn on September 21, 1991. Confronting the legacy of genocide, natural disaster, war, emigration, and the transition from a post-soviet economy, Armenia has made tremendous progress in the years since independence.

Much, however, remains to be done, and the Armenian Volunteer Corps provides innumerable service opportunities for those willing to meet the rewarding challenges of nation building. *Living and working in Armenia is not simply fulfilling – it is an investment in the future of the Armenian nation.*

AVC's motto – Come Move Mountains – is achieved each day by the extraordinary efforts of our dedicated volunteers

Please join us! (emphasis added).

Bringing these together, it can be argued that within the AVC discourse, Armenia's progress and connection with the Western world is implied as the restoration of the historical justice for the injustices done to Armenians throughout the centuries. As such, within this framework, Armenia is constructed as the collective symbol of the Armenians and a mirror to judge whether justice for Armenians is established or not that should be evaluated by the progress of Armenia. By this way, Armenia and Armenian nation are framed as one entity that is symbolized by Armenia. As such, the progress and wellbeing of Armenia is attached a symbolic significance beyond its actual implications.

4.3 Christian Youth Mission to Armenia

Christian Youth Mission to Armenia (CYMA) was initiated by Archbishop Hovnan Derderian in 2001 following his “spiritual Pilgrimage” to Armenia “on the occasion of the 1700 Anniversary of the official adoption of Christianity as the state religion of Armenia” as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization³⁴⁹ in the USA. The CYMA is an affiliate of the Armenian Church Youth Organization of the Western Diocese (ACYO-WD), the youth organization of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin³⁵⁰ (see, Yaldezian 2007a). As a church youth organization, the mission of the ACYO-WD is defined as facilitating the integration of “its members into the life of the church by providing opportunities for Worship, Service, Education, and Fellowship in Christ

349 See, footnote 301.

350 The official website of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin is at <http://www.armenianchurchwd.com/> (latest access 28.12.2013). This website contains a brief official history of the Armenian Apostolic Church in the United States between 1898 and 2007 and the Western Diocese at <http://www.armenianchurchwd.com/diocese/history-of-the-western-diocese/> (latest access 28.12.2013).

according to the doctrines and traditions of the Armenian Apostolic Church” (ACYO 2000-2011a)³⁵¹. In addition, the by-laws of the ACYO-WD declares that, it shall “promote the study and appreciation of Armenian cultural heritage” and “strengthen the fellowship and solidarity among its members”, as well (ACYO 2000-2011b)

As such, the ACYO-WD does not limit its mission with strictly religious matters. In addition to acculturation of the youth with the teachings of the Armenian Apostolic Church, the ACYO-WD aims at cultural and communal survival of the Armenian-American community within the jurisdiction of the Western Diocese³⁵². To achieve this objective, in addition to conferences, meetings and cultural events, the ACYO-WD organizes two major events, namely, summer camps in Dunlap, California since 1987 for the children who are eight years of age or older³⁵³ and the CYMA trips to Armenia. From this, it can be seen that the CYMA Armenia trips are primarily conceptualized as a means to strengthen the Armenian Christian faith and by extension Armenian identity among the diasporic Armenian youth, and to consolidate the communal ties in the diaspora.

In 2004 and 2005, the CYMA had participants from the East Coast of the USA and the UK, and in 2006 it began recruiting participants from all over the world, although there is no information as regards to the specific participant-sending countries³⁵⁴. Hence, although the

351 As regards to membership, “a communicant of the Armenian Church (one who has been baptized and/or confirmed in the Armenian Church) who has attained the age of twelve (12) years, is eligible to become a member of the ACYO-WD” (ACYO 2000-2011b).

352 This is not contradictive given that throughout the history Armenian Apostolic Church has been more than merely a religious institution. Rather, the Armenian Apostolic Church has functioned as an administrative and social institution regulating the intra-communal and inter-communal affairs of the Armenian communities in the absence of an Armenian state for long centuries.

353 See, <http://www.hyecamp.com/> (latest access 28.12.2013) for official information on the ACYO-WD summer camps.

354 The CYMA explains this as the follows:

We have some changes this year, and we are trying to get as many people as possible. For example, if you are 18 and up, you can join us for both the pilgrimage (2 weeks) and the internship program (8 weeks). We are actively working to secure scholarship funds because we want everyone to be able to afford to come with us. As always, for our readers and viewers around the world, EVERYONE is welcome to join us. This means you on the *East Coast and Canada, or in Europe, Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Oceanus. This is a great way to meet Armenians from all around the world and create lifelong meaningful friendships.* Don't worry, we take good care of everyone on in our mission.

In 2004 and 2005 we had participants from the East Coast of the United States, and our good friends from ole' blighty in the Manchester Armenian Youth Organization in Manchester, United Kingdom. These are friendships that were created and bonded over living together in Yerevan over 4 or 5 weeks and traveling all over Hayastan and Artshakh (Yaldezian 2006a).

CYMA is under the patronage of the Western Diocese, its activities reach beyond the jurisdiction of the latter. Putting no geographical limitations for its recruits gives the CYMA a translocal perspective, which renders it a globally functioning organization with a trans-state *modus operandi*. However, this does not bring in huge numbers of recruits. On the contrary, although no statistics are available online, from the CYMA blog it can be seen that between 2004 and 2011 only over 100 Armenian youth participated in the CYMA Armenia trips³⁵⁵. Still, its trans-state *modus operandi* demonstrates that the CYMA does not only seek acculturation of the youth with the teachings of the Armenian Apostolic Church and strengthen communal ties within the jurisdiction of the Western Diocese in the U.S.A., but intends to do so in the global scale.

The cost of the CYMA Armenia trips is around \$3000-\$3500 per participant (see, CYMA 2009). To reduce this high cost, the CYMA runs a sponsorship program³⁵⁶. In addition, in 2008 one-year online sponsorship program was commenced that gives companies and organizations the opportunity to have their logos and the links to their websites in the CYMA website for one year in return of \$250-\$500-\$1000 donation³⁵⁷. The CYMA also benefits from fund raising activities such as estate sales as another source of income.

4.3.1 Thousand Sermons in One Journey³⁵⁸

The CYMA summer trips to Armenia consist of visits to religious and historical sites in Armenia and/or internship programs in this country³⁵⁹. However, neither internship programs

There is no information as regards to the requirements of participating the CYMA trips other than being Armenian between eighteen and twenty-nine years old (2007a). Hence, it is not clear if affinity with the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin is a must.

355 According to the partial information in the CYMA blog, the numbers of the CYMA participants in years are as the follows: between 2004 and 2007, over 25; in 2008, 26; in 2009, 10 (see, Yaldezian 2007a; 2008a; Merganian 2009b).

356 For this sponsorship program see, Yaldezian (2007b).

357 For the details of the CYMA on-line sponsorship program see, Yaldezian (2008a).

358 “A trip to Armenia is worth more than one thousand sermons” is the motto that the CYMA.

359 The CYMA Armenia trip program varies in years. In 2007, the CYMA organized two separate programs as two-week “spiritual pilgrimage” and eight-week “internship program” (see, Yaldezian 2007a). In 2010, pilgrimage and internship programs were combined in a four-week trip (CYMA 2010). The same combined program continued in 2011 and 2012. The sites visited in 2007 within the spiritual pilgrimage program included Soorp Etchmiadzin, Zvartnots, Haghpat, Sanahin, Vanadzor, Dilijan, Hamberd Fortress, Saghmosavank, Oshagan, Stepanagert, Shushi, Ghandazar, Khorvirap, Noravank, Datev, Jermuk, Mer Doon, Tzitzernakaberd, Ashtaraki Dzor, Garni, Geghard, Lake Sevan and Sevanavank, Ruins of the ancient Ani, Parz Lake, Gai Village, Gyrumi, Soorp Taline, Byrukan Observatory, the Zadig Orphanage Festival (see, Yaldezian 2007c).

Ani is a medieval Armenian city in the present day Turkey’s Kars city at the Armenia-Turkey border. Between mid-tenth and mid-eleventh centuries Ani served as the capital of the Armenian Bagratuni Kingdom. In this period, Ani blossomed considerably and its population reached over a hundred-thousand inhabitants. In the next centuries, however, Ani was gradually desolated, lost its importance and eventually became a ruined and

are introduced merely in reference to career opportunities nor are the visits to religious and historical sites in Armenia defined as ordinary touristic excursions. While introduction to contemporary daily life in Armenia is presented as the main purpose of the internship programs, visits to religious and historical sites in Armenia are delineated as “spiritual pilgrimages”. As such, both internship and visits to religious and historical sites are framed as cognitive journeys, the anticipated result of which is the deeper comprehension of Armenia and Armenian identity, the diaspora and diasporic existence, the connection between Armenia and the diaspora, and the eventual change in the mindset of the Armenia trip participants, that is, their indoctrination as “good Armenians”³⁶⁰. This cognitive renewal is expected to actuate

abandoned city. Because the ruins of ancient Ani are at the Turkish side of the border between Armenia and Turkey, pilgrims get the opportunity only to view this ancient city from the Armenian side of the border. See footnote 411 for a recount of visit to ancient Ani, alas from the Armenian side of the border.

360 In 2007, CYMA blog published question-answer type interviews with three CYMA participants (see for example, Rose 2007). In these interviews, the following questions were directed to the interviewees.

- 1) What idea did you have about Armenia that changed the most as a result of the trip?
- 2) Of all the places that you visited what is your favorite Church, Cultural Landmark, and Natural site and why?
- 3) What was the main lesson that you learned in Armenia that you plan on applying to your everyday life?
- 4) What is one experience that you had which affected your faith and why?
- 5) What’s your favorite memory from the trip? Favorite Quote?
- 6) Any further reflections?

First, third and the fourth questions reveal CYMA’s prospects of the Armenia with respect to changes in participants’ way of thinking consequent to the strengthening of the Armenian selves.

Likewise, another CYMA blog in the same year quotes from the blogs of the 2007 Armenia trip participants. These are the quotes made by David Yaldezian, an active member of the CYMA program since 2005 and the current Chair of the CYMA Executive Committee. Therefore, it can be thought that the quotes are the views that the CYMA aspires to highlight. These quotes include both Armenia-related and self-related insights. The former contains criticisms as well as the observation on the developments taking place in this country. The self related quotes are about finding/discovering oneself, including finding the Armenian-self and the inspiration gained in Armenia to give back. All these reveal that one of the expected outcomes of the CYMA Armenia trip is to transform the diasporic youth into diasporic Armenians youth. The followings are these quotes.

Going to the museums and monuments have really inspired me and touched me. I’ve never been one who likes writing non-fiction, but I’ve been taking notes and pictures everyday; once I get home, I’m going to start writing as much as I possibly can about Armenia. That will be the first book I have published, I promise." Mary Keutelian - I Don't Want to Leave Yet

As individuals we should find our own path, we build our own bridges through our experiences, and we should give back to Armenia where we see ourselves contributing best. The only ones in charge of the knowledge we gain from this trip is ourselves. Lena Rakijian, - Why are we Here

"...Genatz to this persistent nation whose ways I’m slowly learning, loving and growing more attached to. The cool thing is, if everyone has a day like I had yesterday where you learn where you came from and how you’re ancestors moved and how your Family survived, lived and grew in other places. You win, and they still lose, whoever they may be at this present time." Vaughn Eyvazian - Julfa. Golden Apricot

"I have been observing Armenians since the minute my plane landed. Their main focus is detail, and although it may hinder them from a quicker development, I love watching and seeing the outcomes of their hard work. " Alene Tcekmadyian - The Talent, the Hope, the Passion

the eventual unity of the ethnic Armenians worldwide. It is for this higher end that the CYMA warns the CYMA participants about the non-touristic character of the trips in the following way³⁶¹.

CYMA has been designed and organized under the auspicious of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church. This trip was organized for an ease and an efficacy not found with a typical trip. This is not a high school trip or tour around Armenia with a travel agency. We are not going to these locations to just visit, walk around and leave. We are the Christian Youth Mission to Armenia and this is your Spiritual Pilgrimage to your homeland! (Yaldezian 2008b).

This warning that ends with an exclamation mark also implies that “spiritual pilgrimage” to Armenia is a task to be accomplished by the Armenian youth, who is expected to behave accordingly. However, besides this rhetoric based on duties, the CYMA stresses concrete benefits of Armenia trips such as career opportunities and the excitements that await the diasporic Armenians. This uplifting rhetoric, however, sometimes gets too embellished. For example, the CYMA explains the accommodation of the participants in Armenia as follows:

We will be staying at the nicest business hotels in Hayastan. It is located right off Hanrapetutun Hadabarak. Vartkes Barsam, a member of Western Diocese donated this hotel to the American University of Armenia and the CYMA-WD group has access to it. Thank you, thank you, thank you. Last year they modernized this hotel, so this year we took advantage... all CYMA members will be in one centralized location. This is great for your safety, organization and of course comfort. *This hotel is VERY nice and you live like Kings and Queens.* Maybe too nice indeed (Yaldezian 2008c)³⁶².

"The last problem that I found particularly disturbing was the apathy expressed by most villagers in regards to the betterment of their respective villages. Most wanted change, they asked and beseeched us for a variety of things, but some seemed hesitant or even opposed to undertaking remedies for the problems they had outlined. It was almost as if they had lost hope, as if they had forgotten the strength in themselves." Alex Giragozian - "Reflections on a Trip to Tavoush"

"At this moment, I felt a rush of emotion come over me and realized why I am so proud to be Armenian and to be a Christian. Everyone in the church no longer was Beirutzi, Hayastanci or Bolsahye but ARMENIAN. All one in the same coming together to share in our culture's religion and history." Sarah Mergonian - Etchmiadzin (Yaldezian 2007d).

³⁶¹ A similar warning in the CYMA blog is as follows:

All trips are mandatory unless you are in the hospital (you won't be), and when you are in Armenia, you represent your family, your Western Diocese, your CYMA group and of course, the WHOLE diaspora. You will be treated like an adult, so you are expected to act like one (Yaldezian 2008c).

³⁶² Another commercial of the CYMA Armenia trips with reference to accommodation in the CYMA blog is the following.

All in all, our journey to Artsakh was absolutely(SIC!) amazing. We all fell in love with Stepanagert. The air is clear, the music to our ears (the honking cars) was gone, and the

Overall, it can be seen that the CYMA discourse blends “hard” moral and “soft” commercial rhetorical elements. Yet, be it a responsibility or an opportunity, or these two together, Armenia trips are presented as a top item in the list of the Armenian must-to-do list that at times takes a quite strong form as the following quote demonstrates.

...Bishop Sebu Zuljian. Upon conveying his fatherly blessings and greetings to the youth, the primate stressed the importance of the diasporan youth’s love and support for Armenia and their appreciation of its spiritual and cultural values. The primate urged them to never sever there (SIC!) connection to Armenia’s soil and challenged them consistently visit the homeland. “*See how [children] love their parents and never turn their face from them, likewise you must love Armenia. Only at this time you can be worthy of your Armenian name,*” said Sebu Surpazan. (Matt 2007, emphasis added).

A kind of renewed sense of Armenianness by getting “acquainted with contemporary Armenian society” in “the land that the faith of our forefathers established” is the core prospect of the Armenia trips that is referred to as the spiritually uplifting mission of the Armenia trips³⁶³. The short presentation of the CYMA Armenia trip quoted below evidently expresses the prospective self-discovery in ethno-national terms as follows:

CYMA Pilgrims will travel to the most breath taking spiritual and historical sites throughout Armenia and Artsakh. The Spiritual Pilgrimage and

people were very hospitable and friendly. The hotel we stayed at was very comfortable, we basically got a whole house to ourselves, 5 bedrooms, each with its own bathroom! It is called Heghnar, and I highly recommend it. If you are planning a trip to Artsakh, let me know, i(SIC!) have their contact info! (Yaldezian 2006b).

For similar blogs see, Yaldezian(2007a; 2006c; 2006d; 2006e) and Mergeanian (2009a).

363 Alas, it is disputable whether one can get acquainted with contemporary Armenia society in four or eight weeks trips. Given that pilgrimage is the main component of the CYMA Armenia trips, it is again suspicious to what extend historical site visits can help to accomplish the CYMA goals. Likewise, staying in nice hotels or at rented flats close to the Yerevan center together reduces the possibility of meaningful interactions between the CYMA participants and the “man on the street”. Similarly, in a blog posted in 2008 the CYMA mentions that “most people spend way more than they thought they would on food, gifts, etc so be prepared to spend anywhere between \$500-\$1500” (Yaldezian 2008c). \$500-\$1500 is the amount of money that would be spent in eighteen days. The armbanks.am reports the nominal wage in Armenia in January 2012 was \$295 (Armbanks 2012). Given the relative economic development in Armenia, it can be thought that this amount was lower in 2008. This gap is also another reason to doubt the achievability of the goal of the CYMA. Although the good intention at the background can be seen, the following quote is another revelation of the inequality between the CYMA participants and the local Armenians.

Also, bring pens, pencils, coloured paper, notebooks, writing paper, markers, crayons, coloured pencils etc from Target, Wall mart etc. We will drop these items off at the diocese of Yerevan and it will make a HUGE impression for our group. This is a HUGE donation that goes a lot further than \$20 you will spend! (Yaldezian 2008c).

Bringing all these together, it is not surprising that, some of the daily realities of Armenia are perceived as “surreal” by the CYMA Armenia trip participants as the below quote demonstrates.

One of the most surreal experiences was the closeness to the Turkish border, where we could hear the call to prayer. The sound must have traveled at least 3-4 miles and yet it was so clear (Yaldezian 2006f).

Internship is designed to be an *extraordinary time to learn and discover the Armenian identity in our spiritual and ancestral homeland.*

Pilgrims will travel throughout Armenia visiting special locations, lead by a clergyman of the Western Diocese as well as our CYMA Coordinator. During each week your internship will introduce you to contemporary Armenian life and create life long relationships with your brother and sisters in Armenia (CYMA 2004-2011a).

Attaining a “new perspective on the significant role of the church through an enlightened spiritual foundation” (Yaldezian 2006e) is the presented as the most important aspect of the discovery of Armenian identity. Importantly, according to the CYMA this can be achieved only in Armenia because the Armenian Apostolic Church as “a traditional eastern orthodox church” is difficult to comprehend “in a western and modern society without witnessing its historical triumph first hand” (Yaldezian 2006e)³⁶⁴. This understanding leads the CYMA to adopt the phrase “a trip to Armenia is worth more than one thousand sermons” as its motto.

The discovery of the Armenian-self via Armenian Christianity is expected to be accompanied by a renewal of the mode of thinking among the CYMA participants, which is expected to bring deeper perceptiveness on diaspora, Armenia and the relationship between the two. This projection is demonstrated in the CYMA blog as:

³⁶⁴ The below quotes are the examples of the ways in which CYMA Armenia trips are presented as life-changing events for facilitating a stronger sense of Armenianness and Christianity. Note that, Christianity, in general, and Armenian Apostolic Christianity, in specific, are one of the main markers of the Armenian identity. Importantly, the recent interest in Muslim-Armenians or Islamized-Armenians is an adverse trend to this perception.

The completion of the second CYMA mission the Western Diocese has clearly established a new tradition in the lives of their youth. This trip represents a commitment to the mission on behalf of the Church and from now on it will continue to grow and provide the youth with the opportunity to grow in spirituality and Christian fellowship while discovering their motherland (Yaldezian 2005).

The CYMA-WD program’s aim is to create a seminal bond with the Armenian Church, culture and heritage through the participation in the daily life in Armenia creating a bridge between Armenia and the diaspora (Yaldezian 2007a).

CYMA 2009 has come and gone. Another year of memories, connections, and changed lives forever.

The CYMA program has been a catalyst of beautiful reflections, blogs, and poems. It's this type of reflection and soul searching that is so powerful and renewing in our Spiritual lives as Armenians and our daily lives as active members of the worldwide Armenian community (Yaldezian 2009f).

Last summer seven young Armenians had the journey of a lifetime. Going to Armenia helped these participants understand the true beauty of Armenia with its historical ruins within this mountainous country. They were able to reconnect with their identity, culture, and religion. Living together for a whole month helped the group become a family as they ate together, walked the streets of Yerevan, and understood what it means to be a Christian Armenian (Tatevik 2011).

“Bridge the Gap” is the ongoing mission of the CYMA program. We believe we must leverage the resources that we have available in the diaspora and create an environment of collaboration between the diaspora, Armenia and Artsakh. Through this collaboration, a bridge of knowledge and resources can be created and sustained. Throughout the duration of either journey, participants have the ability to learn and share their ideas, skills and motivations with other Armenian students from around the diaspora and Armenia and Artsakh. This is not a one way road. We expect and count on participants to come back to their diasporan communities not only with a deeper understanding of Armenia and Artsakh, but also a new perspective of the diaspora, the Armenian Apostolic Church, and their role in their development. It (SIC!) should be the goal for all Armenian youth to experience their spiritual and cultural identity (Yaldejian 2007e).

Likewise, David Yaldejian³⁶⁵ in another blog entry declares the “importance of staying involved with the mission of CYMA even while back in the diaspora”. He says, "the journey doesn't stop now that you have arrived home. It is up to you to continue this journey and continue to Bridge the Gap". His Eminence Hovnan Srpazan, on the same track, states "the journey back from Armenia is just as vital as the journey to Armenia. Stay close to the CYMA mission, and keep your experiences close to your heart." (Yaldejian 2006g). These proclamations on the continuation of the journey after the Armenia trip expresses CYMA’s prospect of diaspora-building through a change in the mindset of the participants following the spiritual pilgrimage in Armenia³⁶⁶. As regards to diaspora-building, the mission statement of the CYMA states:

The Christian Youth Mission to Armenia (CYMA) serves to *unify and strengthen the Armenian community* by establishing a BRIDGE between diaspora's Youth and Our Homeland through participation in the social, religious, professional and cultural life of Hayastan (CYMA 2004-2011b).

The form of the Armenia-diaspora relationship that the CYMA foresees is not different from that of the Republic of Armenia and many other diaspora organizations. That is as the following quote demonstrates, the CYMA conceptualizes diaspora as an economic and socio-cultural asset. Yet, what is noteworthy is that the CYMA mentions also the spiritual domain in Armenia, although this may be just inelobarate rhetoric.

365 See footnote 360.

366 As mentioned above in the text, the by-laws of the ACYO-WD defines community building as one of its goals. With respect to community building, seemingly accessory, yet important factor is the events such as fund raising activities, alumni reunions, pre-trip meetings, family meetings that contribute to the consolidation of the Armenian diaspora community around a common cause (see, Yaldejian 2006h; 2008d; Matt 2008).

Hence, a gap has been created over the years of development in the diaspora separate and different from Hayastan. However, as Hayastan develops into a stronger and more prosperous republic, it will need a continuous influx of resources to sustain and develop itself. Luckily, we have a diaspora. Not only is this diaspora large, but it is global, and it is multicultural. This allows for many different specialties affecting a wide spectrum of development in the social, cultural, professional, and *spiritual lives in Hayastan and Artsakh* (Yaldezian 2006e, emphasis added).

Within this framework, parallel to the common conceptualization of Armenia-diaspora relations, the CYMA identifies the diaspora as an asset for the benefit of Armenia. This understanding goes parallel to the conceptualization of diaspora as a terra of lesser Armenianness, and Armenia as the condition of the continuity of Armenianness.

It can be seen that, similar to the BR/DH and the AVC, the CYMA projects the prospective results of the Armenia trips to follow a spiral path that begins from the individual and enlarges through local and global levels, that is, from individual Armenians to diaspora communities, and to Armenia-diaspora relations. The eventual end in this sequence is the construction of the worldwide Armenian ethno-nation.

4.3.2 Armenia: Spiritual Roots and Contemporary Armenianness

Along with “a trip to Armenia is worth more than one thousand sermons”, “bridging the gap” is another motto of the CYMA, arguably as an expression of the projected interconnected achievements of the consolidation of the diaspora communities and Armenia-diaspora linkages, and the eventually the trans-state unity of the Armenians. The prerequisite of these achievements is the construction of the Armenian-self and Armenia is the essential condition of this fundamental accomplishment. Therefore, within this framework, Armenia is the central building block of the bridges that the CYMA hopes to build. Overall, according to the CYMA, Armenia is the decisive factor of the extra-territorial Armenian ethno-nation building as the terrain of Armenianness and the territorial connection belt of the extra-territorial ethno-nation.

The below quote from the CYMA blog reveals why within the framework that the CYMA draws Armenia has such a central position.

It should be the goal for all Armenian youth to experience their spiritual and cultural identity and this program is designed to accomplish this goal. It

gives Armenian youth the opportunity to truly experience their Motherland, *contemporary Armenian life and experience their Spiritual Roots* (Christian Youth Mission to Armenia 2004-2011a)³⁶⁷.

As this passage demonstrates, the CYMA attributes Armenia two main traits: 1) the soil where the spiritual roots lie and 2) the stage where contemporary Armenian life is performed. As regards to the spiritual roots, the CYMA identifies Armenia as the “land that the faith of our fore-fathers established” (Yaldezian 2006i). As such, the CYMA spots Armenia as the soil where Armenianness has flourished, a claim that forms the logical ground of associating the Armenianness with Armenia as the above mentioned claim of the organic link between Armenian Christianity and Armenia and the subsequent discrepancy between Armenian Christianity and western societies demonstrates. Framing the matter in this way, the CYMA points out Armenia as the ultimate medium between contemporary Armenians and the authentic, that is, correct, Armenianness that ethnic ancestors have created.

Yet, the CYMA does not conceptualize Armenianness as a relic from the past. Nor does it frame Armenia simply as a connecting belt between the past and the present. Rather, the CYMA acknowledges the temporally dynamic nature of the Armenian ethno-national identity. As such, the CYMA comes to terms with a historicist understanding of Armenianness that is neither timeless nor static but changing and transforming in time expressed by the expression “contemporary Armenian life” in the above quote. However, while acknowledging the temporally dynamic nature of the Armenian ethno-national identity, the CYMA anchors it to Armenia. In other words, while the CYMA frees Armenians from the time, imprisons it in space by attributing it a spatial character. As such, the CYMA identifies Armenianness as an entity that evolves in time but remains in place. Consequently, within the CYMA discourse, Armenia appears as the terra where Armenianness was born, evolved and still evolves, that is, the loci of Armenianness that not only enables its existence but also its evolution. This understanding, however, overlooks the importance of diaspora centers flourished and demised throughout the history such as Isfahan (New Julfa), Madras and Calcutta, Istanbul, Lebanon and California, where great contributions to the Armenian culture have been achieved.

367 Furthermore, this quote demonstrates that the CYMA presents Armenia trips as an obligation, as discussed above.

4.4 Land and Culture Organization

The Land and Culture Organization (LCO) was founded in 1987 as a 501c(3) non-profit organization and an affiliate of the France-based Organisation Terre et Culture (OTC)³⁶⁸. In 1992, the LCO became the US chapter of the *Union International Organisation Terre et Culture* (UIOTC), an umbrella organization consist of chapters in France, UK, Belgium and Armenia (see, L'Organisation Terre et Culture 2014). The LCO Board is composed of five personals. The LCO president is also the member of the Board of UIOTC, which is composed of one personal from each UIOTC chapter. However, the LCO website does not provide any further information about the Board members besides their names and tasks in the LCO Board (see, Land and Culture Organization 2014a).

The OTC, as the mother organization of the UIOTC, declares:

Prefigured in 1976, Land and Culture Organization was born in France in 1978 on the belief that any reflection on the situation of Armenians must necessarily take into account the legacy of history in its entirety and in its true geographical dimension, and the defense of identity goes through a restored relationship with the site custodians of memory and heritage (L'Organisation Terre et Culture 2014).

Following that, the OTC states its objective as the promotion of the “Armenian cultural heritage through planning, developing and implementing specific projects, and creating the economic and social conditions necessary for its development through the implementation of cooperative actions” (L'Organisation Terre et Culture 2014). Likewise, the UK chapter states its organizational goal as “preserving historical Armenian sites in modern and historic Armenia”. The UK Chapter additionally mentions “connecting Diasporan Armenians to their homeland through volunteer work opportunities” and “promoting and encouraging Armenian Culture in the UK” (Land and Culture Organization-UK n.d.). Finally, the LCO, the US-chapter, declares the following principles³⁶⁹:

- To gain and disseminate an intimate knowledge of the land and our rich culture.

368 The LCO website states 1977 as the year of foundation of the OTC (see, Land and Culture Organization 2014b). However, as seen in the quote in the text, the OTC website states 1978 as the year of its foundation (see, L'Organisation Terre et Culture 2014). This is one of a number of contradictory information in the LCO and OTC websites.

369 The UIOTC has no website. Therefore, first-hand information on the goals, vision and modus operandi of the UIOTC is not accessible. The Belgium chapter has no website, too. The website of the Armenia chapter at <http://lcoarmenia.wordpress.com/> (latest access 28.12.2013) does not contain relevant information.

- To raise international awareness that the treasures of the Armenian heritage are at the mercy of an indifferent world.
- To rescue these treasures from total destruction.
- To assist in the social and economic developments of communities living in historic and present-day Armenia (Land and Culture Organization 2014b).

Bringing these together, it can be seen that the main objective of the UIOTC, hence the LCO, is to facilitate preservation of the Armenian heritage and to create social and economic conditions of the former. To this end, it identifies the conservation of the historical Armenian sites as the chief imperative as it classifies history and geography as the determinants of the Armenianness and the heritage sites as the ultimate fortress of the Armenian ethno-national identity³⁷⁰. Furthermore, UIOTC seeks to promote love and appreciation of the Armenian heritage among Armenians. Strengthening the connections between diaspora Armenians and Armenia and assisting social and economic development in Armenia are envisioned as the correlates of these prospective achievements. Finally, the UIOTC aims to introduce the world with the Armenian culture and to raise international awareness of the vanishing historical Armenians artifacts³⁷¹.

Although the UIOTC has chapters in France, USA, Armenia, UK, Belgium, it recruits volunteers also from Karabakh, Canada, Syria and unspecified European countries (see, Land and Culture Organization 2014h; 2010e; 2009). There is no information that implies age limitation for the volunteers, yet the LCO Press Release issued on August 1, 2009 states the ages of the participants in 2009 ranged from mid-teens to mid-forties, with the medium age nineteen. The same press release informs that most of the LCO volunteers were students (Land and Culture Organization 2014o).

³⁷⁰ The LCO website claims, “for over 30 years, the Land and Culture Organization (LCO)” has completed eleven renovation projects; seven in Armenia, two in Karabakh and another two in “historical Armenia”, i.e., Syria and Northern Iran (Land and Culture Organization 2014c). Strikingly, the LCO identifies Syria and Northern Iran as parts of historical Armenia, which is simply a misrepresentation. Notably, There is a lack of clarity and distinction in names of the UIOTC chapters. Here, the American LCO refers to OTC with the name LCO. This may be a result of the organizational affinity of the UIOTC chapters. However, it may also be a result of negligence. The point mentioned in the previous footnote displays the factor of negligence cannot be ignored.

³⁷¹ Victimhood is one of the major self-attributes of the post-genocide hegemonic Armenian narrative as discussed in the previous chapters. Victimhood often goes parallel with a complaint both to and about the Western World for leaving the Armenians, the Western-oriented civilized Christian nation, alone in the midst and to the mercy of uncivilized Muslim nations. The principles of the LCO-US chapter quoted above reproduces this narrative based on self-love, victimhood and complaint. As such, the LCO discourse constitutes another evidence that the new generation diaspora organizations have not achieved a decisive renewal of the post-genocide hegemonic Armenian narrative.

The LCO declares it is not sponsored by any political, religious or benevolent organization, and donations and membership fees, a minimum of \$50, are its only financial sources. The LCO states its volunteers “pay for their own expenses to work in villages and on historic sites in Armenia” and “all funds received are used for worksite supplies and architectural support” (Land and Culture Organization 2014d). To take part in the LCO summer campaigns volunteers are required to pay \$750 to covers the expenses of lodging, meals and weekend excursions. In addition, participants also have to pay their travel expenses to/from their work sites in Armenia, Karabakh or “historical Armenia”.

4.4.1 Avatars of the Armenianness

To attract volunteers, the LCO relies on a romantic representation of the LCO campaigns³⁷². By reflecting on challenging conditions, tough living standards and sometimes absence of basic facilities in the far away villages, unanticipated incidences and difficulties³⁷³, the LCO draws attention to the adventures awaiting the volunteers in Armenia. These adventures are presented as the distinctiveness of experiencing Armenia as a part of the LCO campaigns. For example, in one of the Campaign News, under the title “LCO-OTC Adventures in Armenia” the recount of an off-day picnic in the country-side ends as “only in Armenia, can you go out in the sun, picnic by a stream, get stuck in the rain, help someone out of the mud and return to "high tea". This was not a tourist attraction. This is the real Armenia experience” (LCO-OTC Adventures 2013). Another Campaign News states “the work of digging a new wall and clearing out bones and rocks continues, but (SIC!) as our group is finishing it's last days of work, there are still some more adventures to be had” (Land and Culture Organization 2014h). With this kind of naratives, the LCO designates not only the Armenian countryside, but also the volunteer work as an adventure in itself. The LCO Campaign News and Press Releases broadcast stories of the local people welcoming the LCO volunteers. Narrations of the special blessing of the priest “who was grateful to see so many diasporan youth in this remote area of Armenia”, the excitement of the children³⁷⁴, village officials and school children “dancing

372 Teamwork, immersion, hard work and fun are the four points that the LCO homepage at <http://www.lcousa.org/> (latest access 28.12.2013) underlines as the aspects of the LCO campaigns with the support of visuals.

373 For example, in one of the Campaign News writes “they unearthed tangible examples of our historic and rich past while living in the difficult realities of today’s rural Armenian villages” (Land and Culture Organization 2014i).

374 The excitement of the children is mostly directed towards female volunteers. One of the Campaign News, for instance, tells the following.

The children are everywhere and are the pulse of the village. They cannot get enough of the volunteers, especially the girls. Each female volunteer has her own set of groupies that follows her around all the time at every job site. The volunteers are also clearing the area

warmly” upon the arrival of the LCO volunteers hint the prospective LCO volunteers that they would be the center of attention of the local village people in Armenia (see, Land and Culture Organization 2014h; 2013i 2011c; 2011i). As such, alongside adventures, the LCO highlights socio-psychological satisfaction, as well. Given that the medium age of the LCO volunteers is nineteen and majority of them are students in the developed Western countries, who typically look for exciting stimulations and distinct experiences, it is not difficult to imagine that the LCO’s representation of its campaigns is inspiring for the prospective volunteers³⁷⁵. Conspicuously, this narrative is not handy only for attracting volunteers; it is also an important factor in constructing the image of Armenia as a distinct place of excitement.

In addition to this romantic narrative, the LCO emphasizes a particular sense of duty of conservation and perpetuation of the ethno-national heritage that is formulated by the motto “preserving our past securing our future” (Land and Culture Organization 2014f). The LCO explains that the idea of the LCO was born “on the premise that Diasporan Armenians not only have a *moral responsibility to preserve their ancient culture and heritage*, but that they must also take an active role by *physically working on the lands of their ancestors*” (Land and Culture Organization 2014b, emphasis added)³⁷⁶. The same statement further states:

Since 1977, the LCO has organized summer campaigns whereby volunteers from around the world and Armenia can come to work on their ancestral lands. They come to give their time, talents, energies, and resources. In return, they gain the knowledge that *they have not taken the heritage given to them by their ancestors for granted but have ensured its continuation for the next generation to come* (emphasis added).

The LCO is not only concerned with passing on the Armenian heritage from the past to the future but also with directing the contemporary Armenian youth to reclaim their Armenian identity. The LCO expects to reach these goals by assuming three interconnected accomplishments, namely, architectural preservation of the historical Armenian sites,

around the churchyard and the village’s monument to the fallen soldiers of World War II. On one of the days, the local boys wanted to treat the volunteers to a special transportation system, a donkey (Land and Culture Organization 2014n).

375 For example, one of the LCO press releases states: “the volunteers will be staying within the village, and will have the opportunity to experience a village life which most people don’t experience on a trip to Armenia (Land and Culture Organization 2014n). Certainly, especially for the youth, having an unconventional summer trip provides the LCO volunteers with a surplus such as telling their exciting adventures back at home to their peers.

376 Preservation of the “ancient culture and heritage” is an interesting expression for revealing the vain sociological outlook and over-idealism of the LCO.

community renovation, and land cultivation projects. However, the absence of any information on community renovation and land cultivation projects in Campaign News and Press Releases of the LCO reveals that in practice the LCO is active only on architectural preservation. As such, community renovation and land cultivation projects remain only as rhetorical elements.

The LCO portrays historical Armenian sites as artifacts much more than mere historical remnants *per se*. Likewise, according to the LCO these sites are more than simple material representations of the ancient Armenian culture. Rather, the LCO conceptualizes the historical Armenian sites as the embodiments of the Armenian culture, physical containers of the Armenian spirit, materialized forms of the Armenianness, in brief, as the externalized and objectified Armenianness itself. As such, according to the LCO, historical sites are not simply the totems serving as an emblem of the Armenianness but the avatars of the Armenianness, the Krishna of the Armenian spirit, the idols of an idolater understanding of Armenianness. As historical Armenian sites are conceptualized as such, their permanency and existence is equated with the permanency and existence of the very Armenianness itself.

Conceptualization of the Armenian historical sites as the avatars of Armenianness is a correlate of the LCO's conceptualization of the Armenianness as a rigid essence temporally and spatially fixed in the past and in the Armenian land that is externalized and objectified by the Armenian historical sites, and Armenian countryside and rural life style. Such conceptualization however frames Armenianness as something external to and disintegrated from the contemporary daily life not only in diaspora but also in the Armenian urban spaces. As an effect, Armenianness within the LCO discourse is comparable to a holy sculpture in a faraway monastery in a faraway land that shall be respected and paid pilgrimage visits to reunify the self with the Armenian-self. This understanding eventually outlines Armenianness as an alienated identity, that is, a form that is estranged from the matter, i.e., the Armenian (wo)man, except for the Armenian villagers, who are represented as the maintainers of ancient Armenian way of life³⁷⁷. As such, Armenianness is understood as an entity that is not lived within the stir and spontaneity of the daily life but as a distinct ritual that is performed. The habitual use of the word "experience", that is, experiencing Armenian life, culture, history and

377 Obviously, associating the rural life in Armenia with ancient Armenianness has no socio-historical. In fact, this perception is another example of the futile intellectual comprehension and vain historical and sociological outlook of the LCO.

so on within the LCO discourse, in fact, is an implicit expression of such alienation as one of the campaign news in 2011 quoted below exemplifies.

Land and Culture Organization/Organisation Terre et Culture from North America, Europe and the Middle East volunteers have arrived in Yerevan and are staying together at Yerevan Hostel. The group has been enjoying the sites and sounds of Yerevan life before they head off to their campaign sites. *They have experienced Armenian history, religion, and culture.* On their first night here, American, French, and Syrian Armenians bonded over dinner with a live traditional Armenian band. In remembrance of their forefathers, LCO paid its respects at the Armenian Genocide Memorial and Museum while touring the capital of Yerevan. On Sunday, volunteers went to mass at Holy Etchmiadzin as well as visited Sourp Gayane, Sourp Hripsime, and Zvartnots. As part of their excursions, they visited and explored UNESCO world heritage sites of Geghart and Garni (Land and Culture Organization 2014l, emphasis added).

As this quote demonstrates, the LCO delineates ordinary touristic activities such as listening traditional Armenian music at a restaurant, visiting the Armenian Genocide Memorial and Museum and several historical sites, touring Yerevan³⁷⁸ and attending a mass at Etchmiadzin as experiencing Armenian history, religion, and culture through which the LCO volunteers are supposed to gain a “hint” of Armenianness and “feel Armenian”. Framing the matter as such results in the conceptualization of Armenia as an Armenian theme park or an ethnic Disneyland, where the streets are stages, landscape is a décor, people are stunts and daily life is a script. Unfortunately, conceptualization of Armenia in this way hardly facilitates a deeper comprehension of Armenia among the LCO volunteers. The expressions like “feeling Armenian”, “feeling at home” or “opportunity to live the rural Armenian life” are the manifestations of the failure of the LCO missions in this regard; what the LCO missions accomplish is just giving a taste of Armenianness, not its understanding.

It is this understanding that frames Armenianness as an externalized and objectified entity that lies behind the LCO’s claim of moral the responsibility of the preservation of the Armenian “ancient culture and heritage” and the following organizational goal of architectural preservation of the historical Armenian sites; according to the LCO’s framework, as the externalized and objectified Armenianness, only the conservation of the historical Armenian sites can guarantee the immortality of the millennia-old Armenianness. As such, this is the

378 Note that within the LCO discourse associating touring Yerevan with experiencing Armenianness is a contradiction for the fact that for the LCO not the modern Yerevan but the underdeveloped Armenian countryside is the terra of Armenianness.

only way to transmit Armenianness to the future. Therefore, within this framework it is not vain to equate architectural preservation with nation building as the following quote from one of the LCO Campaign News demonstrates:

The trip to Artsakh was a very moving experience for the volunteers. They felt a sense of pride that this region was recovered, and also that they participated in a *part of history and nation building*. The volunteers appreciated the value and sacrifice that the villagers play in the preservation of our land (Land and Culture Organization 2014m, emphasis added).

It is also noticeable that the idolater understanding of Armenianness as an extension of the objectivist outlook engenders an emphasis on the physical contact and labor with the historical remnants as the below quotes displays³⁷⁹.

Volunteers apply their *physical energy* on architectural preservation, land cultivation, and community development. LCO's summer campaigns provide Armenians the unique experience of discovering their ancestral roots and experiencing their cultural horizons by living and working on the land...

Be a participant in your history, not a viewer on the sidelines. *By touching and rebuilding with the same stones as your forefathers, you will be a link in the continuation of your Armenian legacy* (Land and Culture Organization 2013e, emphasis added).

The LCO discourse does not confine Armenianness only within the historical artifacts. It also associates Armenianness with the soil: the Armenian land. Paraphrased, the LCO alleges an organic link between Armenianness and the soil similar to the organic link that it alleges between the historical remnants and Armenianness, the view that is presented in the vision statement of the LCO that partially says: "LCO believes that a national culture can best flourish and bear fruit on its own land. Each nation has the right of dwelling on its ancestral lands and struggling for its preservation" (Land and Culture Organization 2014b). As Armenianness is conceptualized as an entity associated with the soil, the soil itself becomes

379 Likewise, the above quoted campaign news writes also the following as another example of the emphasis on concrete physical contacts with the historical remnants.

The group wrote their names on a piece of paper and sealed it in a bottle and placed it within the cement of the altar. Now, the volunteers feel that they are physically and spiritually a permanent part of the church (Land and Culture Organization 2014m).

Related to this point, another campaign news in 2011 writes:

It was exciting when they found two gold rings and a human skull. Now, archaeologists and historical experts will further analyze those artifacts. Volunteers are really feeling exhilarated and fulfilled in the work they are doing and connecting to Armenian history as they work on this ancient monument (Land and Culture Organization 2014j).

another avatar of Armenianness. As the soil is identified as another avatar, working not only on the soil but also for the soil becomes an ethno-national ritual of connecting with the ethno-national heritage. The emphasis on physical labor on the lands of the ancestors emerges from this framework.

Framing the relationship between Armenianness and the soil along this line, the LCO emphasizes the countryside as the true seedbed of the Armenian culture. Doing that, the LCO contrasts the rural life in Armenia with the modern-city life and glorifies the former by equating it with the authentic, or in LCO's terms, ancient Armenianness. In other words, whereas the LCO associates modern urban space with cosmopolitanism that signifies cultural corruption and assimilation in its mindset, it presents rural Armenia as the terra of the genuine Armenianness, where villagers continue to practice the correct Armenian way of life untouched by the waves of corrupting modernity. For example, one of the LCO campaign news writes³⁸⁰:

On July 31st, the July volunteers gathered for their last hurrah as a group in Armenia. These new and old friends will forever share their special memories and bond of their time together in *a small remote Armenian village living amongst the locals preserving the Armenian heritage* (Land and Culture Organization 2014e, emphasis added).

4.4.2 Armenia: The Roots and the Temple of Armenianness

The bottom line of the LCO discourse as regards to the construction of Armenia is the objectivist outlook. As the above analysis reveals, the LCO conceptualizes Armenian identity as something fixed within a certain time and a certain place. Within this framework, historical artifacts are coded as the externalized and objectified Armenianness. By the extension of this conceptualization, Armenia as the soil of Armenianness and the repository of the Armenian historical sites is portrayed as an huge open-air temple-museum of the Armenianness, the preservation of which depends on the preservation of the artifacts in this temple-museum as without those artifacts, Armenia would only be an empty space.

380 Another Campaign News in 2010 states:

As the group sadly departed "their village", they all knew Yeghvard and this experience would forever leave an impression on both their memories and their Armenian spirit. They all have now been a participant and will remain a permanent part of our ancestral land and culture (Land and Culture Organization 2014n).

It is this understanding that leads to the claim that Armenia is the roots of the Armenian family as expressed in the only direct reference to Armenia and diaspora in the LCO website that states the following:

Armenia and the Diaspora are a family tree with Armenia being our roots and the Spiurk its leaves. Both are equally important and need to be nurtured. If together, we care for the roots, the tree can survive (Land and Culture Organization 2014g)³⁸¹.

Although, in this quote Armenia and diaspora are said to be of equal importance, equating Armenia with the roots and diaspora with the leaves of the tree reveals different statuses attributed to these entities. In fact, the last sentence of this quote expresses that it is the root that matters most for the survival of tree. Therefore, despite the claim of equal value, the LCO allocates a higher significance to Armenia as the procreator of the Armenian ethno-nation³⁸². As such, Armenia is determined as the condition of the permanency of the Armenianness. Notably, with this conceptual framework, the LCO ascribes the diaspora the duty to assist Armenia for the continuation of the Armenian ethno-nation, hence the survival of itself.

However, such transfiguration of Armenia to a sublime object of Armenianness that results in a highly idealized and distorted conceptualization of Armenia causes a widening gap between the reality of Armenia as a country and the “ideal of Armenia” as the temple-museum of the Armenianness. Furthermore, framing Armenia in these terms necessitates a great deal of selectivity in determining what represents Armenianness and what not as the emphasis on the authenticity of the life in rural Armenia and the consequent dismissal of the modern-city life as some form of alienation verify. In fact, this reveals the flaw of the claim of connecting the diasporic youth with Armenia. At best, what the LCO volunteers connect with is the illustration of Armenia and a particular understanding of Armenianness. Accordingly, the overall conceptual framework of the LCO turns Armenia a kind of ethnic Disneyland and the LCO campaigns and the whole stay in the Armenian land an ethno-cultural safari that the “alienated” Armenians “experience” their estranged Armenianness by working at and visiting the historical sites, being a part-time participant of the Armenian rural life, as well as visiting

381 The noun *spiurk* or *syurk* refers to diaspora communities in Armenian language.

382 Note that even this simple and short paragraph includes an apparent contradiction. Hence, another verity that reveals the absence of intellectual integrity of the LCO.

the battle field of the Karabakh war and meeting Karabakh war veterans³⁸³, which, altogether, make an adventurous summer.

Last but not least, the LCO conceptualizes Armenia as one part of the Armenian land, not its entirety, as clearly demonstrated in the following statement that says “our ancient churches and monasteries are the only tangible proof that this is our land. We have the responsibility and opportunity to protect our heritage for our future” (Preserving Our Past 2013)³⁸⁴ and the fact the LCO campaigns target not only Armenia and Karabakh but also the “historical Armenia”. As such, the LCO identifies the Armenian land not with the legal internationally recognized state borders but with the Armenian historical sites, whether or not within the Armenian state borders. This disrespect to the official state borders and conceptualization of the Armenian land as exceeding those borders contains an intrinsic irredentism. Secondly, establishing an organic link between the Armenian land and Armenianness leaves no legitimacy for the existence of other ethno-national groups on the Armenian land, the logical consequence of which is, at best, granting them a secondary status as some kind of a metic, resident alien, and, at worst, their elimination from the Armenian soil as crabgrass. These are the serious political implications of the LCO’s construction of Armenia.

4.5 Conclusion

As the above analyses reveal, structure, *modus operandi*, *raison d’être* of the BR/DH, the AVC, the CYMA and the LCO are significantly analogous. Likewise, discourses of these organizations decidedly rely on similar themes, clichés and messages. As such, a significant degree of likeness is manifest as regards to these four organizations. This enables drawing generalizable conclusions that holds for all.

The advertised objective of the BR/DH, the AVC, the CYMA and the LCO is to organize volunteer and pilgrimage programs in Armenia. The BR/DH and the AVC run offices in Armenia and cooperate with the Armenian state and private firms. On the same track, the BR/DH collaborates with both Armenia-based and U.S. based organizations and NGOs. As such, Armenia-USA nexus is the topography on which these organizations conduct their activities. However, they recruit participants not only from the USA but also from around the globe and the LCO functions as the U.S. chapter of the trans-state ethno-national organization

383 For recounts of the visits to Karabakh see, Land and Culture Organization (2014i; 2014j; 2014k).

384 For the fact that the LCO takes Armenian historical sites as the markers of the Armenian land, the preservation of the former takes on a political significance, as well. Notably, the recently popularized discourse of “cultural genocide” can be viewed through this prism.

UIOTC. Hence, activities of these organizations expand beyond the Armenia-USA nexus and spread out to the global scale. Accordingly, although based in the USA and founded and administered by Armenian-Americans, the BR/DH, the AVC, the CYMA and the LCO can be diagnosed as global ethno-national diasporic organizations, the activities of which are centered around Armenia, rather than customary local/national NGOs. This organizational characteristic reflects the elemental *raison d'être* of these organizations; the extra-territorial Armenian ethno-nation building.

The mission of extra-territorial Armenian ethno-nation building is projected to be based on three interrelated achievements: 1) revitalization of the attachment of the diasporic youth to Armenianness and construction of the Armenian-selves, 2) consolidation of the diaspora communities and ensuring their reproduction, and 3) enhancing functioning ties between Armenia and diaspora. For the success of these projects Armenia is nominated as the main instrument. As such, first and foremost, Armenia is conceptualized as a political instrument to realize extra-territorial Armenian ethno-national building³⁸⁵.

Political instrumentality of Armenia emanates from two perceptions of Armenia, namely, as the conjoint cause of all-Armenians that sets the agenda for the joint action, and, second, as the terrain of Armenianness. In fact, perception of Armenia as the conjoint cause of all-Armenians is a result of attributing it an emblematic value that is precipitated from associating it with Armenianness. As a derivative, secondly, Armenia is conceptualized as an actual asset for the acculturation of the estranged ethnic Armenians in diaspora by identifying it either with the roots or contemporary form of Armenianness. In both cases, however, Armenia is identified with the correct Armenianness and designated as its prerequisite at the expense of conceptualization of Armenian identity as something temporarily or spatially fixed entity. Whereas framing the matter as such depicts Armenianness as an alienated identity, a form that is disengaged from the matter, it conceptualizes Armenia as a fantastic land, a country of a fairy tale, an ethnic Disneyland rather than a corporeal country that belongs to this world. Framing Armenia as such eventually adds to its symbolism that in return strengthens its political instrumentality. Particularly, construction of Armenia as a political instrument for the extra-territorial unification of the Armenian ethno-nation and prerequisite of the Armenianness result in equating the survival of Armenia with not only the survival of

385 The Ari Tun program of Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia mentioned in Chapters 2 and 3 verifies that not only the diasporic elite but the “homeland” elite instrumentalizes Armenia to this end, as well.

the rather abstract notion of Armenianness, but also the Armenians as individuals and as a group. Along this line, Armenia is also conceptualized as a securitized entity.

CHAPTER 5

THE ARMENIAN-AMERICAN YOUTH AND THE DISCOVERY OF THE “ARMENIAN HOMELAND”

In the previous chapters, the discourse of the Armenian state and the discourses of the four U.S. based new-generation diaspora organizations were examined to expose the discursive construction of Armenia by these actors as agents of discourse. This chapter analyzes the blogs and the travelogues of the diaspora Armenians, who partake in internship and pilgrimage programs of three of the four organizations examined in the previous chapter, namely, Birthright Armenia (BR/DH), Armenian Volunteer Corps (AVC), Christian Youth Mission to Armenia (CYMA) that are broadcasted in the websites of these organizations with the same objective to reveal the discursive construction of Armenia within the virtual Armenian ethno-national communicative space. Analysis in this chapter does not include the texts of Land and Culture Organization volunteers for the fact that this organization does not broadcast personal blogs or travelogues of those who participate in its campaigns.

The BR/DH and the CYMA broadcast the travelogues and the blogs of their participants on their websites. Alternatively, the AVC utilizes a separate blog at <http://armenianvolunteer.blogspot.com> (latest access 24.12.2013) to this end. Although the BR/DH and the CYMA do not provide any explanation about the purpose of broadcasting travelogues and blogs, the AVC explains this as an attempt to create an “open forum for posting photos, describing volunteer work and activities, and reflecting on daily life as a volunteer in Armenia” (Tetevossian 2006). This intention can be generalized to the BR/DH and the CYMA³⁸⁶. In the main, it can be understood that BR/DH, AVC, and CYMA make use

386 Overall, websites of the BR/DH and the CYMA and the AVC blog are well designed, accessible and reader friendly, yet, not error-free. Few editorial mistakes such as publishing the same travelogue more than once and confusing information on the country of citizenship/residence of the authors are the errors that catch eye. For example, the same travelogue of the BR/DH participant Nora Injeyan titled *My Nine Weeks in Gyumri* was published twice at <http://birthrightarmenia.org/pages.php?al=travelogues&gid=14&eid=69&d=In> and <http://birthrightarmenia.org/pages.php?al=travelogues&gid=14&eid=68&d=> (latest access 24.12.2013). Vana Nazarian is represented as American in the BR/DH website at <http://birthrightarmenia.org/pages.php?al=travelogues&gid=14&eid=63&d=> (latest access 24.12.2013) and as Canadian at the AVC blog at <http://armenianvolunteer.blogspot.com/2010/12/gyumri-armenia-word> (latest access 24.012.2013). The country of residence of some of the authors are not mentioned in the formal introductions of their travelogues or blogs in the BR/DH website and the AVC blog, although this information can be found within the texts (see, Gasparian 2008b; S.Sarkisian 2008; C.Manoukian 2007). The AVC website claims there are fifty blogs written by the participants of the mission in 2010, although the actual number is fifty-two. Finally, no information was provided as regards to the name, country of residence and sex of the author of

of these texts as advertisements of their programs and as pre-trip orientation for the prospective participants. Importantly, the CYMA website allows the readers to comment on the blogs that facilitates interaction between the senders and the receivers. This facility is frequently utilized by the family members and friends of the bloggers, as well as the random strangers, who may make antagonistic comments³⁸⁷, and interestingly by dealers who post commercials furnishing the blogs with an unusual content³⁸⁸. Some blogs referring to previously posted blogs and even using similar titles verify bloggers are also among the readers of the blogs³⁸⁹. A blog that writes, “well, most of you know that last year I spent 9 months living in Armenia. And most of you know that I’ve since returned to CA” (TamaraK 2008) hints authors speak to the people in their immediate surrounding as the prospective readers. This is the possible reason why some blogs look like open-letters reporting about the daily events in Armenia. As such, the BR/DH and the CYMA websites and the AVC blog can be regarded as media that forms vivid virtual communicative spaces within which authors and readers communicate their perceptions of Armenia. Besides possibility of auto-censorship, there is neither a clear statement nor much evidence of organizational censorship except the AVC’s notice in the very first post in the AVC blog that states:

This blog is intended to be an open forum for volunteers to share their experiences with each other, alumni, and the public. This blog is not intended for discussion of anything other than the Armenia Volunteer Corps and related organizations/events. Blogs which are not pertinent, or contain vulgar or malicious content, will not be posted. Thanks for your cooperation (Armenian Volunteer Corps 2006a).

In any case, for the objective of this research neither self-censorship or nor organizational censorship is a critical factor for the fact that this dissertation aims to analyze not the raw

the text in the AVC blog at <http://armenianvolunteer.blogspot.com/2008/02/hiking-in-karabakh.html> (latest access 24.12.2013).

387 One of such those comments reads as “Armenia thriving??? Wow. Why can't we locals see that? Thank you guys for opening our eyes. We won't emigrate anymore” (Hayastantsi 2005) as a challenge to the CYMA blogger, who preach the wonders of Armenia. This comment is important for demonstrating different realities of Armenia for the locals and the diasporans as one of the sources of conflict between the two parties. Moreover, it reveals the fallacy of the Armenia trips in terms of facilitating a deeper understanding of Armenia among the diaspora youth. It can be argued the myth of homeland as a far away heaven among the diaspora Armenians blocks a realist comprehension of Armenia even in the case of physical contact.

388 See for example, <http://www.cyma-wd.org/2005/07/31/ugh> (latest access, 13.02.2013. Not available by December 24, 2013) at which “affordable bridesmaid dresses”, “best swiss replica watches” and similar items were advertised.

389 See for example, Noush (2005c). See, also, Hosbayar (2005a) and R.Manoukian (2005c) for two blogs written by two different authors with the titles “yay!!!!” and “yay #2”.

reality of Armenia but the ways in which the social reality of Armenia is discursively constructed within and by the texts as explained in Chapter 1. Therefore, this dissertation focuses on the representations rather than the unmediated realities as its data.

By December 19, 2012, ninety-four travelogues in the BR/DH website, ninety blogs in the AVC blog and ninety-six blogs in the CYMA website were available published until January 1, 2012³⁹⁰. These two-hundred eighty texts were written by a total of one-hundred and ninety-one authors. As the disparity between the numbers of texts and the authors indicates some authors posted multiple texts³⁹¹. Secondly, there are texts that were posted in both the BR/DH website and the AVC blog³⁹². Lastly, not all the participants of the BR/DH, the AVC and the CYMA programs necessarily post travelogues or blogs, which may indicate that the texts present the perceptions of the more poignant Armenia trip participants.

As pointed out in the previous chapter, although the BR/DH, the AVC and the CYMA are U.S. based organizations, they recruit participants from around the globe. This is reflected in the composition of the authors of the texts, as well; until 2012, authors from at least sixteen different countries have posted texts, as demonstrated in Table 1 below, although the U.S. citizens/residents make up almost the 70%, of the authors followed by the citizens/residents of Canada that constitute the next 10%³⁹³.

390 The dates of the first travelogue/blog in the BR/DH website, AVC blog and the CYMA blog are September 30, 2007; May 24, 2006; June 29, 2005, respectively.

391 See, Appendix 17 for the list of the texts analyzed in this chapter.

392 Alex Sarafians's text (2010) in Spanish was broadcasted both in the BR/DH website and the AVC blog. In the BR/DH website, the English version of the same text is also available (see, Safarian, 2010b). Likewise, texts of Nouny Benchimol (2010), Noushig Hovhannesian (2010a; 2010b) and Michelle Metchikian (2011) are replicated in the BR/DH website and the AVC blog.

393 The countries of citizenship/residence of the six authors are not mentioned in the texts. Therefore, the exact number of the sending countries may be more than sixteen. Furthermore, the CYMA blog does not contain any information on country of citizenship/residence of its participants. Hence, Table 1 provides only the approximate numbers and percentages.

Country	Number	Percentage
USA	82 + 46 = 128 (129) ³⁹⁴	67%
Canada	19 (18) ³⁹⁵	10%
Argentina	12	6.3%
France	8	4.2%
Brazil	3	1.6%
Lebanon	3	1.6%
Turkey	2	1%
UK	2	1%
Australia ³⁹⁶	1	0.5%
Chile	1	0.5%
Denmark	1	0.5%
Germany	1	0.5%
Greece	1	0.5%
Palestine	1	0.5%
Russia	1	0.5%
Syria	1	0.5%
NM	6	3.1%

Table 1) The country of citizenship/residence of the authors of the texts in tentative numbers and percentages.

As regards to the language of the texts, all the CYMA blogs are written in English. On the other hand, texts published in the BR/DH website and the AVC blog are written in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese and German. Yet, as the below Table 2 demonstrates, English is the *quasi-Lingua Franca* both for its numerical dominance and for the fact that some non-native English speakers also compose their texts in English³⁹⁷. A similar disproportion exists also with respect to sex of the authors; while male authors constitute the 32.5%, female

394 As stated in footnote 386, the 2010 BR/DH participant Vana Nazarian is presented as American and Canadian in two different travelogues.

395 See, footnote 394.

396 As a matter of fact, the AVC volunteer from Australia is a non-Armenian Australian.

397 Also, the BR/DH participant Alex Sarafian posted both the English and Spanish versions of the same text in the BR/DH website.

authors make the 67% of the authors³⁹⁸. There is no direct reference to the age of the authors of the texts. Yet, it can be understood from the texts that the majority of the authors are in their early twenties who are either college students or fresh graduates³⁹⁹.

Language	Number	Percentage
English	256	89.8%
Spanish	14	4.9%
French	11	3.9%
Portuguese	4	1.4%
German	1	0.4%

Table 2) The language of the texts with in numbers and percentages.

Finally, one might expect that the participants of the Armenia trip programs represent the sections of the Armenian diaspora that embrace the Armenian identity, connected to the Armenian communities, internalize nationalist thoughts and more informed and concerned about the national issues. Although, there are texts that are written by such authors, there are also texts that plainly demonstrate their authors are significantly estranged from the Armenian identity⁴⁰⁰. Interestingly, some authors lack even the very basic and popular knowledge about the Armenian history and politics. For example, the CYMA participant Vaughn Eyvazian (2007c; 2007d) writes that he learnt about the history of Julfa Armenians and even the Karabakh war from a movie that he watched in a movie theatre in Armenia; in one of his blogs, he writes he “never knew about the war in Karabakh” (2007b). Yet, even for those without any meaningful attachment to Armenianness, Armenia trips may be a first step towards their journeys to Armenianness. Lastly, decision to take Armenia trips can be viewed

398 The sex of one of the authors that posted in the AVC blog is not mentioned.

399 The AVC volunteers Ishkhan Babajanian and Anahit Babajanian are out of the common with respect to the age cohort of the authors. Although their ages are not stated in their blog (Armenian Volunteer Corps 2006b), from the fact that one of them, who wrote the blog in the name of both, is a retired pediatrician reveals this couple was at least at their sixties by the time they participated in the AVC program.

400 For example, Dawn Huckelbridge (2011) writes:

Growing up I was only vaguely aware of being Armenian. My grandfather would refer to it on occasion and sometimes we would eat dolma and tabbouleh at home, but I had no real understanding of my heritage. I didn't know the language, knew very little about the country, and knew almost no Armenians in the Diaspora. I felt privileged to grow up in diverse communities and to be exposed to so many different cultures, and yet ironically, I had very little exposure to my own.

as the manifestation of a latent desire to discover Armenianness, regardless of the initial level of attachment with it⁴⁰¹.

As an important matter of fact, similar to the texts examined in the previous chapters, travelogues and blogs examined in this chapter are written around various themes, which are not necessarily directly related to the identity of Armenia *per se*. Rather, the discursive construction of Armenia within and by these texts follows a labyrinthine path through the order and interaction of different themes, clichés, moral claims and the rhetoric. Therefore, the analysis focuses on the most frequently referred themes and issues within the texts⁴⁰² and the interactions among them. The methodological principles detailed in Chapter 1 guides the entire analysis.

In the rest of this chapter, first the content and rhetoric of the texts are examined. The examination of the texts discloses that interpersonal relations, visits to historical and war sites in Armenia and volunteer work experience are the most frequently referred subjects. As such, they are the key aspects of the Armenia trips that outline the “homeland” experiences of the authors of the texts. In order to comprehend the homeland experience of the Armenia trips participants there these aspects of the Armenia trips are discussed. The most noteworthy consequence of the Armenia trips is the reassessment of the ethnic and national belongings and the following renewal of self-perception that renders Armenia trips a life-changing experience. As such an important consequence that is also closely related to the discursive construction of Armenia, the following section details the three different results of the reassessment of the ethnic and national belonging, namely, acknowledging the ethnic, civic and hybrid selves. Within the text four different conceptualizations of Armenia, namely, Armenia as a land of advantages, Armenia as the land of Armenianness, Armenia as the symbol of ethno-national rebirth and collective victory and hope, and Armenia as a land of adventure reveal themselves. Fourthly, these are discussed. Finally, in the conclusion, the

401 The BR/DH Armenia trip participant Edward Casabian during an occasional conversation with the author of this dissertation at Birthright Armenia's alumni network meeting on April 13, 2011 in New York at Fordham University (see, <http://reporter.am/index.cfm?objectid=EFAAB4C6-85E2-11E0-A9FE0003FF3452C2>, latest access 19.05.2014) said for him Armenia trip with the BR/DH was nothing more than a free vacation. Yet, his engagement in BR/DH activities after his return to the USA demonstrates a strengthened sense of identification with the Armenian identity.

402 In the representation of the findings of the analysis, some of the most paradigmatic passages in the texts are quoted. These direct quotations are also utilized to demonstrate the rhetoric and language usage of the authors, which sometimes take an irritatingly informal form. Yet, when required non-paradigmatic passages are also quoted in order to demonstrate diverse views.

results of the analysis are summed up to expose the discursive construction of Armenia by the aggregate of the texts.

5.1 The Content and Rhetoric of the Texts

Broadly speaking, texts examined in this chapter can be classified with respect to their content first, as single-themed and multi-themed texts, and, second, as informative and reflexive texts. As to the former classification, while some texts are based on a single theme such as the volunteer work or a trip to a historical site, there are also texts that reflect on different aspects of the Armenia trip. As to the latter classification, informative texts are alike diaries in which authors narrate their experiences in Armenia rather in a plain way, whereas reflexive texts contain reflections of the authors on different aspects of their experiences in Armenia. Some texts in the second category include also thoughts on ideological constructs such as homeland, Armenianness, ethnic and national belonging. Yet, the informative-reflexive classification is rather analytical than categorical for the fact that a single text may contain both informative and reflexive content. Taken as a whole, it can be seen that the type of the Armenia trip, i.e., internship or pilgrimage, length and type of stay in Armenia, i.e., rental, hotel or host family stay, and the timing of the writing, i.e., before, during or after the trip, are the factors of the thematic inclusiveness and the reflexive depth⁴⁰³.

Notwithstanding the content-wise differences, an overwhelming majority of the texts affirm Armenia trips as a major event that ought to be undertaken by all Armenians in the diaspora. An applauding rhetoric that sometimes even turn hyperbolic accompanies a significant percent of these texts, which is comparatively most evident in the texts broadcasted by the CYMA. The below quote is one example of such melodramatic rhetoric⁴⁰⁴:

403 A related observation is that reflexive texts are mostly longer than the informative texts. Secondly, in relative terms, BR/DH travelogues are rather reflexive texts, whereas the CYMA blogs are more informative. To put in an order, the AVC blogs are in the middle, containing both informative and reflexive texts.

404 The form of Armenia trips of the CYMA that resembles a summer trip is likely to be the reason of this general characteristic of the CYMA blogs. Besides, the age-cohort of the authors and a sense of self-censorship mentioned above grounded on an ideological sense of duty to confirm the beauties of Armenia and the internship and pilgrimage programs may be other factors. Also, the fact that Armenia trip is the first experience abroad for many of the authors might have resulted in the overexcitement of some authors. As a matter of fact, a significant percentage of the CYMA blogs highlight the touristic aspects of the Armenia trip overwhelmingly with an exalted rhetoric often coupled with a very informal language. Consequently, many CYMA blogs lack consequential reflections. This creates an evident contradiction with the habitual claim of the cognitive results of the Armenia trip, namely, the deeper comprehension of Armenia. Notably, many authors mention plain daily things to verify their claim of comprehension. The below quotes from the blogs of the CYMA participants Lisa

hey everyone in the world wide web thats readin this blog, i would just like to say that i am quickly falling in love with my motherland Armenia. Today was definitely a day to remember. We took a 3 hour bus ride to vanadzor and saw the most beautiful churches ever! Its absolutely amazing to think that our Christian religion can be dated back to sooo long ago. Standing in those churches today made me soo proud to be an Armenian, after all we have been through we still have all the strength in the world, as a people, to keep going. Talking to some of the village locals, they are sooo happy to see youth from America go back and appreciate their homeland. I feel my connection to the people of Armenia, is going stronger everyday. To top the day off at the last church we visited, out of nowhere the rain started to pour. *I think the raindrops in Armenia are bigger than the ones in California.* Running through the rain, onto our bus was seriously the best moment ever! (Sarin 2008a, emphasis added).

Yet, there are also few depreciatory texts that are the polar opposites of the uncritically applauding texts such as Diana Ovsepiian's travelogue quoted below that demonstrates the arrogance, insolence, distain and absence of empathy and understanding⁴⁰⁵. Noticeably, just as the texts that applaud Armenia mostly focus on plain daily things, depreciatory judgments are

Hosboyar and Rita Manoukian are other two examples of the hyperbolic rhetoric and informal language use in the texts.

Hi this is Lisa Hosboyar (OCPinky) from St. Mary Costa Mesa in the O.C. Oh my god, Armenia is great! From the moment we all met up in Vienna, the whole group became a family. All of us get along soooo well, I feel like I've known all of them my whole life... Food is reallly cheap here, which is realllly awsome. All the girls want to shop and go to the cool hair salons. Today we had a clear view of Mt. Ararat. it was sooo beautiful it almost looked fake. After we saw some cool sites, we went to a dance performance. it reminded me and Alene of our days in Zvartnotz dance group. lol.)Ok im done, oh shout out to my family, and St. Mary crew. Love you!!!! (Hosbayar 2005b).

RITA HERE: So basically its Saturday, and we have been in Armenia for 5 days. These five days have probably been the best experience in my lifetime, and there is still 3 weeks left to go!! Everyone is so friendly here, and everything is so cheap! yes. Today we went to Vernisage (open market). MAJOR SHOPPING. Besides the cheap necklaces that have been purchased, very cheap dinners have too. Not only is the food cheap, its probably the best food ive ever had- and the apricots, wow amazingggggg...seriously i cant describe how amazingly awesome everything has been. Now besides shopping and food comes the night life: so like I can't describe every little detail because for all of you who haven't been to Armenia you need to experience it yourself and not through my fun fun fun fun stories. But anyways Armenia never sleeps. We have been to Cheers twice, cheers is pretty cool only if you attend with the right crowd. Now the best place I have been to so far is the Opera Club...major vip disco tech!! its really fun...(R.Manoukian 2005a).

For similar texts see, Keutelian (2007), Ovanessoff (2005a; 2005c), Rakijan (2007b), Rose (2007), Sarin (2008b).

405 For a similar text see, Hacatoryan (2011).

primarily derived from causal things. Overall, it can be seen that the two opposite attitudes, in fact, are a consequence of the same superficial way of relating oneself with Armenia.

Fashion might be the furthest thing from your mind when you think about Armenia, but once you get here it's unavoidable. For the first few days you really experience fashion culture shock to say the least. There is a lot of effort and energy that goes into the way people dress here, both for men and women- of all ages. The fashion spectrum ranges between two extremes- either people are in all black from head to toe, or they are wearing the flashiest, most eye-popping getups. For the older generation, especially the men, you can count on seeing lots of dark colors, sport coats, and black dress shoes- crocodile print preferably. But one of my favorite things to see is the Yerevantsi young woman decked out in purple patent thigh-high boots, pink minidress, huge crystal encrusted sunglasses, blonde highlights, and matching patent purse and accessories of course (various versions of this combination exist). Okay, they're not all the same. Just as in any city, people are individuals and they all have their own personal form of expression. But because Yerevan is a small city, people all tend to follow the same trends at the same time- so everyone starts to look alike after a while. For example, there is a haircut which is really popular right now with young men- it's kind of like a modified mullet. Any time you step out into the streets you are guaranteed to see at least three or four guys walking around with that same hairstyle.

The sense of fashion in Yerevan really is interesting in its own idiosyncratic way. There is the, well, not too good in my opinion: crystals and rhinestones cover every surface, everything is in eye popping patent, the heels on the women are lethal, men like to wear really feminine sunglasses and tight jeans, you lose count of all the Dolce & Gabbana and Gucci plastered over everyones chest, neon reigns supreme, there is no minimalism, etc. Then there is the good. It really is interesting to just sit in a cafe and people watch: you will never be bored. People really take pride in the way they dress, and it makes the city all the more interesting for it.

I like the fact that Armenians here don't just roll out of bed and leave the house- like many people do in America. Even going to the grocery store here deserves to get dressed up for. It almost adds to the respect that people have for one another. I mean really, who would you be willing to take more seriously- someone in sweats or someone in a suit (with croc shoes of course). Although there are lots of well-dressed cities in the world- Paris, Milan, Vienna- there is no city that dresses quite like Yerevan (Ovsepian 2009).

Besides applauding and deprecating texts that stand at opposite poles, yet stand upon the same outlook, thirdly, there are texts that sustain a critical distance to their subject matter. These

texts plea neither to extol nor to slander Armenia in a blind manner, but to develop a deeper perceptiveness on Armenia. For that, these texts stress the importance of putting aside all the preconceptions and expectation, and being receptive to the unexpected with an unbiased sight. Notably, the authors of these texts underline the importance of blending with Armenian society, and for that promote volunteering contra tourism, host family stay contra hotels or rentals, and dialogue with the locals. As an example, Ani Dikranian on July 27, 2008 wrote the following:

So what exactly has Armenia given me? What have I discovered about its reality thus far? What have I realized about myself? Well, I'm not yet quite sure. As this is my fifth trip to Armenia, I have a less idealistic perception on Armenia and Armenian life than I did during my previous visits when I was simply awe-struck with the surreal feeling of being in Hayrenik (homeland). (My excitement and warm sentiments at that time even stretched to the flies buzzing annoyingly in my ear. "Vochinch," I would think, "they're Armenian flies!") I feel that my current perspective allows me to see Armenia as existing in reality rather than in my mind and heart. I'm seeing Armenia now for what it's accomplished in a few short and difficult years, for its failures and for its upcoming challenges. I see residents of Armenia not only as my brothers, sisters and relatives, but also as people living in the realities of a developing country trying to establish a better life for themselves and their children (Dikranian 2008)⁴⁰⁶.

406 Dikranian continued in her travelogues as the follows:

For me, Armenian reality consists of many contrasts beginning with the development of my own love-hate relationship with Armenia. There is much that I dislike about Armenia, but there's much more that I truly appreciate and enjoy. I like the excitement of seeing, feeling and "helping" a country develop, but that development as is implemented in Armenia is sometimes misdirected, inconsistent, poorly planned and unequally spread. I like that people can be quite frank with one another, but their frankness often comes across as rudeness, inconsideration and harshness. I like the sense of community among neighbors, friends and colleagues and that people "look out" for one another, but that mostly translates into people looking at each other and being nose-y and intrusive. I like seeing bright Armenians, who have decided to face hardships by staying in Armenia, work passionately, but I'm saddened when their efforts are routinely inhibited by the corrupt system of bribes, power, position and acquaintances. These contrasts are both frustrating as well as fascinating to discover and to try to make sense of. For me, this is part of what it means to be in Armenia

Another BR/DH participant Aram Pirjanian (2009) makes a similar comment as the following:

If you feel anything but violently ambivalent about this country, you're doing something wrong. If you don't come away having experienced heart wrenching pangs of both joy and sadness, then you have missed the point. If you are contented with taking things at face value or acquiring a superficial understanding of things, you will in all likelihood leave with an altogether...pleasant impression of Armenia. But most volunteers will not do this. Most volunteers, by the sheer fact that they have been attracted by such a loaded title as "birthright", will be predisposed not to be contented with a simple veneer of their fatherland. Most volunteers will dig.

5.2 The Formation of the “Homeland” Experience

The most commonly referred and consequential themes in the texts are the interpersonal relations, visits to historical and war sites, and volunteer work experience. These three corporal experiences trigger cognitive processes in the form of Armenia and the host countries comparisons and reflections on often contrasting perceived social realities in Armenia. In fact, the reflections of these cognitive processes are the major factors of the eventual conceptualization of Armenia. For that, what follows is the examination of the reflections of the Armenia trip participants on interpersonal relations, visits to historical and war sites, and volunteer work experience.

5.2.1 Interpersonal Relations

As regards to interpersonal relations, interactions with fellow volunteers and/or pilgrims and local Armenians, specifically colleagues and host family members are the most commonly stressed subjects in the texts. The texts frequently include accounts on the encounters and developing friendships with fellow volunteers and pilgrims. Typically, fellow volunteers and pilgrims are perceived as companions pursuing the same mission and abiding the same craving for a better Armenia. In consequence, encounters with fellow volunteers and pilgrims play a crucial role in the elimination of the sense of ideological/political solitude, emergence of a feeling of comradeship, and the consequent rise of a sense of ethno-national belonging. As such, these encounters turn to be a powerful dynamic of diaspora building both in local and global scales, and by extension of ethno-national building. Besides, being among a circle of companions adds to the fun of the Armenia trip, which cannot be overlooked as an important factor of the formation of the homeland perception⁴⁰⁷.

As regards to interactions with the local Armenians, the AVC volunteer Nora Injeyan’s blog quoted below demonstrates the immense importance of these interactions.

My work experience in Armenia, in Gyumri, was molded and influenced the greatest by my boss, an elderly woman named Julietta Eganyan. *She has come to represent, to me, everything Gyumri is, and everything it has the potential of becoming...* After a few minutes of uncomfortable chit-chat, she finally said, “Ari mi pajag gini khmenk” and *my complicated love/hate relationship with her, with Gyumri, began.....* Julietta proved that the

407 The central importance of the encounters with fellow volunteers and pilgrims can be seen in CYMA Armenia trip participant Noush’s (2005b) blog, in which she laments after her companions who leaves Armenia before her.

people of Gyumri are still living in the aftermath of the earthquake. (Injeyan 2010, emphasis added).

As this quote shows, many volunteers and pilgrims often relate themselves with Armenia through the mediation of the local Armenians⁴⁰⁸. Put differently, the relationship of the volunteers and pilgrims with Armenia develops largely upon their relationships with the local Armenians. As both the cause and the result, local Armenians are perceived as the personification of Armenia and the “Armenian way of life”. As such, local Armenians become one of the lenses through which Armenia is perceived. After all, whereas Armenia comes to objectify Armenianness, as shall be detailed below, local Armenians come to objectify Armenia.

As such a pivotal factor in the formation of the perception of Armenia, several characteristics are attributed to the local Armenians within the texts. Being proud, firm, diligent, vivid and lively are the most startling ones among those attributes⁴⁰⁹. Importantly upon these characteristics attributed to individuals, certain positive characteristics such as strong sense of community in opposition to individualism and the materialist culture in western societies are attributed to the Armenian society as a whole⁴¹⁰. As shall be mentioned below, the affirmative characteristics attributed to local Armenians and Armenian society often counterbalance the structural problems of the country that are mentioned in the texts. On the other hand, it must be highlighted that some participants, particularly the females, also criticize the patriarchal and adverse work ethics, however often apologetically.

5.2.2 Visits to Historical and War Sites

Historical and war sites are another medium between volunteers and pilgrims and Armenia. As such, they are another building block of the “homeland” experience. Historical sites, mostly composed of ancient churches, notwithstanding how neglected and ruinous they may be, are perceived as the concrete evidences of the ancientness of the Armenian ethno-nation from time immemorial. They are regarded as the affirmation of the temporal ethno-national continuity of the Armenians. Furthermore, these relics are taken as the solid evidences of the

408 The excerpt from Talene Ghazarian’s travelogue (2009), particularly her words “I feel that it has been not through my internship, but through di-ologue with other diasporans and locals that I have both been most impactful and most impacted” that is quoted at page 252 is also a demonstration of this point.

409 See, Tchekmedyian (2007b) and Kazazian (2011) for two examples of the ways in which volunteers and pilgrims perceive local Armenians.

410 Such comparisons and the resultant contrast are most evident in the texts of those coming from Western countries.

once glittering civilization that the Armenian ancestors built, and hence of the Armenian genius. Similarly, Karabakh war sites are attached great value as the symbolic places of the final victory of Armenians within a history of defeats. Importantly, it can be seen that visits to historical and war sites facilitate the consolidation of the hegemonic Armenian ethno-national narrative rather than triggering a relatively factual understanding of distant and recent history and present day realities of the country as visitors make sense of these entities by interpreting them through the already existing cognitive and cultural categories consolidated as a result of years long socialization and indoctrination processes⁴¹¹. Similarly, for example, a visit to a village at the Armenia-Azerbaijan border may also result in the same end, in this particular case, reification of the Karabakh war and the “Azeri aggression”, as the below quote demonstrates.

When I heard we'd be visiting the last village between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Chinnari, I wasn't nervous. As a sheltered American girl, I never imagined a place where my life could be in danger. I soon learned otherwise upon entering the somewhat desolate and dead village.

... The people in Chinnari had seen alot, and everywhere you went, you saw in their faces the look of triumph and defeat. Their faces were grim, yet strong. It was looks of people who had definitely experienced more than a handful.

411 For example, the CYMA participant Vaughn Eyvazian writes:

Bad wasn't seeing broken buildings in Gyumri and the renovation of the city after it was devastated and it surely wasn't passing through villages where people don't have many belongings either. The beginning of the bad for me, other than stomach aches, was when we reached the ruins of Ani. Escorted to the border of the Crevasse looking across to see what used to be my homeland stripped away. Maybe where they stopped, or maybe where we stood. Regardless, I felt a sickness in my stomach as the Turkish guard closely watched over our shoulders to make sure we didn't capture this moment with our cameras on Armenian soil. Thinking about it wrenches my stomach and it's not just because I have the day flu at this moment. I just thought that at this point in time, we would have the freedom to capture this moment, the ancient relics, that ancient city with so much importance. So I sat took it in realizing that what was in front of me was ours, but wasn't ours at all. A paradox. I took pictures regardless. Looking in the distance next to one of our crumbled churches I see the Turkish flag waving in the air. Everything happens for a reason they say, finding a reason for all of this will be tough and it will be an on going struggle for who knows how long. I sat down took some deep breaths realized that this practically was the eye of the storm. *The closest I'd ever be to a true enemy of my people, systematic genocidal murders*. I can't say I wish it never happened because the past is the past and what doesn't kill us only makes us stronger. But I think of why my Grandpa was an orphan, his necessity to collect what looked like junk to most of us, but treasures and trinkets to him. He never had these things and decided to keep them close. Ok, so I'm trying really hard to not go off on tangents, but it's tough. Someone said when you look around at other Armenian's from other places whether it be Turkey, Iran, Russia, Georgia, Lebanon, Israel. There's only one difference, that your ancestors took a left instead of a right in the desert. So I'm thankful for that struggle, that trek, the journey that leads us to be unique, strong, and a defined culture. And I ask God to have mercy on the Turks.

Other than that all is well, I'm feeling much better now. Much Love, Vaughn Eyvazian (Eyvazian 2007b).

Chinnari is a village/ war-zone. Azeri snipers shoot at any given point onto our side of the territory without warning. There were six main hilltops facing directly upward from the Chinnari village and on top of every hilltop there was a post with a sniper, ready to shoot at any given moment. (Such snipers prohibit 70% of all lands in Chinnari from cultivation due to shootings). Seeing how close this village was to the enemy made me feel so disgusted with humanity. I thought to myself, "Dont these people have mercy? Aren't they human.. with families and children?!" Before that point in my realizations, I never had felt so vulnerable in my entire life. I was uncomfortable in my very skin; as an American, it's a feeling I was very un-used to.

I thought to myself how unfair it was for the people that had to live there. They risk everyday all in the name of protecting OUR land. What they do is my defintion of heroism. Staying overnight within a kilometer of an Azeri sniper, I'm certain, you too, would definitely look at your life from a different scope. Every second I was in Chinnari I felt fortunate, humbled, thankful, disgusted, uncomfortable, prayerful... it was a very spiritual encounter with my motherland; I am beyond thankful I had (Tufenkchyan 2011b).

Interestingly, historical and war sites animate the imagination of the Armei trip participants in a more personal manner, as well. Some volunteers and pilgrims experience these visits as a virtual step into the history where they feel themselves like historical figures. As such, visiting historical and war sites generates a Disneyland effect; by entering these sites visitors find themselves temporarily isolated from the outside world and time as if they travel to distant or recent past by a time-machine that also transform them into historical characters. As to this effect, Alene Tchekmedyan (2007c) in the CYMA website writes the following⁴¹²:

At around 3pm, we came face to face with victory. Literally. It took about 10 minutes to walk through the battlefield and finally approach the mountainous gorge, Jderduz, up which Armenian soldiers climbed to finally defeat Azerbaijan for the "black garden". Standing at the top of the steep mountain and looking beyond the scenery and into the eyes of our people truly made us aware of the realities that our soldiers went through during that solemn spring in 1994. A few of us, including Lena, Arman, Lindsey, Vicken, Serop, and me, actually climbed down the rocky mountain, and more impressively, climbed back up it. *I cannot say that we felt what it was like to be an Armenian soldier during the war, but our imaginations are strong, so we came close. It was a momentous experience.*

412 The CYMA participant Alex Giragosian's blog (2007) is another example of this impact of the site visits.

Overall, historical and war site visits are truly instrumental in the reinforcement of the *a priori* beliefs and prejudices⁴¹³. As such, these events become important tools for the further indoctrination of the diasporic youth. Besides, the existence of these sites in Armenia results in associating these sites and the things they represent with Armenia. In that way, Armenia, as the container of these sites, is perceived as the land that materializes Armenianness. In other words, Armenia as a country appears as the externalized and objectified Armenianness via the historical and war sites.

5.2.3 The Volunteer Work

The volunteer work experience is most relevant for the the BR/DH and the AVC program participants, which is not unanticipated given that these two organizations utilize internship in Armenia as the primary instrument to pursue their organizational goals, whereas the CYMA seesaws between internship and pilgrimage. A significant portion of the texts published by the BR/DH and the AVC are predominantly on the volunteer work experience indicating the huge impact of volunteering in Armenia in the formation of the Armenia trip experience as volunteer work experience provides volunteers with a deeper comprehension of the daily and

413 The below quotes are two examples of the ways in which Armenia trip becomes instrumental in strengthening the national myths.

Since I was a young child, I listened to my mother and Armenian teacher descriptively tell me of folk stories of villages and women gathering water from rivers and streams. I never thought these stories would influence and create my ideal nature, well it did. After having the amazing opportunity to experience Armenia's gorgeous landscapes, I realized that my ideal nature is a reality. It became clear to me that this is the connection I share with Armenia. I have always loved the art, music, food and culture, but experiencing Armenia's nature was my realization that this is the true channel in which I am Armenian...

Before coming to Armenia I never faced or deeply thought about my Armenian identity, I just was Armenian. However, now after my ten weeks in Armenia, I not only have a better understanding of its history and the real situation but I learned what it means to be Armenian for myself. Studying and living my life to be an environmentalist, I could not have felt more honored that my ideals of nature are a true reality existing in Armenia (Goganian 2011).

Another Birthright Armenia bursar Christiana Manoukian after stating "every aspect of [her] life has been Armenian since the day [she] was brought home from the hospital" writes the following:

My travels through Armenia have revived my imagination and each childhood history lesson played out like a movie in my head during the last two and a half months. From the pagan rituals performed at Garni to soldiers making their way up the rocky mountain cliffs of Jelderouz during the liberation of Shushi, I have come full circle and have been sitting in an Armenian history class throughout my whole journey." (C. Manoukian 2007).

See also, Arman (2007), Eyvazian (2007a), Levon (2007), Mazman (2011), Susan (2007), Tatevik (2010b; 2010c; 2010d) and Yaldezian (2009a; 2009b) for similar texts emphasizing Christianity and war sites. Jagrayan's travelogue (2011) constitutes an example of the ways in which Armenia is perceived as the materialization of distant and recent history. Alternatively, the CYMA participant Alex Sarkisian in his blog (asarkisian24 2011) tells the Armenia he witnessed was not the country he heard about from his parents.

professional life in Armenia that a mere pilgrimage program cannot provide. Most probably for this reason, the BR/DH travelogues and the AVC blogs contain more reflexive and deeper insights on Armenia compared to the CYMA blogs.

Several outcomes of volunteering in Armenia can be identified within the texts. Recognizing different and mostly nugatory work ethics in Armenia and the low level of professionalism and efficiency is one of these outcomes⁴¹⁴. Encountering such inconveniences affects the formation of the Armenia experiences of the volunteers that also impinge on their identity-wise evaluations. Secondly, most of the young university students or fresh graduates that constitute the majority of the Armenia trip participants are granted the opportunity to put into practice what they have learnt in the classrooms as much as the infrastructure and other facilities permit. Moreover, volunteers are given the chance to volunteer in the fields which volunteers had no prior experience or education. These two have three interrelated consequences. First, practice-based experience provides the participants with new perspectives on their future career plans⁴¹⁵. Second, they open the eyes of the volunteers to the professional and business opportunities in Armenia. Third, following achieving these opportunities, volunteers develop a particular perception of Armenia as a land of advantages for the diasporic Armenians to pursue professional and business-related goals, as shall be mentioned below.

5.2.4 Armenia-Host Country and Within-Armenia Comparisons

One of the most important consequences of these corporal experiences is the cognitive processes that they trigger in the form of Armenia-host country and within-Armenia comparisons. Armenia-host country comparisons take two forms that can be grouped as thin and thick comparisons. The thin comparisons are the plain comparisons of the trivial aspects

414 As regards to this point, several texts mention the unhygienic conditions in the hospitals and unethical behaviors of doctors and other personnel such as smoking during medical operations. In fact, allowing the interns in the operation rooms itself is an evidence of the arbitrariness in the hospitals. Yet, it is also this arbitrariness that provides the interns with opportunity to have experiences that they cannot have in their countries of citizenship/residence.

⁴¹⁵ For example, Anahid Matossian (2009) writes in her travelogue the following:

I do not want to leave Armenia and I have big plans that will really change my academic future now. If it had not been for the persistence of my work-place in persuading me to love what I did, I know I would not have discovered this part of me, and for that I am eternally grateful to the Yergragitakan Tangaran of Gyumri, my co-workers and boss, and Depi Hayk.

of the daily life in Armenia and the host country. As the below quote exemplifies, these comparisons may be as superficial as comparing junk food in Armenia and the USA.

hey people. so this is the first time that i am writing to you guys. alex, my sister vic and myself have been here since sunday. like Boghos said before, we are still only realising that we are in Armenia. its so wierd! anyway so we came back from Sevan today...it was soooooo beautiful. everyone is feeling a bit groggy and some are sick (virtual hugs to y'all). life here is sooo different to back home. today lisa, alene, rita and i went shopping for junk food...but they have no corner shops here!! its annoying as!!! so in the end we went to this SFC (Southern Fried CHicken), and im sorry to say...it was rank!!! the bread was like yay thick (bout 8 centimetres) meat was bout 2 mm and there were lashings of mayonnaise. no pickle or squat....i think for the first time in my entire life i am going to say....i prefer McDonalds. man i cant believe i just said that!! (Noush 2005c).

Thick comparisons, on the other hand, reach beyond daily issues as reflections on the deeper structures in Armenia such as culture, life-style and mentality of the people. The “long history of Armenia” in opposition to the “short history of the USA” and opportunities in Armenia vis-à-vis opportunities in the country of citizenship/residence are the other things that are frequently mentioned in thick comparisons. Communal values vs. individualism, simplicity of life vs. materialism, a sense of psychological tranquility vs. persistent struggle to achieve higher material ends are the major contrasts that results from the Armenia-host country comparisons⁴¹⁶. These together with witnessing the economic troubles in Armenia and the empathetic struggle of the people to overcome these difficulties, for some of the authors, result in a deeper contemplation on the meaning and purpose of life that also extends to the

416 For example, the CYMA participant Vaughn Eyvazian (2007d) stated:

The most important thing I wanted to talk about was the lesson I've learned; I've learned that life here is simple, passing by makeshift homes with makeshift walls and seeing the fullest smiles I've seen in my life. You don't get these smiles anywhere else, this is the truth in this land. Life is simple, Life is good, and my people love life. I'd like to say that my grandpa was the one to teach me to love life, without ever saying a word about it. Never sweat the small stuff because the people here don't even have complexities in their life to fret upon. And its good, and something as simple as a smile is definite proof of the true appreciation of life in Armenia. I always tell myself in a difficult situation things could always be worse and it helps me appreciate the important things and keeps me optimistic. I'd say they live the same way here. If there was a lesson I could tell everyone to learn here in Armenia is that they should adopt this mentality. I'm realizing more and more the less I need and want things in life, because right now I have it all. This God given opportunity has so far been the best time of my life.

For further Armenia-host country comparisons in terms of the attitudes of the people towards the life and history see also, Keutelian (2005), Lusine S (2006), (Yaldezian 2009c).

revision of the professional career plans. Anahid Ovanessoff's blog published in the CYMA website is one of the examples of this result⁴¹⁷.

It's really too bad that the economy in Armenia is so poor, because aside from that, I really think I would enjoy living here. Like everywhere else, Armenia has its good and bad points...but the good aspects of it have been shining extra brightly for me this past week...There are so many wonderful things here that would make it a great place to live. Sadly, there is no work... and for those who are fortunate enough to find work, the pay isn't much. The nurses with whom I work, only make \$55 a month...A MONTH!!... and they work longer hours and more days than the nurses in America... Regardless, I really feel like the people here try not to dwell on the fact that they have such hardships and instead appreciate life, taking into account the wonderful things that they do have... Life isn't materialistic and unfriendly... when people act nicely toward each other... most of the time it is NOT only for their own benefit. I think that America is a very self involved country where everyone thinks only about themselves. It makes me sad to think that the people here, with the what little they have, are still ready to give whatever little they have to someone else... be it a family member, their neighbor or friend, or even a stranger who they happened to meet one day on the street. They have a hard life, and are forced to make use of every resource available to them, but still offer what they have to others... and it makes me feel embarrassed at how frivolously and wastefully I sometimes live my life. I wish everyone could get a chance to visit the people here, and see how hard they work... it will give them perspective so that they can appreciate what they have and realize how fortunate they are to not be living in a struggling country. These people try to keep their lives as simple as they can and appreciate all that they have... I think there is a lot we can learn from them. :) These are wonderful people and our Motherland is a remarkable place and we should try to help out in whatever way that we can!

Till next time!

-Anahid (Ovanessoff, 2005b).

As regards to within-Armenia comparisons, authors often contrast different realities of Armenia as they perceive. The perceived realities, which are highlighted as the positive sides of Armenia vis-à-vis the host countries are also mentioned as the aspects of Armenia that triumph over the negative aspects of Armenia, particularly the economic troubles of the country. Importantly, such comparisons are highly instrumental in developing a positive sense of Armenia.

417 See, Appendix 18 for Sarah Mergeanlian's blog as another example of the the ways in which Armenia trips trigger reflection on the meaning and purpose of life.

5.3 Formation of Ethnic, Civic and Hybrid Selves

Rita Manoukian is a CYMA Armenia trip participant who expresses her feelings through poetry. She posted a poem titled “DepartingWounds” on August 5, 2007 by which she conveys her feelings and inner reflections as she waits in the airport for her return flight back to her country citizenship/residence. In this poem, Manoukian divides the time as before and after Armenia as an expression that for her Armenia trip has been a turning point, the closure of an era and the beginning of a new one.

Words are merely not the way...
to portray to you how I live my life from day to day
Because there no longer is a Here and Thereafter
There is only a Before Armenia and then an After.
(R. Manoukian 2007).

Similar to Manoukian, most of the authors identify their Armenia trips as a momentous event with life-changing results for reasons including gaining new perspective on the future career plans and the meaning of life that were mentioned above. However, what makes Armenia trip a life-changing experience for many is that Armenia trips trigger a process of reevaluation of the ethnic and national belonging that most of the time results in a renewed sense of oneself⁴¹⁸.

Importantly, resolution of the “identity crisis” is one of the major motivations of the volunteers and pilgrims in deciding to participate in Armenia trip programs⁴¹⁹. Therefore, it can be seen that many Armenia trip participants are predisposed to go through a cognitive process to this end before arriving Armenia. Moreover, as the previous chapter argues, the BR/DH, the AVC and the CYMA, as well, seek to activate such a cognitive process among

418 For example, Tatevik Ravezian (2010) states:

I did not expect my experience to be emotional in this extend for me. It is almost impossible to describe this feeling of going back to my roots – this is only something you can feel by experiencing it. These years of my life are the most important as I am about to build the fundament of my life, and I am so lucky to have my experience in Armenia as a source for inspiration. I am constantly searching for something, which is still a mystery, but I can feel it has a strong connection to Armenia. I want to spend my life having an impact on the development of my country either my moving there sometime in my life or by connection Armenia to Scandinavia.

Tatiana Semerjian, likewise, writes: “...I had missed out on twenty years of allowing Armenia to play a role in developing this identity. I knew how to be an Armenian, but I knew little about what it meant (Yaldejian 2009e). See also, Andonian (2011), Ishkhanian (2011), R.Manoukian (2005b) for other texts in which authors reflect on the renewal of self-identity in different intensities.

419 See, Lusine S (2006) and Rakijan (2007a).

their participants that they hope to end by (re)connection of the young diasporans with the Armenian ethno-national identity. To the credit of these organizations, many of the volunteers and pilgrims arrive to this end, that is, discovery of or reconnection with Armenian identity. However, even though comparatively fewer in number, coming to terms with one's civic-national self instead of Armenianness or hybrid identity are also among the outcomes. In all cases, however, Armenia trips turn into a major event after which volunteers and pilgrims began to develop a new self-perception.

5.3.1 Discovery of/Reconnection with the Armenian-self

Two different paths that lead to discovery of/reconnection with the Armenian-self can be detected. Some authors narrate their discovery of the Armenian-self seeded in themselves in Armenia. That is, for a number of authors, trip to Armenia results in the discovery of the Armenian essence in Armenia, which they claim, has survived within their families through generations, hence implanted within themselves. The AVC participant Armen Yerevanian's (2009) below quoted blog is a paradigmatic expression of this mode of discovery.

The superficial differences were many...What I felt however, was that I had a fundamental understanding of how my local peers thought and acted. I felt I could connect with them through an *Armenian pathos*, through a way of looking at the world passed down from my parents and grandparents that partly defined my Armenian identity.

In this passage, Yerevanian speaks about a kind of common thinking, feeling, and perception among Armenians worldwide, which connects them through invisible ties. Similarly, some authors mention what they identify as common cultural traits between the *hayastantsis* and the diaspora Armenians. The BR/DH participant Amanda Ani Messer's travelogue is a model example of this version. In her travelogue, Messer "realizes" that Armenianness in her family has persisted through three generations after observing that gift giving, seeking the best deal in merchandising, and predisposition to arts and crafts are the cultural traits that are shared by Armenians in Armenia and her family members. She writes:

Beyond the community exposure, another light-ray of my experience is on the inter-personal level. It's fascinating to see habits that my family has rippling through the community here on a larger scale, from family to family, and city to city. It's amazing to think how much "Armenian-ness" has persisted through 3 generations, nearly 100 years, of our family living in the United States.

She adds:

After living here for this time, I see how the personal characteristics of Armenians persist within families around the world - being Armenian is borderless, it's a cultural seed embedded inside of someone (Messer 2009).

Whereas, above quotes exemplify the mode of discovery/confirmation of the Armenian ethno-national identity through overemphasizing the alleged commonalities and deemphasizing diversity among ethnic Armenians⁴²⁰, there are authors, although fewer in number, that come to terms with the diversity among ethnic Armenians, but still maintain and/or develop a sense of ethno-national concurrence. For example, the BR/DH participant Tatevik Revazian (2010a) in her travelogue writes the following:

Meeting other volunteers was also amazing. We were all connected in a special way - not by the country of our birth or where we live, but *our Armenian blood*. It was amazing to see how various the Armenian identity is, and it even made me feel closer to my country, because I am still Armenian, although I am different from the natives.

As this quote demonstrates, different from Yerevanian and Messer, Ravezian reasonably comes to terms with the cultural differences among Armenians. Upon this consciousness, she develops an understanding of the Armenian identity that embraces diversity, in opposition to Messer and Yerevanian, who tend to overlie all the differences by underscoring commonalities that embodies Armenianness in an imaginary timeless and space-free culture. Despite this difference, nonetheless, both arrive at the same essentialist understanding of Armenianness; Messer and Yerevanian by emphasizing the “common cultural traits” and the Armenian pathos, and Ravezian by emphasizing the “Armenian blood”. Strikingly, in the case of Ravezian, what looks like a more liberal approach eventually results in a proto-racist definition of Armenianness.

What directs Ravezian’s liberal outlook to a controversial proto-racist conclusion is the tendency to prove the existence of an ethno-national unity through sameness among ethnic Armenians, in general, and between Armenia and the diaspora, in specific. Many of the authors, indeed, share this tendency, most probably because of an assumed responsibility to prove the existence of such unity among Armenians that often resembles an obsession, which, however, verifies the fictitiousness of the unity claim. Importantly, there are texts that

420 See, Keutelian (2005) and Grigorian (2011a) for two similar texts claiming there are more similarities than differences between Armenians in Armenia and diaspora.

demonstrates how artificial the claim of unity and sameness can be, as the below quote displays⁴²¹.

Over these 4 days I've been communicating with Armenians from all over the world. How similar or different we are? *A question to be answered by heart and not by mind. Armenian blood running down through our veins united us to get to know each other*, explore Artsakh and discover our own selves through our identity. Hikes and "Janapars" we went through opened the beauty of our land, helped to learn its history and past and to see the perspectives for its growth and development.

We would speak Armenian, different though: eastern Armenian, western Armenian and their different forms from Beirut, Argentina, France, Jordan, USA and elsewhere. Trying to break the distance, close the gap we would share our cultural, behavioral and traditional differences. Armenian food and drink, the hospitality of locals as we stayed in their homes for these 4 days brought us closer to our Armenian origin. *And if they were some still doubting as where do they belong they melted with others. Guess when? As they danced to Armenian music. The fun and pleasure of dancing came out through belonging to the one - Armenian nation and united us* (Avetisyan 2010, emphasis added).

Related to the claim of unity and sameness, though potentially as a challenge to this claim, what is evident in the texts is that many volunteers and pilgrims either deliberately or not take Armenia and the local Armenians as the reference point of Armenianness to judge their own Armenianness. Accordingly, Armenia-diaspora comparisons turn into the litmus test to judge the Armenianness of the latter. This approach eventually becomes the most important factor in the construction of Armenia as the land of Armenianness with its side effect, that is, the strengthening of the perception of diaspora as the terra of lesser Armenianness⁴²², although those like Ravezian are more prone to overcome such an understanding and develop a newer view of diaspora. The BR/DH participant Meredith Derian-Toth is one of the few authors who does so, as the below quote demonstrates.

Birthright Armenia is an opportunity for Armenians of all sorts (connected to an Armenian community-not connected, cooks the food-doesn't know the food, speaks the language at home-didn't know there was another language...) to come, live, learn, and immerse themselves in the Armenian

421 For a similar claim that replaces Armenian dances with football see, Tchekmedyan (2007a).

422 One of the CYMA participants states:

Today is our last day in Armenia. Although I woke up today feeling sick, I still managed to get up and explore Yerevan and *the Armenian lifestyle* one last time...

Whenever we go to different churches and sites, she makes sure we grasp the understanding behind the history and *connect with our faith and culture*...(Liana 2008b).

culture. I used to say “real Armenian culture” when comparing myself to native Armenians, but what does that really mean? “Native Armenian culture?” “The culture of those living in the country?” But what about the Diaspora community? I now understand that a huge part of the Armenian culture is its Diaspora. I may have a serious bias- because I am part of this Diaspora community and would like to be considered part of the culture. But, beyond my selfishness, I honestly believe that Armenia’s rich, devastating, and unique history is reflected in the culture, including its Diaspora (Derian-Toth 2011).

In addition to different modes of relating oneself with Armenianness, namely, emphasizing the commonalities or accepting the cultural diversity and substituting it with the Armenian blood, three modes of discovery/reconnection with Armenianness can also be abstracted from the texts, which can be grouped under the names enlightening, incarnation and rerooting.

Enlightening is relevant to those who are neither strongly attached to Armenianness nor to the Armenian community in the diaspora. For them, trip to Armenia signifies the discovery of “Armenianness” that they had been disaffected from⁴²³. The second mode, which I call “incarnating”, on the other hand, is relevant to those who prior to their stay in Armenia already had strong affiliation with the Armenian identity and community in the diaspora. For them, their experiences in Armenia engender the verification, correction and eventually consolidation of “Armenianness” that they are already connected with in diaspora. The third mode that I call “re-rooting” can be noticed in the below quote.

Although I grew up next to Armeniaville, California, I wasn’t involved in the Armenian community (outside the relatives) nor did I really know much about Armenia, in terms of history, politics, current affairs etc. I came to attach my feeling of “Armenianness” to a place and a people (Ghazarian 2009,).

In this quote the author expresses her desire to affix her “Armenianness” to a place and a people that could contain it safe. This can be interpreted as an expression of the desire to re-

423 The below quote is an example of “enlightening” in Armenia.

For many volunteers, a trip back to Armenia is a trip back to the familiar; they may be acquainted with the language, the food, or even its ancient history. For me, now a 3rd generation half-Armenian living in a very non-Armenian community, living in Armenia was an amazing opportunity to learn everything about where my ancestors come from...

The result? I have come back to the United States with a much greater pride in my heritage.

I now know what it means to be an Armenian (Madden 2011).

See also, (Goganian 2011) and Najarian (2011).

root “Armenianness” in a concrete social terrain to attain a feeling reality of the Armenian identity, which otherwise would remain virtual and result in “existential tremors”, and accordingly, and self- solidity.

5.3.2 Acknowledging the “Civic-self”

Although discovery and/or reconnection with the Armenian identity is the desired and also the most common end of the Armenia trips, this is not the absolute end. For some, witnessing socio-economic problems, adverse cultural traits such as patriarchal culture and nugatory work ethics results in disappointment that triggers confirmation and greater appreciation of the country of residence/citizenship and, by extension, civic-national identity defined by citizenship (see for example, Hosbayer 2005a). In addition, being perceived as “American” by the local Armenians may be another subtle factor of disappointment consequent to the feeling of disability to get integrated in the Armenian society and foreignness that leads to the acknowledgement of the civic/national identity. Natalie Kazarian’s blog (2008) includes the passage quoted below that hints this factor.

Anyway my experiences are growing along with my love for this country. I have such strong opposing emotions for Hayastan. I am sad when I walk around sometimes, looking at the people who need help, but I am also upset. (Not all people) but some see us (americans) as targets and not "real armenians." This challenge takes ample amounts of understanding because in my mind, we are more the same than different.

Eventually, for some, trip to Armenia eventually results in acknowledging the civic/national identity in opposition to the ethnic identity. The AVC participant Aleksan Giragosian’s blog is an expression of such result⁴²⁴.

Actually, being here makes me wonder if I can actually live here. I tell my friends and family that I want to move to Armenia, but I seem to forget sometimes that I am an American. What I mean to say is that a move to Armenia would entail more than a change in location. It would entail sacrifices on almost every level (economic, political, cultural). I say "sacrifices" because, at the moment, I do not see any gains that can made through relocating to Armenia. The only thing that keeps me from

424 A similar point is stated by one of the CYMA participants blogging with the nickname Kevin as the follows:

One thing I noticed is that I am American Armenian, not Armenian American. As much as I hate to admit it I haven't felt this much like an outsider since my freshmen year in high school. The locals are generally friendly although I do catch a few words in conversations as I pass by (Kalfayan 2008c).

abandoning the idea altogether is the psychological conditioning, one might even say Brainwashing, I underwent in Armenian school and at home that has instilled in me a longing for my fatherland (Giragosian 2011).

Grigosian's words are noticeable for demonstrating the communal pressure on the diaspora Armenians to long for an unfamiliar homeland. In fact, this communal pressure, or in Grigosian's correct wording "psychological conditioning", is one of the factors of the discovery of/ reconnection with the Armenian self discussed above.

5.3.3 Conciliation of the Ethnic and Civic identities: Coming to terms with the Hybrid-self

In between these two ends, for some authors, trip to Armenia results in the reconciliation and eventual synthesis between their ethnic and civic identities, and by extension, between their ethnic and national belongings. The quote below from a blog titled "To Bridge the Gap" in the CYMA website is an example of this outcome⁴²⁵.

To be honest, this trip has left me torn inside. Although I bleed the blood of an Armenian, I was born and raised as an American. Throughout my life, it has been difficult for me to find a balance between the two. Sometimes I feel like I am the only one of my kind, and that God has blessed with a special gift, but cannot seem to find someone to give it to.

Fortunately, this trip has helped me "bridge the gap" inside my soul. Within approximately one week, I have learned more important aspects of my Armenian heritage on a first hand basis, and at the same time, I have never been more proud to be an American as well... That's when I realized that it doesn't matter if I find an exact balance of being an Armenian-American, but that I accept Christ and apply his teachings to those less fortunate than I. So if I can give that gift to others, than I have truly fulfilled my duties and responsibilities as a Christian (bedros 2008).

It can be argued that, Armenia trip participants who achieve a synthesis between their ethnic and civic identities reach a more holistic understanding of the self. On the other hand, the above quote also demonstrates the difficulty of reaching such an end as the author of this passage mentions his uncertainty of accomplishing an "exact balance". Also, it is interesting

425 The travelogue of the BR/DH participant Tatevik Ravezian partially quoted below is another example.

I kind of hate that question because it is impossible to answer. You can't really compare two completely different countries. I feel at home in both places and comfortable in different ways in both countries (Revazian 2010b).

For similar statements see also, Kalfayan (2008b) and Liana (2008a) for expressions of feeling of attachment to both Armenian and American identities.

that as a result of this uncertainty he mentions his Christian identity as an answer to his existential insecurity. This demonstrates Armenia trips may also facilitate the upsurge of identities other than ethnic or civic.

5.3.4 Strengthened Sense of Attachment to Armenia

Despite these differences, majority of the texts express an enhanced sense of attachment to Armenia in different intensities, which is truer for the texts of those who participate in Armenia trips in search of their selves. The BR/DH participant Elina Sarkisian's travelogue is one example that demonstrates this outcome as follows:

I arrived in Yerevan on a cold March day and for a moment I thought "what would I really do here for the coming months?". Yet, 3 months were not enough. 3 months were only the beginning of feeling comfortable to where I truly belong. Now only 3 months later, I feel the urge to express my impending longing to be back home. Yerevan, for me now is home. I have never felt home before; being born in Syria, growing up most of my adulthood in Montreal and lately living in Toronto made me feel like I was always "homeless". Now I came to the realization that it is not where you are born, nor where you actually live that makes you call somewhere home. I now understand, home is where you feel comfortable, where you feel like you belong. I belong in Armenia!
(Sarkisian 2010).

Furthermore, with the exception of the few, those who come to acknowledge their civic/national self or hybrid-selves also express similar feelings⁴²⁶. As such, there is no zero-sum game between acknowledging civic/nation or hybrid self and attachment to Armenia. However, on the opposite, although not generalizable, enhanced sense of attachment to Armenia sometimes result in some degree of alienation from the country of citizenship/residence as the following quote demonstrates.

Allow me to be frank. Coming to Hayasdan was one of the best decisions I have ever made. From the moment I stepped into the country, I was no longer lost in a sea of Irish, Italians, and blacks. I was amongst my own people, and I truly felt I belonged. I've always had great friends of all nationalities, but my strong Armenian identity is something that none of them could completely grasp, no matter how worldly they are...
Armenians are a beautiful people. Passion, loyalty, and love have coursed through our veins since the beginning of time. This will never end.

426 See, for example Tufenkchyan (2011a) that reveals witnessing problems in Armenia and the consequent disappointment does not necessarily lead to alienation from this country.

Although Philadelphia will always be my birthplace, Hayasdan will always be my home. Something in this country has grabbed ahold of my heart and I don't think it will ever let go. I never imagined I would feel so comfortable in a place that is halfway around the globe, with a language that I cannot speak fluently, and where I didn't know a soul (Hagopian 2011).

5.4 Armenia: The Land of Advantages

Within the aggregate of the the texts, Armenia is constructed as four different yet interrelated entities, namely, as a land of advantages, land of Armenianness, symbol of ethno-national rebirth and collective victory and hope, and land of adventure and excitement.

I work in finance in London, I have quite a demanding job. Last spring I felt the need to take a break from my professional and private life and to reflect on which direction I wanted my life to take. I obtained a 3-month career break from my work (Manessian 2006).

I have been working in the fashion industry for four years in New York City, freelancing in design, styling and research. Last winter, things started to feel a bit dull and I was in need of some inspiration, so I began a getaway plan for the spring and summer (Mirbegian 2009).

As the above quotes demonstrate, for some of the Armenia trip participants, Armenia trips are a way to pull away from the routine of the daily life. As such, this group does not attach Armenia not much of a special meaning other than being an available destination. Within this framework, Armenia does not appear as a particular country to take a trip to but as one country to draw away from the country of residence; rather than the pull factors of Armenia, the push factors of the country of citizenship/residence move these individuals to travel to Armenia. Eventually, Armenia is conceptualized as some kind of a temporal refugee from the daily life. Yet, subliminal ethno-national drives may explain the choice of Armenia instead of another destination as a temporal refugee.

There are also texts that attach a similar meaning to Armenia, yet by underlining the pull factors, particularly touristic highlights of Armenia such as cheap prices, vivid nightlife in Yerevan, historical and religious sites, pastoral beauties, hospitable people, and the “every little weird thing” in Armenia⁴²⁷. In either case, i.e., taking Armenia as somewhere to draw

427. For texts highlighting the touristic aspects of the country see, Brooke H (2006), Merganian (2007), Noush (2005a), Tatevik (2010a).

away from the routine of the everyday life or as a touristic destination, however, Armenia eventually appears as a touristic opportunity as an available destination for relief and a place of temporal joy, but not so much of a place of attachment. Notably, conceptualization of Armenia as a touristic opportunity is not what the the BR/DH, the AVC, and the CYMA aspire for as they organize Armenia trips to facilitate ethno-national belonging among the Armenian diaspora youth. Furthermore, cultivation of such conceptualization among the diaspora youth is likely to decrease the myth of homeland, and, by extension, the ideological bonds that keep diaspora communities intact. Thirdly, texts which advert the touristic aspects of Armenia include mostly thin comparisons between Armenia and the host-countries that demonstrates that the objective of a deeper comprehension of Armenia is mostly left unachieved. Notably, Armenia as a touristic destination is most salient within the CYMA blogs. This can be taken as an indication of the importance of the mode of Armenia trip with respect to the formation of the subjective experiences and perceptions⁴²⁸.

Above it was stated that volunteering in Armenia provides the volunteers with opportunities to gain practical knowledge in their fields of study or interest⁴²⁹. For example, The BR/DH participant Anahid Matossian's in her travelogue writes:

Initially, I was supposed to be working at a Catholic orphanage in Gyumri run by Kouyr Aroussiag...but I decided I wanted something that catered more to my academic interests. So I looked at museums because it seemed

⁴²⁸ The quote in footnote 404 from Rita Manoukian's blog is a Weberian ideal typical example of the CYMA participants' mood of relating themselves with Armenians in this way. Interestingly, Manoukian is the poetess of the two poems quoted in this chapter. As such, the contrast between sentimentality of her poems and the goofiness of the quote in footnote 407 is striking that may indicate in her poems Manoukian is simply being a "good diasporic" preaching her love to Armenia as she feels she has to. For the text of a CYMA participant who comes to terms with the unproductive consequences of perceiving Armenia as a touristic destination see, Levon (2005).

⁴²⁹ In relation to this point, the AVC participant Sima Cunningham's blog constitutes an example of the opportunities that volunteers in Armenia have to work in areas in which they do not have enough competence.

When I first arrived in Armenia I was told I was going to be volunteering at two locations: Manana Youth Education Center and Naregatsi Art Institute. I didn't know much about what I would be doing beyond teaching an English class to an unknown number of students of an unknown age. The first couple of weeks, I honestly felt like I didn't know what I was doing there. Here I was, a 20-year-old student who has never taught a formal class before, never written an official grant proposal and certainly never learned how to understand a budget. I'd volunteered a lot during my life: built houses, done food drives, flower-pot fundraisers and more, but I'd always had a pretty firm idea of what I was doing, and more often than not, someone to tell me exactly what to do (Cunningham 2011).

See also, Avagyan and Chilingarian (2011), Huckelbridge (2011), Mazman (2011) for the psychological rewards and the consequent sense of satisfaction as a result of having the opportunity to realize social projects in Armenia.

like a great experience, something that I couldn't quite have back home. Eventually I was accepted to work as a volunteer at the only archaeological museum in Gyumri. Once the boss, Hamik, heard that I was an anthropology student, his face lit up and he ordered my co-workers to lug in box after box of...HUMAN BONES.... My job was to analyze the sex and age of all the human bones. I remembered bits and pieces of biological anthropology from college and my co-workers helped me along the way, so my job became much easier, not to mention the fact that I was very interested by what I was doing and learning more about the past”
(Matossian 2009).

As this quote demonstrates, volunteering in Armenia provides the volunteers not only with the opportunity of internship. It also presents the chance to be granted with responsibilities beyond personal qualifications, which turns a self-imposed duty to an advantage⁴³⁰. In fact, it is this advantage that volunteering in Armenia helps the growth of a view of Armenia among the volunteers that strengthens the resultant perception of Armenia as a land of advantages.

In addition to corporal corollaries, traveling to Armenia provides the volunteers and pilgrims with socio-psychological fulfillment for both the social circumstances they find themselves in and what the Armenia symbolizes. As regards to the the social circumstances, volunteers and pilgrims often find themselves accredited in Armenia. Notably, rather than the personal characteristics, talents or competence, simply being diasporans particularly from Western countries stands as the main factor of this situation. It can be seen that this creates a certain psychological satisfaction among the volunteers and pilgrims and at least some volunteers and pilgrims do not drop back to relish the situation. The following quote from the travelogue of Christopher Gasparian demonstrates such socio-psychological state:

My day began at 10am at the art institute translated as "Open University". I assisted Samvel in his first class by helping students use various tools to construct their projects...Samvel is a really great guy with a good sense of humor. He's very talented, as I could see when he invited me to join his students while he sketched various portraits using the students as models. *I seemed to be of great interest to the 17-18 year old students that giggled and laughed as they tried to speak English. Curiosity is expected with the kamavor New Yorktsi* (Gasparian 2008a).

430 Importantly, this is one of the fallacies of the internship programs in terms of their efficiency. As such, this reveals that volunteer work in Armenia is rather an ideological tool than a practical one.

Importantly, the person Gasparian refers as “Samvel, the great guy” is the dean of the institution where Gasparian volunteers. Gasparian’s coziness in referring to the dean of the institution can be deciphered as the expanding self-confidence and the following arrogance consequent to the psychological contentment. In fact, similar tone rhetoric is seen in the not so rare claim of helping the local Armenians and, more strikingly, in the claim of showing leadership as the below quote demonstrates. Notably, the claim of leadership is an implicit assumption of the diaspora organizations examined in the previous chapter.

My experience here had a great affect in my life moving forward starting from a business perspective to a long lost family. To me Armenia is untouched land, there is so much to expand and so many things to improve on. The forums Birthright setup enlightened me to form a business of some sort in the future, anything from production to services. *There are great people currently in Armenia but it is up to us volunteers from the Diaspora to help and show leadership* (Grigorian 2009).

Nonetheless, there are also authors who are perceptive of the unwarranted inequality between the local Armenians and the diasporans. Notably, these authors suggest putting aside arrogance and promote dialogue not only to teach but also to learn. BR/DH participant Talene Ghazarian is one of those more perceptive authors who writes the following:

I feel that it has been not through my internship, but through dialogue with other diasporans and locals that I have both been most impactful and most impacted. I would like to emphasize di-ologue, because coming here with a mono-logue, ready to dump one’s western “wisdom” on the inhabitants of this country (or any country) is about as effective as a screen door on a submarine. Don’t get me wrong please come and don’t shy away from “taboo” topics or complicated issues; jump in, but do so with an open mind and ... patience (Ghazarian 2009).

Conceptualization of Armenia as the symbol of collective victory, hope and the rebirth of the Armenian ethno-nation, as shall be detailed below, renders presence in Armenia a source of pride consequent to the sense of fulfillment of the ethno-national duty and “witnessing the history. This, coupled with the delight of “giving back” by volunteering and helping the locals expressed by the cliché of “duty to give back to Armenia” as one of the repeated *raison d’être* of the Armenia trip programs, Armenia trips becomes a considerable source of socio-psychological fulfillment⁴³¹. Notably, socio-psychological fulfillment of being in Armenia is

431 For texts preaching the duty of “giving back” to Armenia see, Avedisian-Cohen (2011); Avagyan and Chilingarian (2011), Grigorian (2011a; 2011b).

so significant that it is a major reason of extended stay in Armenia or repatriation as the case of Shoghag Jabrayan exemplifies, who in her travelogue narrates her life in the city of Kapan as a repatriate and the socio-psychological satisfaction of being and working in Armenia. In addition to the tranquility in this small Armenian town far from the comforts of the Western World, the daily little adventures, joy of witnessing idiosyncrasies that Armenia presents to a Westerner, Jabrayan reflects on “helping the locals” and “witnessing the history” as the reasons of her psychological satisfaction in Armenia (see, Jabrayan 2011).

5.5 Armenia: The Land of Armenianness

For the first and second generation diasporans Armenia is the country where childhood friends and kin live in. As such, tangible social bonds define the relationship between this group and Armenia. Hence, for the first and second generation diasporans journey to Armenia amounts directly to the reunion with associates in Armenia. In the absence of tangible ties, on the other hand, virtual/imagined ties substitute the former. “My decision to come to Armenian this summer was a no brainer. I have always wanted to do volunteer work, but the timing was always off, and my interest in my family history only deepens and intensifies as I get older” (Hunter 2009) writes the AVC participant Amy Hunter in 2009 as an example of the ways in which the idea of family past functions as a virtual tie between a volunteer and Armenia. As a matter of fact, many of the Armenia trip participants undertake these trips to track their family past in Armenia. For these people, journey to Armenia is a virtual entrance into the scene of the stories of the grandparents. Accordingly, these journeys are experienced as virtual re-connections with the ancestors. Within this framework, Armenia appears as a conduit between the past and the present, the ancestors and the self, the roots and the branches. The below quoted expressions of the BR/DH participant González Kazazian demonstrates the formation of those virtual associations.

It was more than just a “trip”- I was living a dream, a dream that my grandfather always spoke about; I can now finally understand or at least fathom what his experience was like.

Being from Chile, I never was a big fan of Armenia before, but now I know there is no greater comparison to it. When I walked through the streets of Yerevan I felt at home, often times too comfortable, like I had been living in these streets, in this country for years. It’s amazing how my grandfather was able to verbally convey his love, his passion, his commitment to the Motherland; being here for the first time, I can truly say that no matter how far I travel, no matter where I am, and despite where I go in life, Armenia will always be my permanent home. It is home for all Armenians and descendants of the Diaspora and our fellow Armenians must realize, if they

haven't already, that we have an undeniable commitment to it (Kazazian 2011)⁴³².

Armenia trips are also experienced as virtual trips to the roots, yet not the family roots but the ethno-national roots, by associating the Armenian heritage with Armenia. The CYMA participant Andrew Moltz blog demonstrates this strikingly:

Even if my ancestors came from Nighde in what is now Turkey, I am still Armenian, and Hayastan is where by the grace of God my ancestors came to accept the Christian faith and the love of God and be part of one of the first Christian nations on earth. I wanted to come to Hayastan to experience the Christian faith in its original homeland and to love my fellow Christians, both Hayastantsis and Spiurka-Hays (Yaldezian 2009a).

As this quote reveals, perceiving Armenia as stage on which the Armenian identity has emerged and evolved is the major factor in the development of the particular understanding of Armenia as the land where the Armenian heritage is laid. In that way, as CYMA participant Rita Monoukian puts it, Armenia is viewed as the “country which is a part of me and my past and of my history” (R. Manoukian 2005a). All in all, through tangible or virtual associations, trips to Armenia are experienced as journeys of self-(re)discovery in ethno-national term as the blog of the CYMA participant Tatiana Semerjian manifests as follows⁴³³:

Going to Armenia for the first time at my age was both a privilege and a shame. It was a privilege because after years of my upbringing and schooling, I had a grasp of my Armenian identity. It was a shame because I had missed out on twenty years of allowing Armenia to play a role in developing this identity. I knew how to be an Armenian, but I knew little about what it meant. Everything I knew had come through a filter. Whether they were personal anecdotes from my relatives, lessons from instructors, or broadcasts on Armenian Teletime, another person in some way had retold the story. I was proud of being Armenian, but mainly because I was taught to be proud. Fortunately for me, Armenia exceeded all of my expectations, strengthened my identity, and reinforced my pride...(Yaldezian 2009e).

432 Unfortunately, Kazazian does not make it clear whether his grandfather is from historical Armenia or Soviet Armenia or post-soviet Armenia. Has he made this point clear further interpretation could have been made.

433 See also, Eyvazian (2007d), Keutelian (2005), Kalfayan (2008a), Madden (2011) and Najarian (2011). Interestingly, children of mixed marriages, too, search their “roots” in Armenia as the BR/DH participant Ani Colekessian’s travelogue demonstrates.

Coming from a mixed Armenian-Austrian background, I always felt a certain distance from the Armenian culture, and while I had taken Saturday classes at the Armenian school in my community, I never quite grasped what it was to be Armenian. It always seemed like such a foreign concept, not something that I could ever really be a part of. This was my opportunity to find out for myself what it really meant to be Armenian and where my roots really did come from, the language, the culture, the people (Colekessian 2008).

The aggregate result of the reflections of experiencing Armenia trips as journeys of self-(re)discovery is the formation of an association between Armenia and Armenianness. This is the main factor of the construction of Armenia as a land of Armenianness within and by the texts examined in this chapter.

5.6 Armenia: The Symbol of Ethno-national Rebirth and Collective Victory and Hope

The CYMA participant Rita Manoukian, in addition to the above quoted poem “Departing Wounds”, posted another poem titled “Cry No Longer” on July 7, 2005 reflecting on the Armenian history; the defeats and the moral victories, and the unending difficulties that the Armenians faced. In this poem, Manoukian writes the following lines.

Don't tell me we have no where left to go
Don't say that this land has nothing more to show
...
Stories and stories of battles lost but wars won
Don't forget that this land is Armenia, the only one (R.Manoukian 2005a).

What stands out in these lines is Manoukian’s identification of Armenia as “the only one”. One plausible interpretation is that with these words Manoukian implies the “Armenian lands that were “lost to the Turk” in the early twentieth century and the fact that Armenia is the only piece of land that accommodates an ethnic Armenian majority. However, it is also possible that she refers to Armenia’s political status as an independent state that gives Armenians political control on the land after centuries of stateless-ness and the accompanying sense of security as the Armenian historical narrative identifies stateless-ness as the major misfortune that led to devastations⁴³⁴. In fact, in the texts examined in this chapter, there is a recognizable emphasis on the political status of Armenia as an independent state.

The emphasis on the independent statehood is not simply an affirmation of a political reality *per se*. Rather, it is the expression of the meaning attributed to post-1991 independent Armenia as the confirmation of the will and strength of the Armenian ethno-nation to survive

434 For example, one of the blogs in the CYMA website writes the following:

Hayastan is unlike any place...To a certain degree, there are a lot of sad emotions tied to this country... Armenian culture had become Russian culture...Its also sad to see the poverty the country is enduring after genocide and years of communism. Even the beauty of Khor Virab is tarnished by the Turkish border being so close. Just beyond, lies Mt. Ararat. But, there is plenty of reason for happiness and optimism. For one, Armenia and the Armenians are still here. Despite the best efforts of countless people, we have endured and are rebuilding. I would say that that notion should bring any Armenian anywhere great happiness as *this is our country and nobody will take it from us* (Mark 2008).

See also, Nora (2008).

and flourish⁴³⁵. Likewise, modernization and economic development of Armenia is taken as another evidence of the same will and strength by the Armenia trip participants⁴³⁶. Overall, primarily the political status of Armenia and secondarily the socio-economic progress of the country are attached a symbolic meaning beyond their real consequences. As such, Armenia is constructed as the symbol of the final collective victory and hope of the Armenians.

Corollary to the symbolism attached to the post-1991 Armenia, many diaspora Armenians perceive relating themselves with the independent Armenia in one way or another not only as an obligation but also as an excitement of being the witnesses of the history of the post-1991 state-building and the corollary “revival of the Armenian ethno-nation”. What the Armenia trips add to the average is being in Armenia is regarded as witnessing the history not simply as passive observer but as an active partaker in history making. This is a real thrill for many of the participants, as the below quote exemplifies⁴³⁷.

I now understand the importance of the work we, as volunteers, are doing in our homeland. It is work dedicated to those who gave their lives, to the lands we have today, to Armenia and Artsakh. Diaspora Armenians and Local Armenians working together, no matter what our jobs are, we are all leaving a tiny footprint in Armenia's history. *We are making history...*”(C.Manoukian 2007, emphasis added).

Despite the tone of idealist altruism in the above quote and other similar statements, an essential point, however, is that for the many “history making” in Armenia remains ultimately diasporic; one can enjoy the excitements of this adventure and flee back to safety of the host-

435 For a rhetorical expression of such meaning see, Jabrayan (2011).

436 A number of participants are more perceptive to the deprecating economic and social situation in Armenia despite the official or non-official claims of progress. At that point, Soviet past is often mentioned as an apology of these undesired realities. Put differently, by scapegoating the USSR and the Soviet policies, the blame of problems in Armenia is put on the Soviet past and hence Armenia is disposed of any negative charges that would shatter it as the symbol of collective victory and hope.

437 See also below quotes as other expressions of the excitement of partaking in “history making”.

I would like to join our people there in building and improving pediatric health care in the region. As a person who is deeply committed in improving the condition of our people and preserving the legacy of our forefathers, I hope I can dedicate my small, humble share to my people” (Babajian and Babajian 2006).

Ever since my last visit five years ago, I have wanted to return to Armenia, not as a tourist, but rather as an observer of and participant in its development. Armenia has been undergoing drastic and significant changes in the past several years, which makes this a fascinating time to be here to witness its transformation and affords a wonderful opportunity to contribute to the changes. So, five years and several life experiences later, I'm back in a place that has an unexplainable hold on me; and this time, I'm here in a different capacity and ready to truly discover the real Armenia and perhaps a bit more of myself (Dikranian 2008).

country if things turn malicious. This is true even for the “repatriates”, who, contradicting their idealism, live in Armenia as “prolonged denizens” rather than as “civic brothers” of the locals, who unlike the repatriates have no other “home” to go. The below quote from one of the Birthright Armenia bursars who decided to repatriate exemplifies this diasporic risk-free adventure of state and nation building:

I'm not quite sure what the future holds, and I like it that way. Everybody wants to know how long we plan to stay in Armenia and I don't have a concrete answer. If we were to set a time restriction, we'd be limiting our experience. As long as we're happy, finding fulfillment in our life and work, and continuing to learn, this is where we want to be. We still have so much to gain from this country and so much to offer it. Armenia is in a constant state of flux - growing, changing and running in a million different directions at once. It's an exciting time in our history, and we're proud to be a part of it (Abrahamian 2009).

As such, Armenia, and particularly trip to Armenia, is not only an adventure and excitement but also a great opportunity for the diaspora Armenians to feel like heroes despite the gap between feeling and being one.

5.7 Armenia: The Land of Adventure

Finally, either individually or jointly, factors that result in the formation of the perception of Armenia as a land of advantages, the search of the family past and ethnic roots in the land of Armenianness, the conviction of participating in history making in the land of victory and hope, and getting acquainted with the homeland render Armenia trips also an adventure. In Birthright Armenia participant Vrej Haroutounian's (2010) words:

For us young, educated, and adventurous types, its about exercising the privilege of actually coming out here and planting the seeds of change with our fellow Armenian compatriots—directly with our own hands. Yerevan, Gyumri, Stepanagerd, and the many other places here are calling you home. They are calling you to come and start your relationship with them, so that your love for them and their love for you grows, and so the day comes that you will share their burdens and privilege.

In addition to these subjective elements, objective characteristics of Armenia as a distant underdeveloped non-western post-soviet country hardly one of the World's top touristic destinies solidifies Armenia a fulfilling challenge. Subjective and objective factors together facilitate the conceptualization of Armenia as a land of adventure within and by the texts examined in this chapter.

5.8 Conclusion: A Country and a Fantasyland on the Same Soil

Overall, two analytically diverse constructions of Armenia can be abstracted from the texts: Armenia as a tangible country⁴³⁸ and Armenia as a fantasyland. Broadly speaking, construction of Armenia as a tangible country is more apparent within descriptive texts in which authors recount their daily experiences in Armenia rather in a comparatively plain way. As a tangible country, the most salient characteristics attributed to Armenia is being a land of advantages as an available temporal refugee and a country where university students and young professionals can gain practice in their fields of specialization and obtain socio-psychological rewards.

Whereas recounting the daily experiences of the Armenia trip participants is the primary factor of the construction of Armenia as a tangible country, projection of the *a priori* ideas, prejudices and beliefs that are mostly the derivatives of the diasporic myth of homeland and the post-genocide Armenian ethno-national narrative is the main dynamic of the construction of Armenia as a fantasyland. In that sense, Armenia as a fantasyland is principally a result of the imposition of the “subjective” onto the “objective”, the idea onto the matter, the ideal onto the real, the abstract onto the concrete. As such, Armenia as a fantasyland is more of an entity that mediates the concretization of the abstract. Therefore, construction of Armenia as a fantasyland is also the process of mystification of Armenia through the imposition of the diasporic myths and the elements of the post-genocide Armenian ethno-national narrative on it. Being the land of Armenianness, symbol of rebirth, collective victory and hope, and land of adventure are the three characteristics of Armenia as a fantasyland.

For a large number of participants, especially for those who were socialized in an Armenian cultural environment in the diaspora, Armenia is not just a country in the far away South Caucasus but an idea that captivates the mind and a “lifelong dream”⁴³⁹. What lies behind this

438 For some texts that construct Armenia as a tangible country see, A.Sarkisian(2011), Kazazian (2011) and Sayadian (2011) that highlight the contrast between the harsh conditions and the cheerful people and following pride of being an Armenian and the academic, professional and touristic opportunities that Armenia offers.

439 For example, the CYMA participant Robert Petrossian writes:

CYMA provided me with an opportunity to fulfill a lifelong dream of mine: to travel to my motherland, Armenia. The trip began at LAX airport where the CYMA group came together to achieve the collective goal of exploring our country’s culture and history. Upon landing in Armenia, I instantly felt immersed in the Armenian culture; everywhere I looked I saw Armenian people, everything I read or heard was in Armenian. A smile crept across my mouth for I knew I was truly in Armenia (Yaldezian 2009d).

state of mind is essentially the conceptualization of Armenia as a connection belt to the family past to ethnic ancestors, and to Armenianness⁴⁴⁰. Accordingly, for the Armenia trip participants tripping through Armenia is not just a tour in a country called Armenia but a passage to the past of the self and a virtual journey to self-discovery. This journey to one's self is one of the most pressing drives of the Armenians in the diaspora.

Bauman (2006) argues that in “liquid times” lives and identities are much more transient, fluent and uprooted. This, on the one hand, gives individuals an illusion of freedom, yet, on the other hand engenders existential tremors for the absence of a stable sense of identity and belonging that results in anxiety, fear and a sense of uncertainty. To overcome the existential tremors, people seek to re-root themselves in the local and the national to re-gain the lost feeling of stability and security. In specific to diasporic Armenians in the Christian and liberal Western countries, Armenianness has been losing its markers of distinctiveness. Losing the social markers, Armenian identity and communities are reproduced mostly through speech acts largely based on the narratives of genocide, symbolic actions and collective rituals that hardly correlate to worries, fears, bliss and struggles of the everyday-life. This, however, deepens the abstractness and estrangement of Armenianness as an idea haunted in the past and alienated from the contemporary daily life. As a result, Armenianness turns into something notional and an empty identity without a real meaning in the present. This results in the socio-psychological drive to find the meaning of Armenianness by associating it with the present and concrete. Associating Armenianness with Armenia is a solution to this crisis by anchoring the former to a sheltered constant. However, this resolution creates another anxiety as honoring Armenia as “the place of Armenianness” implies acknowledging the diaspora as the terrain of lesser Armeinanness. It is the resultant anxiety that leads many authors to assert the commonalities between Armenians in Armenian and those in diaspora in different ways with the result of constructing a singular, hegemonic and homogenous Armenian identity. As such, Armenia not only becomes the land of Armenianness but also its prison and limit. On the other hand, although ignorable in number, there are authors who observe and acknowledge the existence of diverse life-styles in Armenia. For example, Ani Dikranian, who was quoted at

440 Mardirossian (2010), for example states:

Growing up all around the globe, Diaspora Armenians have accumulated many unique dialects of Armenian language. For that reason, it is quite difficult to fully understand, speak, and decipher true eastern Armenian. Therefore, attending these classes has become very helpful for us Armenian speakers and non-speakers, as we learn to understand, speak, read and write the traditional Armenian way.

page 232, following such recognition, complains that whereas in diaspora one feels a need to prove her/his Armenianness by behaving like a “good Armenian”, in Armenia, on the contrary, one does not need to prove her/his Armenianness. Accordingly for her, whereas the diaspora is a place where one’s free development and expression of self is constrained by hegemonic socio-cultural codes and norms as she is obliged to prove her Armenianness, Armenia constitutes as place of liberty that opens up opportunities to individuals to develop and express their own self-identity without any restraint as they do not have to prove their ethno-national belonging. In that sense “homeland” constitutes a free and emancipatory space for creative and free self-construction. As such, whereas for the many Armenia is a place that covertly imposes the authentic/correct Armenianness, for people like Dikranian Armenia is a place of freedom for autonomous identity construction.

One of the main pillars of the post-genocide Armenian ethno-national narrative is the designation of statelessness as the major misfortune and weakness of the Armenians for its devastating results including massacres, exiles, and genocide. As a derivative, independence of Armenia gained in 1991 is spotted as the moment that the Armenian sorrowful Armenian history has turned to another direction. As such, independent statehood is not just a present political reality, but a powerful symbol. Accordingly, Armenia trip participants regard their presence in Armenia not simply as a corporeal experience, but as a symbolically loaded life-event of witnessing the history by actively participating in the making of it. Importantly, this symbolic baggage strengthens the social reality of Armenia as the land of Armenianness. In the texts examined in this chapter, the impact of this hegemonic understanding finds its expression in the construction of Armenia as a symbol of ethno-national rebirth, collective victory and hope. Attributed such a strong symbolism, attachment to Armenia, despite how ritualistic it may be, is taken as the litmus test of being a good Armenian. As such, attachment and loyalty to Armenia as the symbol of ethno-national rebirth, collective victory and hope also turns to be a turnsole paper of being an Armenianness.

Finally, subsequent to the excitement of the prospective surprises of self-discovery through the journey to the familial and ethnic roots and, alternatively or alongside with this, the thrill of being a participant of the state and nation building, hence of becoming a nation-building hero as the effect of constructions of Armenia as the land of Armenianness and as the symbol of rebirth, collective victory and hope, Armenia is implied as a land of adventure, as the third

facet of Armenia as a fantasyland. Importantly, construction of Armenia as a land of adventure adds to its construction as a land of advantages in indirect ways.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Glasnosts, *perestroika* and *demokratizatsiya* in the Soviet Union by the mid-1980s, demolition of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the eventual collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 were the series of events that certified the end of the Cold War by the victory of the Western liberal democracy and capitalism over the real-socialism. The echo of the end of the Cold War was so gross so that it persuaded some to believe in Francis Fukuyama's end of history thesis inspired by the Hegelian philosophy *via* Alexandre Kojève remembered by the often quoted words below:

What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War, or the passing of a particular period of post-war history, but the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government (Fukuyama 1989).

Fukuyama added, however, that the consolidation of the governance of the universalized Western liberal democracy on the “real or material world” could take some time and until then there would be events that would continue to “fill the pages of Foreign Affairs' yearly summaries of international relations”.

Although, the thesis of the final trump and the consequent universalization of Western liberal democracy is a much contested thesis, what has been verified by the post-1991 history is that by the victory of Western liberal democracy there have been many, probably too many, events to fill the pages of Foreign Affairs. Sadly, those events most often than not have been conflicts, wars and other misfortunes. For the post-soviet people, in particular, the end of the history was the dramatic beginning of a new history as they were introduced to the new and unusual life of liberal capitalist civilization and vice versa. For the kin-diasporas of the post-soviet countries, too, independent post-soviet homeland was a completely new reality, to which they had to adapt themselves to. Consequently, post-soviet kin-diasporas also passed through certain transformations within the wider framework of post-soviet transformations. By extension, patterns of homeland-diaspora relationships also radically altered in the post-soviet era. This generic framework has also been true for the Armenian case.

The transition of Armenia from a soviet republic to an independent capitalist republic animated not only the radical dislocation of the established Soviet economic, political and

socio-cultural structures, in Platz's (2000, 124) words "catastrophic demodernization" in Armenia, but also interrupted the routine in the diaspora communities. As a turning point, the 1988 earthquake in Armenia revealed the incompetence of the traditional diaspora political parties and organizations in carrying out effective aid campaigns for the wounded homeland, notwithstanding their cavalier rhetoric. This triggered the search for newer initiatives both at the individual and institutional levels that planted the seeds of new generation diaspora organizations. Meantime, as independence gradually manifested itself as a firmer possibility, diaspora communities turned their gaze towards Armenia even more so turning the independent Armenian republic to a paramount ethno-national cause, and by extension, a principal ethno-national binder, as well as a chief cause of controversies. The re-territorialization of the political imagination of the Armenian diaspora around Armenia, in return, facilitated the post-1991 trans-state Armenian ethno-national re-construction along the Armenia-diaspora nexus.

The post-1991 Armenia has been going through a process of re-construction in political and socio-economic spheres. In all these spheres, particularly after 1998 there have been innumerable initiatives of the diasporic individuals and institutions. However, in addition to these tangible processes, the fundamental and decisive process has been the construction of the social reality of the post-soviet independent Armenia, since the emergent meaning and identity of the post-1991 Armenia constitute the conceptual basis of the practical attempts in the political and socio-economic spheres. Departing from this perspective, this dissertation sought to answer few outwardly plain questions about the meaning and significance of the independent Armenia not only for the Armenians in Armenia, but also for the "other half" of the Armenian *ethnie* in diaspora. As a sequel, the aim of this dissertation has been to examine the Armenian ethno-national social reality of the post-1991 Armenia.

Notably, the construction of the social reality of the post-1991 Armenia and the re-construction of the post-1991 extra-territorial trans-state Armenian ethno-nation are integral processes; the meaning and identity of the post-1991 Armenia reflects and is reflected by the re-construction of the post-1991 extra-territorial trans-state Armenian ethno-nation. Moreover, both processes reflect and contingent to the already established collective beliefs, ideologies, worldviews and perceptions consolidated throughout the time.

Armenians as an ethno-nation bear several self-attributes that compose the pillars of their collective self-identification and portrayal that are reproduced by the Armenian ethno-national narrative such as being the first Christian nation contested by the Georgian and Assyrian ethno-national narratives. Yet, being the nation that had been the victim of the first genocide of the twenty-first century and the accompanying sense of victimhood are the defining characteristic of the contemporary Armenian ethno-national identity. Notably, different from, for example, the Jewish case, Armenian victimhood based on genocide consists not only of the loss of the people, but also the loss of the homeland. For that, while examining the Armenian ethno-national social reality of the post-1991 Armenia, attention has been paid to the social memory of the genocide, although this has not been hypothesized for the inductive approach of this dissertation, but discussed below.

The construction of the social reality of any entity is an aggregate outcome of different kinds of social practices. Yet, in order to reveal the Armenian ethno-national social reality of the post-1991 Armenia this dissertation focused only on the discursive social practices performed within the Armenian ethno-national communicative space formed along the Armenia-diaspora nexus. Accordingly, this dissertation examined the discourses (re)produced within the virtual domain of the World Wide Web.

The short history of the third Armenia republic can be divided into two. Between the late 1980s-1998, when the foundations of the young republic were laid, a new interpretation of the Armenian history and contemporary politics was sought by the ruling elite. The post-1998 era that was opened by the replacement of the first president Levon Ter Petrosyan by Robert Kocharyan has been the era of political and economic consolidation of the Armenian Republic on firmer grounds. However, the political and economic consolidation went parallel with the demise of the innovative search for a new interpretation of history and contemporary politics of the former era and the re-hegemonization of the traditional post-genocide national narrative and the “National Ideology”. In fact, the post-1998 consolidation was to a certain extent achieved upon this ideological reactionism. In the post-1998 era, the prickly relations between Armenia and diaspora have been rehabilitated along a “nation-centered” perspective that defined the Armenian nation and state along ethno-racial terms and *de facto* identified the Armenian state as the state of the ethnic Armenians around the world. With the 2005 and 2007 constitutional and legal amendments, respectively, and the establishment of the Ministry of Diaspora in 2008, the post-1998 trend was solidified on firmer grounds and the Armenia-

diaspora relations entered into a new stage that can be labeled as the stage of legalization, formalization and institutionalization. This dissertation focused on the period between 2007-2008 and 2012.

As regards to the agents of discourse in the virtual space of the World Wide Web, the State of the Republic of Armenia, new generation U.S. based diaspora organizations and Armenian individuals in diaspora were addressed. In specific, the statements and messages of the President Serzh Sargsyan, speeches of the Minister of Diaspora Hranush Hakopyan and the *Hayern Aysor* electronic daily of the Ministry of Diaspora, the official websites of Birthright Armenia, Armenian Volunteer Corps, Christian Youth Mission to Armenia, and Land and Culture Organization, and the travelogues and blogs of the participants of these organizations were examined.

En bloc, the Armenian state discourse is a constant, bold and rhetorical reminder of the threats against the Armenians both as an ethno-nation and as individuals. It highlights adverse contemporary circumstances at the global and regional levels not only as challenges, but as matters of life or death. Herewith, the Armenian state discourse reinforces a perception of a catastrophic deadlock besieging the Armenians. It can be seen that what conditions this perplexity is not simply the delusive diagnoses of the contemporary issues but also the conscious manipulations of the Armenians state; by crafting a sense of state of emergency, Armenian state elite hopes to silence criticisms coming from within Armenia and diaspora and magnetize diaspora's unconditional economic and political support. In that, political situation in the South Caucasus, Armenia's isolation in the region, unresolved problems with Turkey and to a lesser extent with Georgia, the *de jure* ongoing war with Azerbaijan and the domestic problems provide a fertile ground. Yet, the hegemonic post-genocide Armenian ethno-national narrative and the social memory of the 1915 tragedy that directly or indirectly but constantly remind the Armenians of genocide, either white, i.e., cultural assimilation, or red, i.e., physical extermination, two threats that points out the same risk of the erasure of the Armenianness from the surface of the earth, appears as the key implementer of this manipulative discourse.

As a sense of permanent state of emergency is reinforced, subsequent moral imperatives are stated, which in one way or another merge at the chief duty of preservation and protection of the Armenian identity, culture, and the very physical existence of the Armenians, in brief the

Armenianness itself. Strong organic ties between Armenia and diaspora are designated as a necessity to prevent cultural assimilation, hence cultural extermination of the Armenians in diaspora. This designation implements the construction of the post-1991 Armenia as the heart of the Armenian culture and identity. Reflections on the possible aggression of the enemies both at the state and individual levels and the vulnerability of the Armenians against such possible aggressions implicitly or explicitly referring to the genocide, together with the glorification of the pyrrhic victory of Armenia in the Karabakh war enforces the idea of Armenia as the savior and framing independent Armenia as the ultimate guardian of the Armenians around the world. These two, namely, Armenia as the heart of the Armenian culture and identity and Armenia as the guardian of the Armenian ethno-nation constitute the grounds on which the inevitability of the powerful existence of the independent Armenia for the existence of the Armenianness is implied. The aggregate of these is the construction of the post-1991 Armenia as the garrison of the Armenianness.

The most salient attribute of Armenia within the discourse of the new generation U.S. based diaspora organizations is being the soil of Armenianness. Either by identifying Armenia with the correct and/or authentic Armenian lifestyle or with the roots of the Armenian culture, these organizations designate fostered connections between diaspora Armenians and Armenia as a requisite of the prevention of “white genocide” and the reproduction of the Armenian diaspora communities around the world. It is also the same attribution that conditions the conceptualization of Armenia trips as not simple corporeal experiences but cognitive journeys to the ethnic-selves of the participants. As such, Armenia trips are expected to restore the severed identification of the diaspora Armenians with the Armenian identity and by extension the Armenian Cause. Diasporic Armenians’ reclamation of their Armenian identity is conceptualized as the fundamental but also the first step of the spirally interconnected ends of securing the permanency of the diaspora communities, assisting the development of Armenia and fortification of the Armenia-diaspora connections that would eventually facilitate the reconstruction of the extra-territorial Armenian ethno-nation. As such, within this framework, next to its construction as the soil of the Armenianness, Armenia is constructed as the condition of the possibility of the global Armenian ethno-nation. Finally, next to the duty-based rhetoric that emerge upon the nationalist and altruistic morals that identify Armenia trips and the consequent expectations as the moral imperatives, the emphasis on the material rewards of the Armenia trips constructs Armenia as a land of advantages. This, up to a certain extent, balances the construction of Armenia within a highly idealistic framework.

Armenia trip participants in their travelogues and blogs also reflect frequently on the material and psychological rewards of the Armenia trips. For many of the Armenia trip participants, volunteer work in Armenia is perceived as an opportunity to gain experience in different professional fields. In addition, Armenia as a destination at the periphery of the Western world with its exciting touristic spots provides the young diasporics with relief from insipidity of the routine. Besides, Armenia trips provide psychological relief by giving the volunteers a sense of fulfillment of personal and national duties. As a result, Armenia as a land of advantages appears as a significant construct within the travelogues and blogs of the young diasporic Armenians. It can be seen that a kind of search for the self is one of the major motivations of the Armenia trip participants, which coheres with the objectives of the new generation U.S. based diaspora organizations. This, together with the reflections on the encounters with the local Armenians and historical and war site visits, lays the foundations of the construction of Armenia as the land of Armenianness. The idea of the fulfillment of a sense of personal and national duty by visiting Armenia is also another element that strengthens this construction, while helping the framing of Armenia as the symbol of ethno-national rebirth and collective victory and hope.

In the discourses of the Armenian state, new generation diaspora organizations and Armenia trip participants certain differences manifest themselves. Compared to the discourses of the new generation diaspora organizations and Armenia trip participants, the accent on the possible physical threats facing Armenia and Armenians and a militaristic tone is more apparent in Armenian state discourse. The independent statehood as an essential strength for the protection of these two is also frequently underlined by the Armenian state. The manipulative rhetoric is also another remarkable feature of the Armenian state discourse. The discourse of the new generation diaspora organizations reflects the old concerns over cultural assimilation and reproduction of the diaspora communities. Accordingly, instead of physical threats, cultural threats are a more salient theme in the discourse of the new generation diaspora organizations. Thirdly, whereas the Armenian state and the new generation diaspora organizations speak for and to the Armenians as an ethno-national collectivity, Armenia trip participants mostly speak for and of themselves. In the travelogues and blogs of this group, very personal reflections on the search for identity and meaning are a noticeable characteristic. What is also noticeable in the discourses of the new generation diaspora organizations and the Armenia trip participants is the reflections on the advantages that Armenia offers to the Armenians in diaspora. As such, there is a certain tension between

diasporic idealism and individualistic interests within the discourses of the new generation diaspora organizations and the Armenia trip participants.

However, despite these differences, the discourses of the Armenian state, new generation diaspora organizations and the Armenia trip participants accommodate substantial parallels. The reflections on the physical threats that frames Armenia as the garrison state the Armenian ethno-nation in the Armenian state discourse finds its correlate within the discourses of the Armenia trip participants in framing the independent Armenia as the symbol of collective victory and hope. The association alleged within the discourse of the new generation diaspora organizations and the Armenian state between Armenia and Armenianness is reproduced by the Armenia trip participants in their reflections on the “journey of self-discovery”. In all the three sets of discourse, implicit or explicit deliberations on the re-construction of the trans-state Armenian ethno-national construction can be seen. Overall, within and by the discourses examined in this dissertation Armenia is principally constructed as the guardian and the soil of Armenianness that reflects its political status as an independent state and the concerns over the Armenian cultural survival in the diaspora.

To speak with the concepts of the Grounded Theory that informed the analyses in this dissertation, physical and cultural survival are the two categories out of which these constructions grow. The core category that these categories merge, on the other hand, is survival that reflects a kind of existential distress. From that, it can be abstracted that the actual agent of discourse within the communicative space formed along the Armenia-diaspora nexus is the “anxious Armenian”. This “anxious Armenian” manifests herself in three different forms. First is the contemporary late-modern Armenian who searches stability and security by re-rooting herself in a concrete place and reclaiming a constant ethno-national identity to resist the relentless flows of the “liquid times”. As such, this “anxious Armenian” is no different from her late-modern peers, who seek the same kind of stability and security in ethno-national identities, religious movements and other imagined constants. The “diasporic Armenian” as a sub-category of that “late-modern Armenian”, to use Bakalian’s (1993) analogy, craves to be again an Armenian rather than just feeling as one. Next to the Armenian who mostly moves for self-concerns, the second form of the “anxious Armenian” is the diasporic Armenian who is concerned with the cultural survival of the Armenian ethno-nation as a group similar to her predecessors who fought the “white massacre” as detailed in Appendix 4. Alarmed by the assimilatory trends in the diaspora, she finds a prospect in the

“homeland”. Besides these non-Armenian-specific forms, the “anxious Armenian” whose voice is most profound within the Armenian ethno-national trans-state communicative space is the Armenian that “remembers” the genocide. In fact, she is the Armenian that the social memory of the genocide speaks itself through either by the deliberate manipulative or the unpremeditated unconscious discursive social practices of the speaking subject. Overall, it can be seen that the social memory of the genocide is the main factor that conditions the existential distress, the core category around and upon which the discourses examined in this chapter are composed. As such, the social memory of the genocide main factor in the discursive re-construction of the social reality of the post-1991 Armenia.

The presentist school in the social memory scholarship reflects on the socio-political instrumentality of the social memory particularly in transformational periods for the maintenance of the social coherence, sense of group belonging, legitimization of the existing institutions and the relations of status and authority, and reproduction of the beliefs and value judgments. Departing from this instrumentalist perspective, presentist social memory studies often reflects on the ‘politics of social memory’, or to use Canefe’s (2004, 80) term “chronopolitics”, which stands for “the elements of choice, negotiation and contestation that come into play for the ultimate determination of what is remembered” and ask memory ‘by whom’, ‘for whom’, ‘against whom’, ‘for what’, ‘against what’, ‘why’, ‘how’, ‘when’, and ‘where’. As such, to the presentist scholars search for memory is not an act directed toward the past; on the contrary, it is directed toward the present and future. Parallel to that, the presentist school conceptualizes social memory as a propos of the present-day rather than the past and argues each historical era creates a particular social memory contingent to the social, political, cultural, economic characteristics of that era⁴⁴¹. The examination in this dissertation shows that the Armenian state purposefully seeks to implement the social memory of the genocide among the Armenians to eliminate criticisms and secure diaspora’s economic and political support. Darieva (2008) in her article “*The Road to Golgotha*”: *Representing Loss in Postsocialist Armenia* (2008) makes important observations on the transformation of the remembrance of the 1915 tragedy in the post-1991 Armenia. She reminds the reader that although first popular genocide commemoration was held in 1965, the remembrance of the genocide began aptly to transcend the private sphere by the 1980s. De-sovietization of the

441 In fact, the case of the Armenian state constitutes a good case for the presentist social memory studies. For the examples of presentist social memory studies see Carrier (2005), Hamilton (1994), Hobsbawm (2000), Roth (1995), Said, 2005, Thelen (1989), Todorova (2004).

symbolic content of the social memory of the genocide and its re-nationalization and standardization began by the end of 1980s through acts such as the declaration of April 24th as an official holiday, publication of Verjine Svazlian's collections of the stories of the eye-witnesses of the genocide, opening of the genocide museum at the Tsitsernakaberd genocide memorial complex constructed in 1967. As a striking example, after 1991 *khackars* (Armenian traditional stone crosses) were erected in the genocide memorial complex to represent the victims of the Sumgait and Baku events that powerfully implies the continuation of the Turkic aggression and the genocide, which is a salient theme in the Armenian state discourse as the analysis in this dissertation demonstrates. As such, the discursive practice of the Armenian state is compatible with the post-1991 trend of re-engineering of the social memory of genocide in Armenia and the entire process constitutes a good example for the presentist memory studies.

However, what is crucial to comprehend is how this engineering finds acceptance from the Armenians in Armenia and diaspora. Marianne Hirsch in her chapter *Projected Memory: Holocaust Photographs in Personal and Public Fantasy* (1999) asks how people internalize the memories of others as their own. To explain internalization of others' memories, Hirsch coins the term 'postmemory' that she explains as follows:

I use the term postmemory to describe the relationship of children of survivors of cultural or collective trauma to the experience of their parents, experiences that they "remember" only as the stories and images with which they grew up, but that are so powerful, so monumental, as to constitute memories in their own right. The term is meant to convey its temporal and qualitative difference from survivor memory, its secondary or second-generation memory quality, its basis in displacement, its belatedness. Postmemory is a powerful form of memory precisely because its connection to its object or source is mediated not through recollection but through projection, investment, and creation. That is not to say that survivor memory itself is unmediated, but that it is more directly connected to the past. Postmemory characterizes the experience of those who grow up dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, whose own belated stories are displaced by stories of the previous generation, shaped by traumatic events that they can neither understand nor re-create (Hirsch 1999, 8).

In the diaspora, in general, and in the USA, in specific, particularly since the 1970s, the diasporic elite intentionally been kept alive and reproduced the social memory of genocide through cultural and academic works to secure communal reproduction and to pursue recognition from the wider society (see, Payaslian 2010, 126). Besides, the social memory of 1915 has been *ipso facto* reproduced through generations in the private sphere of the

households through the stories told about the old-country and the *Medz Yeghern*⁴⁴² both in diaspora and Armenia. Michel Foucault in his various writings argues that whereas memory is a substantial tool for social control, 'popular memory' is the political arm of those who are at the margins of the society. In the same spirit, Milan Kundera in his *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* (2000) writes "the struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting". Assmann (2001, 75), too, argues under repression remembering might take a form of resistance. For the Armenians, remembrance of the genocide has been the last line of defense in an already lost war; those who have been ripped off almost everything they had were left only with the memories of what they lost. Hence, keeping the memory was perceived as a noble and necessary act of resistance and as a duty. Last but not least, in order to grasp the phenomenon better, accumulationist school of social memory studies' criticism to the presentist school shall be taken into account. As Mizstal (2003, 60-61), rightly argues presentist framework while focusing on the conscious, planned, informed practices of the memory agents, fails to be attentive to the psychological, social, linguistic, and political factors beyond the control of the memory agents. This criticism lies at the very core of the argument of the accumulationist school that argues memory agents do not possess an ultimate might over the construction of social memories as there are certain factors limiting memory agents' competence of memory construction. According to the accumulationist school the main impeding factor is the past itself as the raw material of the social memory. Therefore, memory agents' power to construct a coherent memory is only imperfect (Mizstal 2003, 68-69. See also, Olick and Robbins 1998, 128-130). All in all, accumulationist school calls attention to the limits of construction that are drawn mainly by the past itself and the interactions between the past *per se*, existing social memory/memories, memory agents, and the social, linguistic, artistic, cultural and ideological baggage of a society that memory agents can selectively utilize. Given that, the 1915 tragedy was a great catastrophe for the majority of the Armenians, what had been accumulated in 1915 constitutes a fertile ground for the elite to engineer the social memory of the 1915 tragedy.

To conclude, although the post-1991 independent Armenia is a major breakthrough, in its social construction the social memory of the genocide is the major input, which hardly animates a break with the past. Therefore, it can be argued that whereas genocide has been the

⁴⁴² See, footnote 281.

“defining and founding moment” of the contemporary Armenian identity, it is also the “defining and founding moment” of the post-1991 Armenia.

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APPENDIX 1

MAPS OF ARMENIA(S)

Map of the Armenian Empire at the time of King Tigran the Great



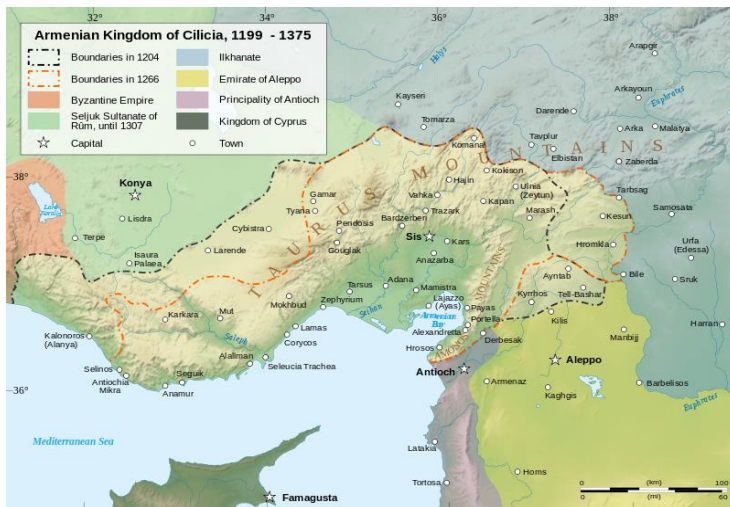
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Maps_of_the_Armenian_Empire_of_Tigranes.gif
(latest access 24.07.2013)

Maps of Armenia throughout the History



<http://www.armenica.org/cgi-bin/armenica.cgi?l=3==Armenia> (latest access 24.07.2013)

Map of the Armenian Cilician Kingdom



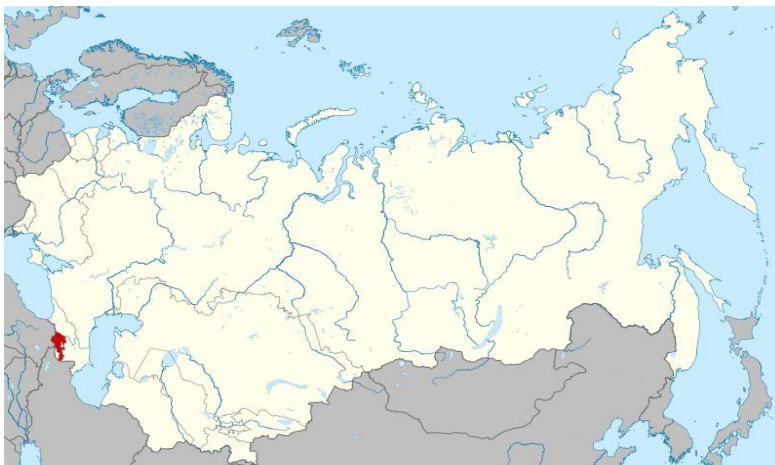
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Cilician_Armenia-en.svg (latest access 24.07.2013)

Map of Western (Ottoman) Armenia



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Six_armenian_provinces.png (latest access 24.07.2013)

Map of the Armenian SSR in the USSR



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Soviet_Union_-_Armenia.svg (latest access 24.07.2013)

Map of the Armenian SSR in the Caucasus



<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Caucasiamapussr.gif> (latest access 24.07.2013)

Map of the Republic of Armenia in Eurasia



<http://www.maps-continents.com/caucasus-central-asia.htm> (latest access 24 .07.2013)

Map of Armenia and Karabakh in the Caucasus



<http://www.armenica.org/cgi-bin/armenica.cgi?l=1=3==Armenia> (latest access 24.07.2013)

Map of the United Armenia according to the Armenian Revolutionary Federation



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:United_Armenia_.png (latest access 24.07.2013)

APPENDIX 2

OVERVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON DIASPORAS

Diaspora, an ancient Greek word, which above all had been used to define the scattering of the Jews, gained popularity by the late 1960s and attracted a revived interest in 1990s (see, Brubaker 2005; Cohen 1999). The amplification of the translocal networks as both the cause and the effect of the globalization process is one of the reasons of the expansion of the diaspora literature by the 1990s. In addition to that, the failure of the modernist expectation of minority groups' assimilation into the wider society led to an epistemological break and motivated social scientists towards a search for new paradigms (Anteby-Yemini and Berthomiere 2005). Ethno-national clashes during and after the collapse of the Soviet Bloc attracted scholars to the field of ethnicity and nationalism studies. In this process, the term diaspora was also recognized and used as an illustrative term (Sheffer 2002, 197). Third, the readiness of new nation states to intervene into ethno-national conflicts in favor of their co-ethnics living in other countries added a new impetus to the discussion (see, King and Melvin 1999-2000). Fourth, the growing hegemony of the human rights discourse and political liberalization legitimized diasporic groups and enabled them to voice their affinity to their kin groups and/or kin states (see, Sheffer 2002). Fifth, nation-states, particularly the peripheral states of the Global South, began utilizing their kin diasporas' lobbying activities in the influential host countries to initiate policies which would yield economic and political returns (see, for instance, Basch et al. 1994). Last but not least, the increasing interest in "new hybrid identity formations" as an effect of global flows directed the attention of many scholars to diasporas. The postmodernist scholars glorified the concept of diaspora as they perceived diasporas as the loci of formation of heterogeneous, diverse and hybrid identities challenging the homogenous, essentialist and "pure" identities intended by nation-states (see, for instance, Appadurai and Breckenridge 1988; Boyarin and Boyarin 1993; Gilroy 1987: 1993; Hall 1990; Mercer 1988).

The volume of the literature on diasporas correlates to the increasing recognition that diasporas receive in terms of their role in the global culture, economy and politics. As the literature on diasporas expands, sub-literatures also emerge with different conceptualizations, diverse approaches and research agendas. For example, Vertovec (1997) outlines three general meanings of 'diaspora' which have emerged in the literature as 1) diaspora as a social form, 2) diaspora as type of consciousness, and 3) diaspora as mode of cultural production.

Mishra (2006) categorizes diaspora studies into three as those which focus on 1) dual-territoriality, 2) situational laterality, and 3) archival specificity. Nonetheless, two main and rival approaches can be identified within diaspora studies.

First, there are studies conducted from within the postmodern paradigm⁴⁴³. Postmodern scholarship regards diasporas as the exemplars of the evaporation of all sorts of boundaries and borders and the flourishing of hybrid and fluid identities in the global era. Consequent to this understanding, “being here and there simultaneously”, “rootlessness”, “routes rather than roots” are the reoccurring themes in this scholarship. Stuart Hall’s definition of the diaspora below illustrates the postmodern understanding of diaspora.

Diaspora does not refer to those scattered tribes whose identity can only be secured in relation to some sacred homeland to which they must to all costs return. This is the old, the imperializing, the homogenizing form of “ethnicity”.... the diaspora experience as I intend it here is defined not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of identity which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by hybridity. Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and differences (Hall 1990, 235).

Criticisms can be directed to postmodern diaspora studies from different angles. First of all, postmodern diaspora studies are based on and reproducing a perception of duality between so-called fixed, exclusionary, essentialist, homogenizing ethno-national identities fostered by nation-states and fluid, hybrid heterogeneous diasporic identities. However, such dichotomy is indeed itself essentialist as it attributes fixed characteristics to nation-states and diasporas, which results in sightlessness to the transformations that ethno-national identities and nation-states undergo. Secondly, postmodern scholars’ conceptualization of diasporas as hybrid, heterogeneous and fluid are not factually verified as many studies has displayed that indeed it is often diasporas that re-produce the essentialist ethno-national consciousness and ideologies (see, for instance, Skrbis 1999). Lastly, as Fredrik Barth shows in his edited volume *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (1969) with respect to ethno-national imagination cultural changes and transformations are not necessarily followed by the eradication of the boundaries between groups. Hence, hybrid cultures may flourish but this does not inevitably lead to the hybridization of identities. In other words,

⁴⁴³ Stuart Hall, Homi Bhabba, Paul Gilroy and James Clifford are the distinguished pioneers of the postmodern scholarship on diasporas (see, Baumann 2000, 324).

cultural flows and interactions may result in similar ethno-national cultures, yet, as long as ethno-national imagination persists, hybridization of the cultures does not acquire political significance.

The second approach in diaspora studies reflects on diasporas as socio-political formations within the context of global capitalism and in relation to nation-states as the major, but not uncontested, actors in the global capitalist system. Socio-political diaspora studies often attempt to define the characteristics of diasporas as sociological formations. William Safran (1991, 83-84), for example, points out the following six characteristics of diasporas to construct a Weberian ideal type of a diaspora.

- 1) They, or their ancestors, have been dispersed from an original “centre” to two or more foreign regions;
- 2) They retain a collective memory, vision or myth about their original homeland including its location, history and achievements;
- 3) They believe they are not-and perhaps can never be- fully accepted in their host societies and so remain partly separate;
- 4) Their ancestral home is idealized and it is thought that, when conditions are favorable, either they, or their descendants should return;
- 5) They believe all members of the diaspora should be committed to the maintenance or restoration of the original homeland and to its safety and prosperity; and
- 6) They continue in various ways to relate to that homeland and their ethnocommunal consciousness and solidarity are in an important way defined by the existence of such a relationship.

Likewise, Robin Cohen (2008, 17), inspired by Safran, suggests a nine-item list as follows:

- 1) Dispersal from an original homeland, often traumatically, to two or more foreign regions;
- 2) Alternatively, the expansion from a homeland in search of work, in pursuit of trade or to further colonial ambitions;
- 3) A collective memory and myth about the homeland including its location, history and achievements;
- 4) An idealization of the putative ancestral home and collective commitment to its maintenance, restoration, safety and prosperity, even to its creation;
- 5) The development of a return movement which gains collective approbation;
- 6) A strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long time and based on a sense of distinctiveness, a common history and the belief in the common fate;
- 7) A troubled relationship with host societies suggesting a lack of acceptance at the least or the possibility that another calamity might befall the group;

- 8) A sense of empathy and solidarity with co-ethnic members in other countries of settlement; and
- 9) The possibility of a distinctive yet creative and enriching life in host countries with a tolerance for pluralism.

Both Safran and Cohen point out physical dispersion from a homeland, its mystification, construction of the “us” on the idea of the common homeland in their identification of the diasporas as distinct sociological formations. In brief, according to these scholars what distinguishes diasporas from other sociological categories such as minority or migrant is the centrality of the idea of homeland. Baumann (2000, 327) explains this point as follows:

...the relational facts of a perpetual recollecting identification with a fictitious or far away existent geographic territory and its cultural-religious traditions are taken as diaspora constitutive. If this identificational recollection or binding, expressed in symbolic or material ways, is missing, a situation and social form shall not be called “diasporic”.

Last but not least, Gabriel Sheffer provides the most sounding definition of diaspora within the socio-political approach as follows:

An ethno-national diaspora is a social-political formation, created as a result of either voluntary or forced migration, whose members regard themselves as of the same ethno-national origin and who permanently reside as minorities in one or several host countries. Members of such entities maintain regular or occasional contacts with what they regard as their homeland and with individuals and groups of the same background residing in other countries. Based on aggregate decisions to settle permanently in host countries, but to maintain a common identity, diasporans identify as such, showing solidarity with their group and their entire nation, and they organize and are active in the cultural, social, economic, and political spheres. Among their various activities, members of such diasporas establish trans-state networks that reflect complex relationships among the diasporas, their host countries, their homelands, and international actors (Sheffer 2003, 9).

In Sheffer’s definition, the adjective ethno-national is accommodating for drawing attention to a central yet sometimes overlooked characteristic of diasporas; diaspora is ultimately an ethno-national category. Diaspora is eventually an entity, the members of which imagine themselves within a particular ethno-national collectivity. In addition to adding the prefix ethno-national, Sheffer also points out that the term diaspora suggests a certain level of ethno-national solidarity. Sheffer’s observation is important for demonstrating that diasporas are not only “in themselves”, that is they are not just an empirical social reality, but also “for themselves”, which means diasporas are potentially active and conscious actors. Adjacent to

calling for attention to the manifest ethno-national characteristic of diasporas, Sheffer also highlights their trans-state nature as a corrective to a conceptual confusion in the literature⁴⁴⁴. Besides these, Sheffer, parallel to Safran and Cohen, implies that the idea of homeland is a central factor in the formation of diasporas.

⁴⁴⁴ See, footnote 13 in Chapter 1 for the meaning that the prefix trans adds.

APPENDIX 3

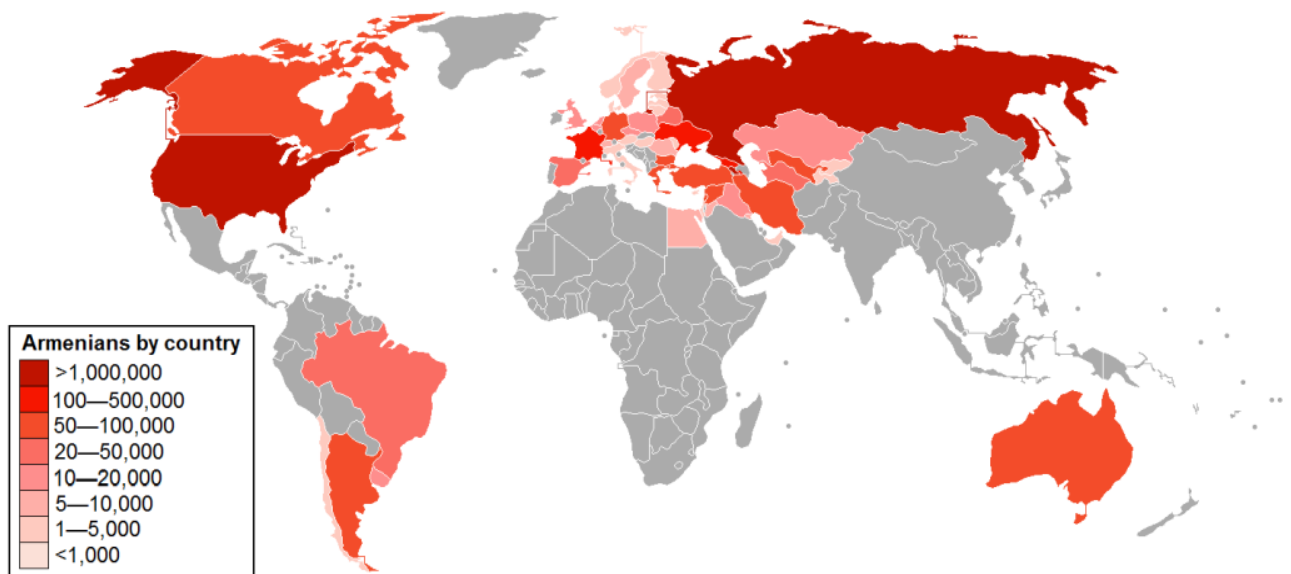
ESTIMATED COUNTRY-WISE POPULATION OF THE WORLD-WIDE ARMENIAN COMMUNITIES

(Includes countries that host Armenian communities composed of 5000 or more individuals)

Country	Source 1: Armeniadiasp ora.com (http://armeni adiaspora.co m/population. html, latest access 23.07.2013)	Source 2: Wikipedia.com https://en.wikip edia.org/wiki/A rmenian_diaspo ra#Population_ by_country, latest access 23.07.2013)	Country	Source1: Armeniadiasp ora.com (http://armeni adiaspora.co m/population. html, latest access 23.07.2013)	Source 2: Wikipedia.com https://en.wikip edia.org/wiki/ Armenian_dias pora#Populatio n_by_country, latest access 23.07.2013)	Country	Source 1: Armeniadiasp ora.com (http://armeni adiaspora.co m/population. html, latest access 23.07.2013)	Source 2: Wikipedia.com https://en.wikip edia.org/wiki/A rmenian_diaspo ra#Population_ by_country, latest access 23.07.2013)
Argentina	130,000	Estimated 70.000-130.000	Germany	42,000	Official 10,810 (Armenian citizen, 2010) Estimated 42,000	Russia	2,250,000	Official 1,130,491(2002 census) Estimated: 2,225,000- 2,500,000
Armenia	3,000,000	Official 3.145.354 (2001 census)	Greece	20,000	Official 7,742 (Armenian citizen, 2001) Estimated 60,000	Spain	1,000	Official 11,481 (Armenian citizen, 2010) Estimated 80,000
Australia	50,000	Official 15.789 (2006 census) Estimated 50.000	Hungary	15,000	Official 74 (Armenian citizen, 2010) Estimated 3,500- 30,000	Sweden	5,000	Official 996
Belarus	25,000	Official 10,191 (1999 census) Estimated 25,000	Iran	100,000	Estimated: 50,000- 120,000	Switzerland	5,000	-----
Belgium	10,000	Official 5,164 (Armenian citizen, 2010)	Iraq	20,000	Estimated 15,000-20,000	Syria	150,000	Estimated 35,000-70,000

Brazil	40,000	Estimated 40,000	Jordan	51,533	Estimated 2,000-3,000	Tajikistan	6,000	Official 995 (2000 Census)
Bulgaria	30,000	Official 10,832 Estimated 30,000- 50,000	Kazakhstan	25,000	Official 11,031 (2010 official est.) Estimated 25,000	Turkey	2,080,000	Estimated 40,000- 70,000
Canada	40,615	Official 50,500 (2006 census) Estimated 50,000	Kuwait	5,000	-----	Turkmenistan	32,000	Official 31,829 (1989 census) Estimated 30,000-44,000
Czech Republic	10,000	Official 1,923 (Armenian citizen, 2010) Estimated 10,000	Latvia	5,000	Official 2,742 official (2008 yearly statistics)	Ukraine	-----	Official 99,894 (2001 census) Estimated 100,000- 250,000
Egypt	6,500	Estimated 8,500	Lebanon	234,000	Estimated 70,000	United Kingdom	18,000	Official 589 (Armenian born, 2001) Estimated 18,000
France	450,000	Official 4,778 (Armenian born, 1999) Estimated 500,000- 600,000	Moldova	7,000	----	United States	1,400,000	Official 474,559 (2010 Survey) Estimated 1,270,000

Georgia	248,000	Official	Poland	92,000	Official	Uruguay	19,000	Estimated
		248,929 (2002 census)			1,082 (2002 census)			
		Estimated			Estimated			
		200,000-400,000			15,000-20,000			
		Abkhazia						
		Official 44,869 (2003 census)						
		Estimated						
		60,000-65,000						
						Uzbekistan	70,000	Official
								42,359 (2000 official est.)
								Estimated
								70,000



<http://ajammc.com/2013/07/21/yura-movsisyan-refugee-armenian-hero-of-the-diaspora> (latest access 24.07.2013).

APPENDIX 4

ARMENIAN DIASPORA IN THE USA BETWEEN 1834 and 1970s

The First Stage of the Armenian Diaspora in the USA: The Early Formation between 1834 and 1923

It is generally accepted that the first Armenian that set foot in the New World, specifically to Virginia, then a British colony, either in 1618 or 1619. After this very first settler, who was from Persia and called Martin the Armenian, two Armenian silk growers from the Ottoman Armenia were brought to Virginia in 1653 (Avakian, 1977; Malcom, 1919; Mirak, 1983; Piotrowski, 1977; Tashjian, 1970; Werstman 1978). However, sociologically meaningful presence of the Armenians in the USA began by the second half of the nineteenth century.

The history of the Armenian communities in the USA can be divided into three main stages. The first stage is the stage of the early formation of the Armenian diaspora in the USA that begins from 1834, when the Armenian migrants arrived to the USA as students and ends in 1923, when the Lausanne Peace Treaty was concluded by the establishment of the new Republic of Turkey as the successor of the Ottoman Empire, with which hopes for an independent Armenia and return to Anatolia were vanished. As such, the stage of the early formation of the Armenian diaspora in the USA extends over almost a century. This slow and gradual process of the early formation helped the consolidation of the Armenian diaspora in the USA on a firm basis. The second stage starts from 1923 and prolongs to mid-1980s. This stage is the stage of the consolidation of the Armenian diaspora in the USA, importantly as a stateless diaspora. With the establishment of the independent Republic of Armenia in 1991, Armenian diaspora transformed from a stateless to a state-linked diaspora⁴⁴⁵. Therefore, it is possible to spot the year 1991 as the beginning of the third stage of the Armenian diaspora in the USA.

The Protestant Mission in the Ottoman Anatolia and the First Armenian Migrants in the USA

Protestant missionary activities in the Ottoman Anatolia began in 1831⁴⁴⁶. Mirak (1983, 23) argues, initial target of the Mission was the Muslims in Anatolia. However, before long missionaries realized that this was a task much difficult to achieve than anticipated for the fidelity of the Muslims to their faith. Upon this realization, missionaries adopted another

445 For stateless and state-linked diasporas, see footnote 3.

446 See, Appendix 6 for a brief overview of the early Protestant activities in the Ottoman Empire.

strategy, which was to convert the Armenians as the largest Christian community of the Ottoman Anatolia to Protestantism, who would later become role models for their Muslim neighbors. D.Papazian (2000) recounts this as follows⁴⁴⁷:

What the Armenians could not see, and what became crystal clear at the end of the Armenian Genocide, was that the missionaries were primarily interested in the Turks, for it was the Muslims whom they actually wished to convert, and the Armenians were only a means to an end.

One of the primary activities of the Protestant missionaries in Anatolia was establishing colleges that provided high quality education to their Christian, Jewish and Muslim students (Mirak 1983, 25). It was the Armenian graduates of these colleges that moved to the USA to continue their education, who became the pioneers of the later migratory waves of the Armenians to this country.

The expectation of the Protestant missionaries from the graduates of the colleges in Anatolia was their return back to Anatolia after completing their higher education in the USA to continue the mission in their native land. However, not all the alumni turned back to Anatolia that was unanticipated by the missionaries. Mirak (1983, 37) reports that this caused disappointment among the Protestant missionaries and some missionaries refused to teach English in the colleges to prevent the emigration of the alumni to the USA. Contradicting his own account, however, Mirak also states that the total number of the Armenian graduates that walked off to the USA was only sixty-seventy and many of them eventually turned back to Anatolia (Mirak 1983, 37-38). Whatever their number was, those who continued their education in the USA were highly educated elite types. For example, Khachadur Osganian who moved to the USA from Istanbul in 1834 graduated from the University of New York. He founded a newspaper back in Istanbul, then work as a correspondent of the New York Herald after his return to the USA. For a while, he worked as the Ottoman consulate in New York. Osganian is also renowned for his unaccomplished plan to buy land either in Richmond, Virginia, according to Mirak (1983 38) or in Ohio, according to Avakian (1977, 40), to establish a city with the name New Ani⁴⁴⁸ to build an Armenian colony in the USA. Harutiun Vehebedian, who became the Patrick of the Armenian Patriarchy in Istanbul and

447 As a matter of fact, Papazian's account is an example of the reproduction of the "Armenian victimhood". Moreover, his account carries a sociological bias for the fact that not all the Muslims in Anatolia were Turks. Rather, especially in the Eastern Anatolia, where large Armenian communities existed, Muslim Kurds were the largest ethnic group.

448 Ani is a medieval Armenian city. For the ancient city of Ani, see footnote 359.

then in Jerusalem was also among the graduates of the missionary colleges who travelled to the USA as a student. In brief, it was those few but highly educated students, who laid the foundations of the Armenian diaspora in the USA. As such, Protestant missionary activities had been the first trigger of the formation of the Armenian community in the USA.

Following the students, the next Armenians to depart to the USA in 1870s by utilizing their contacts with the Protestant missionaries were the wealthy merchants, who mostly began oriental rug business in this country (Mirak 1983, 39). In 1880s, petty tradesmen, artisans, and peasants from the poor towns and villages in Anatolia joined the migratory caravan (Bali 2004, 168; Mirak 1983, 40). Next, draft dodgers who sought an escape from the military service that was made mandatory for the non-Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire by the legal acts in 1855 and 1909 began to show off in the USA. Finally, as the socio-political chaos in Anatolia began to pervade and deepen, political activists began to set foot in the USA. By 1890s Armenian migration to the USA became a mass phenomenon corollary to the worsening of the socio-political situation in Ottoman Anatolia.

Reactions to Early Diasporization of the Armenians

Intensification of the migration of the Armenians to the USA by the 1890s caused negative reactions of both the Armenian elite and the Ottoman authorities. Armenian political parties opposed emigration mainly for three reasons. First, the 1908 Revolution in the Ottoman Empire raised the hopes for a better future among the Christian, Jewish and Muslims subjects of the Empire. The Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) was particularly optimistic about the prospective results of the 1908 Young Turk Revolution. For this optimism, the ARF wanted to stop migration to engage Armenians in the building of a new Ottoman Empire based on the equality of all Ottomans⁴⁴⁹. Second, mass migration of the Armenians impaired the socio-political equilibrium in the Eastern Anatolia to the disadvantage of the Armenians vis-à-vis the Muslims, particularly the Kurds; given that assaults of the Kurdish bandits on the Armenian villages was almost a routine, Armenian political parties opposed migration as, in practice, it meant the migration of the young men, the potential defense force against the

449 The 1908 Young Turk Revolution is one of the milestones of the late-Ottoman history by which the Ottoman parliament suspended by Sultan Abdul Hamid II in 1878 was restored. Notably, the ARF is still criticized for its support to the leaders of the Young Turk Revolution, who were accused of being the orchestrators of the Armenian genocide.

Kurdish looters⁴⁵⁰. Third, the marxist Social Democratic Hunchakian Party opposed emigration of the Armenians to the capitalist West for ideological reasons (Mirak 1983, 66). Armenian Apostolic Church also adopted a negative stance against migration for similar reasons. As an example of Church's negative reaction, Mirak (1983, 185) quotes the Armenian priest in Worcester, USA, Mashots Vartabed Papazian cursing emigration with the words "those who bring their wives over [to America] are faithless to the country and those who entice countrymen to migrate are hirelings of the missionaries". Importantly, reactions of the Armenian political parties and the Church against migration unearthed also a contradiction between the theory, rhetoric and the practice; whereas political parties and the Church adopted a very critical rhetoric against emigration, in practice political activists and the clergy were also among the settlers in the USA⁴⁵¹. Among the Armenian elite, only the conservative Armenian journal Puzantian published in Istanbul took a positive stance to migration. The idea of this journal was that Armenians, who would never forget about their country, would learn skills in the Western countries and turn back to Anatolia with those skills except few hundreds. These repatriates would be the pioneers of the prosperous Armenia (Mirak 1983, 68). Puzantian was right in its projection about Armenians never forgetting about Armenia. However, it failed to foresee there would be no Armenia to turn back after 1923. Finally, Ottoman authorities were concerned about the political activities of the Armenians in the USA. Moreover, Ottoman authorities were worried about the migrants who acquired the citizenship of other states and continued their revolutionary activities in the Ottoman country under the protection of those countries. For that, one of the priorities of the Ottoman authorities was to prevent the return of the migrants to the Ottoman country (Mirak 1983 43-48, 153, 209-211).

450 See, Dennis (2008) for a MA thesis that examines the socioeconomic and political relations between Armenians and Kurds in the late-Ottoman Empire. The Treaty of San Stefano (March, 3 1878) between the Ottoman Empire and Russia that ended the Russo-Turkish War between 1877 and 1878 is the first international treaty that mentioned Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. The article 16 of this treaty stated the following verifying the nugatory conduct between Armenians and Kurds in the Eastern provinces of the late Ottoman Empire.

As the withdrawal 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.

451 This contradiction between the theory, rhetoric and the practice did not go unnoticed by the Armenians and caused a reasonable reaction. As an example, Mirak (1983, 67) quotes an Armenian in the USA complaining about the attitude of the political activists and the clergy as with the following words: "if emigration is wrong, if repatriation is the correct solution, why don't we repatriate? If we do not return because of the insecurity [in Turkey] how can we urge others to remain [in Turkey]".

Armenian Communal Life in the USA

Countrymen-ship and Ethnic Solidarity

In the early years, countrymen-ship was the principle upon which Armenians established themselves in the USA. For example, Armenians from Arapgir and Malatya in Anatolia mostly settled in the City of Brotherly Love in Philadelphia, whereas Armenians from Van, east of Malatya in Anatolia chose Pawtucket and Niagara Falls regions. Likewise, marriage between women and men from the same town or region in Anatolia was the norm, breaking of which was considered almost equally shameful with marrying a non-Armenian (Mirak 1983, 26-124; Alexander 2005, 96). Yet, in years, the principle of countrymen-ship evolved into a more encompassing principle of ethnicity as the ethnic solidarity networks among Armenians expanded to involve all Armenians (Mirak 1983, 174-175). This was both a cause and an effect of the growing ethno-national awareness among Armenians in the USA⁴⁵².

The ethnic solidarity networks had been a major advantage for the new comers to take root in a foreign country. Organizations such as Armenian Labor information Bureau founded in 1908 in New York and Armenian Charitable Association Employment Office founded in Boston in 1915 were highly effective means for the adaptation of the Armenians coming from the rural regions of Anatolia to the labor market in the USA and, by extension, to the American society (Mirak 1983, 87-88). On the same track, these networks also provided advantages to the established Armenians in the USA as these networks helped them to employ the fellow Armenians, who shared similar cultural norms. Furthermore, Armenian employers through these networks found the opportunity to hire the new comers who would work for lesser salaries (see, Bulbulian 2001, 28; Mesrobian 2000, 17; Mirak 1983, 61-74).

The Family

Pattie (1997, 150-151) explains the incompatible importance of the family institution as a shelter for the Armenians in diaspora as the follows:

The desire for physical security that pulls many towards the West and toward the development of language skills, business skills, and education

⁴⁵² Although countrymen-ship and ethnic solidarity networks provided considerable advantages to the Armenians in the USA, they also had self-segregationist effects that slowed down the integration process. For example, Mesrobian (2000, 23) quotes from a report on Armenians in the USA dated 1913 that states: “the social life of Armenians in America is distinctively colonial; they do not enter into American society, due to various causes. Language has a great deal to do with it, and then the American society is not so warm in her perception of strangers /foreigners as is expected”.

that will lead to success in Europe and the United States contrasts with the emotional security of the memories of Armenian community, with a sense of duty toward past, and with the high value placed on relationships within the extended family.

In fact, prior to countrymen-ship and ethnic solidarity, family has been the fundamental institution for Armenians in diaspora as the psychological refuge and ultimate fortress of the Armenian heritage. Because of the value attached to the family, early Armenian migrants in the USA typically rejected inter-ethnic marriages even as a possibility (Mirak 1983, 154-161). This caused two interesting consequences related to the numerical imbalance of the young Armenian men and women. First, scarcity of young women at marriage age gave some fathers the opportunity to demand dowry payment for their daughters from their prospective sons in law. For example, Mirak (1983, 153-155) reports cases of demands up to 200 USD and an arranged marriage of a fourteen years old girl with a forty years old man for 100 USD. Second, the same numerical imbalance inspired the emergence of the phenomenon of “mail ordered bride”, that is, arranged marriages between the Armenian man in the USA and the Armenian women in the old world. Evaluated retrospectively, the phenomenon of “mail ordered bride” is a very controversial practice. However, this controversial practice precipitated the salvation of many orphaned and/or alone young women in Anatolia, Syria or elsewhere, whose destiny would not have been any better otherwise. As Alexander (2005, 91) puts “for many of the Armenian girls orphaned or otherwise destitute, the best hope for passage and entry into the United States was an arranged marriage”. Alas, this practice also had its tragic consequences such as the case of fifteen Greek and Armenian “mail ordered brides”, who arrived to New York on 3 August 1922, yet to find no one waiting for them, so had to turn back to where they came from (Alexander 2005, 93).

The Church

Bulbulian (2001, 85-86) similar to many scholars of Armenian studies claims “for the immigrants to a foreign land [Church] was their first line of defense against the loss of identity”⁴⁵³. As such, Church has never been simply a religious institution but an ethnic bolster that has helped the Armenians to remain intact as a group. It is actually for this centrality of the Church, it has been at the center of the severe conflicts among Armenians, as well.

⁴⁵³ For this reason, in general, the Church has a more significant importance for the Armenians in diaspora compared to those in the homeland.

The first Armenian clergy Joseph Vartabed Sarajian arrived to the USA in 1889 and the first Armenian Apostolic Church in the USA was founded in 1891 in Worcester, Massachusetts (Mirak 1983, 182). However, Sarajian's arrival to the USA began the long-lasting severe intra-communal conflicts centered around the Church for his advocacy of the Church's negative attitude towards secular Armenian nationalism and Armenian political parties. The friction between Sarajian and the nationalists caused a big fight among Armenians in a meeting on 26 March 1893. This fight was followed by the succeeding ones. Eventually, on August 15, 1893, Sarajian resigned from his post. The successor of Sarajian was Malachia Vartabed Deroonian, who, according to the Armenian nationalists, was "nothing less than a Turkish agent". Deroonian could hold his post only for three years. Deroonian was succeeded by Mashtots Vartabed Papazian. Different from his predecessors, Papazian was a nationalist and a sympathizer of the ARF. However, this time because of his maverick decisions and the conflict between him and the Church, Papazian could hold his post only a year⁴⁵⁴.

454 Although as an institution Armenian Patriarch in Istanbul remained cautious to secular nationalism of the nineteenth century, it would be wrong to think of this opposition as a categorical and universal one. On the contrary, certain Armenian clergy can be regarded as the pioneers of militant Armenian nationalism. For example, Nalbandian (1963, 136) argues that Armenian clergies Nerses Varjabedian, who served as the Patriarch of Istanbul between 1878 and 1888, and Khrimian Hairig, who served as the Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul (1869–1873), Prelate of Van (1880–1885) and Catholicos of All Armenians (1892–1907) had been important figures for the spread of the nationalist ideology among the Armenian youth in the late-nineteenth century. As regards, to the former, Simsir (1989, 173) cites Nerses Varjabedian stating the following to the British Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lord Salisbury on 13 April 1878:

It is no longer possible for the Armenians and the Turks to live together. Only a Christian administration can provide the equality, justice and the freedom of conscience. A Christian administration should replace the Muslim administration. Armenia (Eastern Anatolia) and Kilikya, are the regions, where the Christian administration should be founded...The Turkish Armenians want this...That is, a Christian administration is demanded in Turkish Armenia, as in Lebanon.

In July 1878, the Treaty of Berlin was signed among United Kingdom, Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, Italy, Russia and the Ottoman Empire that revised the Treaty of San Stefano signed on 3 March 1878. The Article 61 of this treaty, similar to Article 16 of the Treaty of San Stefano, stated:

The Sublime Porte engages to carry out without further delay the ameliorations and reforms which are called for by local needs in the provinces inhabited by Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Circassians and the Kurds. It will give information periodically of the measures taken for this purpose to the Powers, who will watch over the execution of them.

In the Congress of Berlin, an Armenian delegation was also present headed by Khrimian Hairig. Khrimian Hairig observing the Balkan nationalist and the ways in which they pursued their goals began to advocate adopting the same *modus operandi*, that is, armed struggle for the liberation of Armenia. In fact, his well-known sermon named the Paper Ladle quoted below was an expression of his views on the necessity of the armed struggle.

The Paper Ladle

Blessed and beloved Armenians: Now, you have all perked up your ears, impatiently and anxiously waiting to hear what sort of news Khirimian Hayrig has brought us from the Berlin Congress, and what will he say about Article 61 which the powerful governments of the world have bestowed upon the Armenian provinces. Listen carefully to what I am about to say. Grasp the profound meaning of my words and then go and contemplate on my message.

As you know, upon the decision of Patriarch Nerses and the National Assembly, we went to Berlin to present the Armenian Case to the great powers of the Congress. We had great

With the growth of the Armenian population in the USA, in 1898 Echmiadzin elevated the status of the USA to missionary diocese and appointed the first Armenian priest to arrive to the USA Joseph Vartabed Sarajian as the bishop. However, the old conflicts between the Armenian nationalists and the Church did not let Sarajian at this post after 1906. The fierce competition around the Church took a novel form by 1911, when the former Armenian Bishop of Adana (a city in the southern Anatolia), Musheg Seropian was appointed as the prelate of the USA by the Catholicos of the Holy See of Cilicia without the consent of the Catholicos of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin. By this act, the seeds of two separate church hierarchies in the USA were sowed (Mirak 1983).

hopes that the Congress would bring peace to the world and liberation to the small and oppressed nations, among which we count ourselves.

The Congress convened, the statesmen of the great powers of the world gathered around diplomatic tables covered with green cloth. And we, the small and suppressed nations waited outside the Congress. In the middle of the Congress, upon a table covered with green cloth was placed a large bowl of heriseh (a thick and pasty stew-like meal) from which large and small nations and governments would draw their portion.

Some of the participants pulled to the East, some pulled to the West, and after long debates, in order, one by one, they called the representatives of the small nations [into the meeting]. The Bulgarian entered first, then Serbian and the Gharadaghian. The rattling of the swords hanging from their sides attracted the attention of the assembly.

After speaking for some while, these three, pulled out their swords, as if ladles made of iron, and dipped into the bowl, took their portion of heriseh and proudly and boldly departed.

It was now the turn of the Armenian delegate. I drew near with the paper petition from the National Assembly, presented it and asked that they fill my plate too with heriseh. Then, the officials standing before the bowl asked me, "Where is your iron ladle? It is true that we are serving heriseh here, but he who does not have an iron ladle cannot draw from it. Listen up. In the future, if this heriseh is distributed, do not come without a ladle or you will return empty handed.

Dear Armenian people. Could I have dipped my paper ladle in the heriseh? It would have become wet and stayed there. There, where guns talk and swords make noise, what significance do appeals and petitions have?

And I saw next to the Gharadaghian, the Bulgarian and other delegates, several brave [men], blood dripping from the swords hanging at their sides. I then turned my head, as if I was looking for the brave men from Zeitoon, Sasoon, Shadakh and other mountainous areas. But where were they? People of Armenia, tell me, where were those brave souls? Should not one or two of them have been next to me, so that showing their bloody swords to the members of Congress I could have exclaimed, "Look, HERE ARE MY IRON LADLES! They are here, ready!" But alas, all I had was a paper petition, which got wet in the heriseh and we returned empty handed. Truly, had they compared me with the delegates of the Congress, I was taller, my facial features were more attractive. But to what avail? In my hand was placed a piece of paper and not a sword. For this reason we were deprived of the heriseh. In spite of all, in view of the future, going to the Congress of Berlin was not useless.

People of Armenia, of course you understand well what the gun could have done and can do. And so, dear and blessed Armenians, when you return to the Fatherland, to your relatives and friends, take weapons, take weapons and again weapons. People, above all, place the hope of your liberation on yourself. Use your brain and your fist! Man must work for himself in order to be saved (Bedevian n.d.).

Besides, his political activities, Khrimian Hairig was an important figure also for his usage of vernacular Armenian in his church service and writings that helped his message to reach to Armenian masses. Three patriotic poems of Khrimian Hairig titled "Murmurs of a Patriot", "The Memorial of the Lamenting Soldier" and "Garine" can be found at <http://armenianhouse.org/blackwell/armenian-poems/khrimian.html> (09.01.2014).

Armenian Political Parties

No historical study on the Armenian diaspora in the USA that does not focus on the political parties can be complete for the fact that the single most important institution that shaped the life of the Armenians in the USA has been the Armenian political parties with their networks of affiliate organizations such as cultural clubs, women's associations, and youth clubs. Main activities of the political parties in the USA were publishing, organizing protest marches and fund raising for the fellow Armenians in the old country. Besides these conventional activities, military training of the volunteers to fight against the Ottoman Empire in Anatolia and the Caucasus was also in the repertoire of these parties. The first Armenian political party to set itself in the USA was the Social Democratic Hunchakian Party (SDHP). However, the SDHP lost its influence rather quickly by the early 1900s. The Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) filled the vacuum left by the demise of the SDHP and from then on the ARF has been the major Armenian organization in the USA.

Importantly, stern conflicts between the ARF circles and the anti-ARF coalition composed of the anti-ARF individuals and parties, the most important part of which was the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (ADLP) had been the norm and this rivalry reflected itself on almost all domains of the social lives of the Armenians in the USA (Mesrobian 2000, 37; Mirak 1983, 214,241). As a reflection of this conduct, in Alexander's (2005, 64) words: "while those in the homeland had come to be called "the starving Armenians" during these years, in the comfort of America the community well have gained the sobriquet "the quarreling Armenians".

Relations with the Wider American Society

As a migrant group, Armenians in the USA did not face serious discrimination. On the contrary, Armenians were met with a certain degree of sympathy in the new country. In that, news about the massacres of the Armenian in the hands of the Muslim Turks, who had been an object of antipathy in the West had been one of the factors⁴⁵⁵. Related to that, a kind of Christian solidarity was another factor of the sympathy to Armenians in the USA and

455 Mirak (1983, 213) describes the Western antipathy to the Turk in late-nineteenth century-early-twentieth century as the follows:

Since the eighteen century, writers, political figures, and publicists had labeled the Ottoman Empire the perfect example of a corrupt and vicious oriental despotism. And the atrocities which the Greek and Balkan peoples suffered at the hands of the Turks in the nineteenth century sharpened the image of the Turks as bloodthirsty infidels capable of the most barbarous killings of Christians.

Armenians did not hesitate to stress their Christian identity as a means to gain social acceptance. Moreover, the activities of the Protestant missionaries in the USA to inform the American society about the Christian identity of the Armenians and the calamities that this “ancient and glorious Christian people suffered from at the hands of the Muslim Turk” had been an advantage. The organization named Friends of Armenia established in 1893 and the sympathetic attitudes of the political actors in the USA, particularly those of the presidents Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt before and after the World War I had been other important factors in the formation of a sympathetic perception of Armenian in the USA (Alexander (2005, 281, Bulbulian 2001, 106-107; Mesrobian 2000 44,65; Mirak 1983 212-217). Last but not least, rapid economic progress in the USA before the World War I that created a demand for work force was a major advantage for the migrant groups in this country, including Armenians for enabling the newcomers to find employment in the factories and secure an income. The effect of this economic situation for the Armenians was their transformation from merchants, artisans and peasants to blue-collar labor, although this was a temporary transformation for many of the Armenians as Armenians tended to dress off from their boiler suits and dress on ties and suit as the owners of their own businesses as soon as they could find an opportunity. Probably it was because of this tendency Armenians had been strikebreakers in the factories that created a bad fame among the American proletariat. Overall, Armenians have been a successful group in the business-world, in oriental rug trade on the East Coast and in agriculture on the West Coast. In that, the skills that they brought from the old country such as experience in trade, literacy in their own language, experiences as a minority group had been decisive factors (Mirak 1983 105; Bulbulian 2001, 35; Bali 2004, 172-173, 178).

As a matter of fact, Armenian community leaders did not take the sympathy of the wider American society as granted. On the contrary, they did their best not to fizzle out this sympathy and urged Armenians to be the good citizens of their new country. Armenian migrants proved attentive to this call, as well, arguably for two interrelated reasons. First, as they heard about the worsening socio-political situation in Anatolia on the way to 1915, Armenians began to realize that there would be no home to turn back if things would go bad in the USA. This motivated Armenians to strike root in the new country as soon as and as

strong as possible (see, Mesrobian 2000, 83)⁴⁵⁶. Second, Armenians comparing the socio-economic and political conditions in the USA and the Ottoman Anatolia perceived the former as a safe haven and this strengthened the desire to take root in this country instead of turning back to Anatolia when conditions would let (Alexander 2005, 278). Importantly, even before arrival to the USA, Armenians in Anatolia had a very positive image of the USA for the accounts they read from the letters sent to them from the USA. For example, Bali (2004) in his study on the Armenian, Greek, Jewish and Muslim migrants from Anatolia in the early twentieth century makes long quotations from the feuilleton of Feridun Es published in 1948 in the Turkish Daily *Hurriyet* titled “40 Days in the Armenian Caaba”. In one of his articles, Es tells the story of Ida Muradyan who recalls the postcard that her uncle sent from California to her mother back in the old country. Muradyan recounts the letter of her uncle that wrote “my dear sister; here is a heaven in the earth. I would love to live and die here one day”. Muradyan told Es it was this postcard that made her to decide to migrate to the USA (Bali 2004, 208). Another similar story is that of Jeanne Asidyan who recalls her father telling her “don’t worry. We are going to heaven”. Miryam Asidyan likewise told Es as kids they associated America with heaven (Bali 2004, 209-210).

Being a relatively well-educated and economically well-off migrant group predisposed to be good citizens in the new country and having the privilege of having the sympathy of the host-society helped Armenians to adapt to the USA without major problems. Yet this does not mean there were no problems. In the early years of the formation of the Armenian diaspora, young single males made up the majority of the Armenians in the USA. Some of these young men had legal issues related to gambling and prostitution. Yet, besides these petty crimes, very few major crimes were recorded. For example, before the World War I there were only two cases of murder and these were related to the issues in the old country. One case was the murder of Hovannes Tavshanjian for political reasons. The other was the murder of a Turk by two Armenians. On the whole, communal values that Armenians brought from Anatolia kept

456 Bali (2004, 167), as well, identifies the particularity of the migration of the Anatolian Armenians to the USA with respect to the migration of the Anatolian Jews and Muslims as the absence of any prospect of turning back to Anatolia. Avakian (1977, 75), likewise, explains this as follows:

After World War I, however, it became evident to the Armenians in America that their future was in this country, not in the Old World. Only then did they begin to think about integrating themselves into American life more completely. Thus, beginning in 1920, Armenians began to plan for their futures as part of the over-all pattern of American life. They began to move out of their ghettos and disperse into the communities where they lived. They were able to make such moves because by that time their economic position had improved sufficiently to permit it.

them away from crime. Certainly, having a low crime profile was another factor for the social sympathy to Armenians (Mirak 1983 139-141). Realizing this, Armenians did not draw back from excommunicating Armenians with ill social attitudes and even informing them to the law authorities.

Only in Fresno, California there had been noticeable social problems between Armenians and the wider American society (Mirak, 1983, 144-145). The fact that Fresno was the only place where Armenians constitute a sizeable group that rendered them a visible social group, whereas in other parts of the USA Armenians were a numerically small and indistinguishable group can be thought as a reason why in Fresno, not anywhere else, social problems occurred (Mahakian 1935, cited in Bulbulian, 2001, 107, 112-113; Avakian, 1977, 75). As a visible group, some cultural traits that Armenians brought from the old country such as eating habits, particularly smelly foods like garlic, dressing style, bargaining habit that is considered as dishonesty by the others and their clannish conduct caused the antipathy of the other people. In any case, Bulbulian (2001 87, 105-115) argues the first generation Armenian migrants, who mostly worked in businesses the demand and supply group of which were Armenians did not suffer much from social discrimination as they also were not so willing to mangle with the wider society. Bulbulian states it was more the second generation that faced the consequences of social discrimination as this group was more willing for integration with the American society. Secondly, American Nativism, that is, opposition to immigrants for the alleged foreign connections and un-Americaness (Higham 1955) that was on rise between 1880s and 1930s had negative impacts on recent migrant groups, including Armenians. Several legal restrictions on the immigration of the Armenians on racial grounds, as well as the emerging stereotypes were the causes of the negative impact of American Nativism on Armenians during this era (see, Bulbulian 2001, 109; Mirak 1983, 286)⁴⁵⁷.

457 Jones (2013) in her master's thesis titled *American Nativism and Exclusion: The Rise and Fall of the Immigration Restriction League, 1894-1921* quotes from a book published in 1907 the following that demonstrates the stereotyping of the Armenians in the USA.

The Armenians, who are rather recent arrivals, began to come both because of Turkish persecution and of new steamship communication with the Levant. Missionaries and sympathizers in the United States have also done much to encourage their immigration. The total number arriving in 1904 was 1745, most of whom were destined to Massachusetts, Rhode Island and New York. A considerable part were shoemakers, tailors, bakers and weavers, and the balance chiefly laborers and servants. They showed about twenty-three dollars per capita, but only one-tenth brought fifty dollars or more. Of those over fourteen years of age, 21.9 percent were illiterate. Some of the Armenian merchants are fairly intelligent and are not undesirable immigrants. On the other hand, many of the lower class are extremely objectionable. Their standards of living and morals are low, and they tend to

While good relations were the general mode of conduct between the Armenians and the established American society, there had been some frictions between Armenians and other migrant groups. On the East Coast, Irish were the main “enemy” of the Armenians; Armenians loathe the Irish, whom they perceived as groggy, slapdash and unfaithful to family values. Mirak (1983, 139) nicely describes this as “for an Armenian, there was no more contemptible insult than to be called a “drunken Irishman,” unless, of course, he was labeled a “Turk””. On the West Coast, on the other hand, Bulbulian (2001, 31) claims, the conduct between Armenians and the Danish resembled an “open warfare”. Lastly, there were cases of frictions between Armenians and Turks and Kurds that led a group of Muslims to appeal the Ottoman embassy in Washington in 1896. However, different from the Irish and Danish cases, these were the extension of the conflicts in the old country, rather than issues of the new country⁴⁵⁸.

To sum, the migration of Armenians to the USA through almost a hundred years first began as an individual and voluntary process, then gradually turned into a mass and traumatic phenomenon as the socio-political situation in the Ottoman Anatolia got gradually worse in the end of the nineteenth century. After 1915, the migration of the Armenians was rather an escape of the desperate individuals, who were sacked from their homes. The traumatic diasporization of the Armenians by the 1915 could have caused serious adaptation problems in the USA. However owing to the ethnic solidarity and guidance of the earlier Armenian migrants who could adapt to the American society without much trouble for their educational and economic conditions, general sympathy of the wider American society to the Armenians, the economic boom in the USA, and the experiences of the Armenians in the old-country as a minority group and their predisposition to take root in the USA, the post-1915 migrants also relatively easily adapted themselves to the USA. The communal and family values of the Armenians, too, helped them to hold on to life rather than going desperate. In the shaping of

form small colonies in manufacturing centres. Some take up the occupations of cigarette making and peddling. On the whole they are not desirable immigrants.

Coulson (2012) in his seventy-two pages long article examines the naturalization trial of Tatos Cartozian in 1924. Cartozian’s appeal for naturalization was opposed on the claim that he as an Armenians was not “white” and so racially not qualified for naturalization. In this article, Coulson also shows the defense of Cartozian adopted a strategy of portraying Turks, Kurds, and Syrian Muslims as oppressors of Armenians and by this way tried to create a sense of fellowship between Armenians and Americans by depicting Turkey as the common enemy of both. This reveals Armenians in the USA did not hesitate to further demonize the Turk to get accepted in the USA.

458 As an interesting historical note, Mirak (1983 142-143) quotes from the Armenian Daily Hairenik published on December 29, 1914 the following: “some Armenians and Turks have quarreled with one another, and both parties have sent word to their relatives to the same effect, and as a result of that instigation the two elements in the same village – Armenians and Turks – have been quarreling, devouring each other”.

the communal lives of the Armenians in the USA, the Church and, arguably, most important than any other institution except family, Armenian political parties became the major factors

The Second Stage of Armenian Diaspora in the USA: 1920s and 1970s

Concerns over Assimilation and Preservation of the Armenian Heritage

Successful adaptation of the Armenians to the American society that accelerated with the second post-1915 generation raised concerns about assimilation of the Armenian youth and the demise of the Armenian heritage in the USA, a phenomenon referred to as “white massacre”. In fact, since the 1920s “white massacre” has remained a top concern of the Armenian elite in the USA and in diaspora, in general. Certainly, there were Armenians who favored rapid integration and even assimilation of the Armenians. For example, Avakian (1977, 78) argues as economic success and adaptation to the American way of life were the primary concerns of the first post-1915 generation Armenians, many Armenian willingly thrust aside the Armenian heritage to achieve these ends. Importantly, the message of the wider American society was Americanization of the Armenians, as well. As an expression of this mindset, Mirak (1983, 285) cites Bogigian stating in 1925:

I urged [Armenians] to become naturalized citizens; to learn the language; attend American churches; and take part in all community interests. For I have realized that as a nation there is no longer an Armenia and for personal salvation for themselves and their children, uniting with other Christian nations is their only hope.

On the other hand, there were families and elite alarmed by the danger of assimilation. This group deliberately sought to transmit the Armenian heritage to the new generations. The ARF circles particularly championed this cause. For example, the following lines were written in the *Asbarez*⁴⁵⁹, the official publication of the ARF on the West Coast, on June 22, 1922:

We had the belief that to take over America as our native land was a sin, to be shunned by all loyal Armenians. Most of us have simply vegetated here in America; our minds and souls have never severed from the fatherland and we have been constantly preoccupied with her minor and major problems (cited in Mirak 1983, 285).

459 *Asbarez* began its weekly publication 1908 in Fresno as the official publication of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation Western United States Central Committee. In 1970, *Asbarez* began publishing an English section. Since 1993 the English section has become a daily publication. In 1994, *Asbarez* went online and in 1997 launched its web portal. This web portal is at <http://asbarez.com/about/> (latest access 09.01.2014).

Notwithstanding these two opposites, however, most of the Armenians sought a synthesis between integration and preservation (Mirak 1983, 285).

Particularly with the third post-1915 generation, Armenian community began to launch an active and conscious policy to prevent the “white massacre”. To this end, Armenian elite developed new strategies such as publishing Armenian journals in English for the youth that did not master Armenian language (see, Mesrobian 2000, 164-165). For the central importance of the family, Armenian elite paid special attention to prevent inter-ethnic marriages (Alexander, 2005, 134-137, 199-203). However, as a consequence young Armenians found themselves in the midst of conflicting messages. On the one hand, the youth was urged to master the English language, be American patriots, cosmopolitan middle class consumers and have American style woman-man relations. On the other hand, they were strongly directed to remain faithful to the cultural norms of the old-country, preserve the Armenian language and linger in the Armenian community. Some of youth that regarded the stress on the preservation of the Armenian heritage and out-dated customs, traditions and beliefs as obstacles against the realization of their potentials (Alexander, 2005, 128-129, 195). This caused inter-generational conflicts within the Armenian community. Yet, this conflict did not reach a level that would cause radical alienation of the youth from the older generation and the Armenian community for the respect of the youth to the elderly, particularly to those born in Anatolia whom they perceived as a concrete bond between themselves and the old-country and as the witnesses of the calamities in this land. As such, respect to the elderly had been one of the decisive factors in the persistence of the Armenian communities in diaspora⁴⁶⁰.

By the 1940s, the ADLP began to emphasize the need of better adaptation of the Armenians to the American society and to criticize over-emphasis on the Armenian heritage (Alexander 2005, 87-88). On the other hand, the ARF sustained its radical advocacy of the preservation of the Armenian identity. However, in practice, the gap between these two positions was not so wide. Besides the rhetoric, what the ARF advocated was to preserve the Armenian heritage while keeping on Americanization. As such, ARF’s stance was not a self-segregationist position (Alexander, 2005, 304). Importantly, the beginning of the Cold War provided the ARF with the opportunity to articulate itself with the mainstream American politics via its

460 For a similar argument on the Armenians in Cyprus and those migrated from Cyprus to the UK see, Pattie (1997).

radical anti-Soviet stance. In other words, the Cold War made it possible for the ARF to be both an Armenian nationalist and an American patriot (Alexander, 2005, 208-211 & 239-242).

Concerns over the assimilation triggered the concerns over the education of the youth for the fact that whereas the early migrants regarded education as a way to get integrated in the American society, later on education was viewed as an instrument for the preservation of the Armenian heritage. Mesrobian (2000, 131-132) argues by 1932 all around the USA except California there were sixty Armenian schools with a hundred teacher and five-thousand students. However, the quality of these schools was significantly less than desired. Few teachers had pedagogical formation and the curriculums were random. In general, lessons in each year were repetitive and hardly fit to the age and cultural and academic levels of the students. Teaching materials were mostly outdated, which were published in the old country years ago. As a matter of fact, the primary teaching at these schools were songs and the plays for the year-end displays. Therefore, most of the students attended the Armenian schools only by the force of their parents.

Last but not least, attempts to transmit the Armenian culture and heritage to the Armenian youth went parallel with a process of purification of the Armenian culture and language from the “foreign elements” infiltrated in it to reestablish the correct Armenianness that was accelerated by the 1950s (Papazian 2000). Not surprisingly, in practice, the “foreign elements” were the “Turkish elements”, particularly Turkish words and phrases in the Armenian language. As such, the endeavor for the preservation of the Armenian heritage was in essence a social engineering attempt to redefine and restructure the Armenian culture.

Emergence of Two Church Hierarchies

As said above, the relationship between the Church and the Armenian nationalists, particularly the ARF, had been tense from the beginning. After the Soviet takeover of the first Armenian republic in 1920, this conflict reached a new level as the ARF began to question the legitimacy of Echmiadzin and accused it of becoming an apparatus of the Soviet yoke in Armenia. The tension between the Church and the ARF continued to get even more strife by the 1930s. On December 24, 1933, Archbishop Leon Tourian was stabbed to death in the Church of the Holy Cross in New York at the beginning of the Christmas Eve service. Nine people, who were all connected with the ARF were convicted. Although the ARF never

assumed the murder, Armenians held the ARF responsible of this murder and ostracize its members and the sympathizers. This dramatically deepening the schism between the ARF and the anti-ARF camps resulting in two rival Armenian communities⁴⁶¹. Following the deepening of this schism, in 1957 churches under the control of the ARF broke away from Diocese of Echmiadzin and aligned themselves with the Holy See of Cilicia in Anthelias that had come under the control of the ARF by the 1950s. Eventually, two Armenian Church hierarchies came out in the USA; the Diocese under the Holy See of Mother Echmiadzin and the Prilate under the Holy See of Cilicia (Aghanian 2007, 100-101; Alexander 2005, 3&155-156; Avakian 1977, 68-71).

These conflicts affected the weakened the hegemony of the Church negatively and pushed some Armenians away from the Church and the Armenian community, although there were other causes of the alienation of some Armenians. The Church was one of the champions of the preservation of Armenian traditions rather than adopting them to new circumstance. This caused the gradually lost of the ability of the Church to provide the Armenian youth with answers and solutions related to the everyday life. Services conducted in Classical Armenian, which even the Armenian speakers cannot understand had been another cause that estranged the youth from the Church services. Also, the physical dispersion of the Armenians from the “Armenian ghettos” as an effect of their integration to the American society severed the ties of the Armenians with the local Armenian churches. Finally, integration of the Armenians in the American society lessened the need for the psychological support that the Church provided (see, Avakian 1977 80-81). Despite the weakening of its hegemony, however, today the Church still enjoys a considerable hegemonic power among Armenians.

Dispute over the Armenian SSR

After the loss of the “Western Armenia” by the 1915 tragedy and the 1923 Lausanne Peace Treaty, “Eastern Armenia” despite its sovietization in 1920 remained as the only piece of land where Armenians constitute the majority. This triggered the gradual identification of the Armenian SSR as the homeland subsidizing the “lost homeland” in Anatolia (Alexander 2005, 98-101). Furthermore, for the many, Armenian SSR was the nucleus of the prospective independent and united Armenia. These two together elevated the Armenian SSR to the status

⁴⁶¹ Mesrobian’s recollections cited in this appendix is an example of the narration of this conflict from a pro-ARF position.

of a top concern for the Armenians in the USA. As an effect, from 1920s to 1970s Armenian SSR became the main point of dispute between the rival Armenian political parties.

The marxist SDHP had been a supporter of the USSR and the Armenian SSR for ideological reasons. The liberal ADLP, on the other hand, regarded the Soviet rule in Armenia as the only possible way for the survival of the tiny Armenia next to Turkey (bkz. Alexander 2005, 100-102; Mesrobian 2000, 71; Aghanian 2007, 96-99). For the ADLP an independent Armenia was obviously what was desired. However, for the political realities of the day, opposing the Soviet rule in Armenia was neither realistic nor was it logical. Because of this pragmatism, the ADLP also adopted a positive stance to the Armenian SSR. However, to the self-declared socialist ARF, Armenian SSR was the illegitimate result of the Soviet takeover of the short-lived Democratic Republic of Armenia. For that, the ARF adopted a radically antagonist position against the Armenian SSR. In the positioning of the ARF vis-à-vis the Armenian SSR, revenge and enmity to the USSR for the elimination of ruling ARF cadres after an unsuccessful rebellion against the Soviets was also another important factor. Only by the 1930s, the ARF began to accept the factuality of the Soviet rule in Armenia without an alternative in the short run. This timid acceptance, however, did not soften the radical discourse of the ARF. Yet, as Alexander (2005, 174) explains as quoted below, the ARF was also aware that the liberation of Armenia was not a short-term possibility.

In fact, one can argue, the prime goal of Tashnag leaders in America in the 1930s was not so much liberating Armenia, as making sure Armenians understood that Armenia needed to be liberated. In other words, distinct from the status of Armenian homeland was the state of the Armenian-American mind, and the ideal state of mind was a sense of membership in an exiled people, a feeling of having once had a homeland and of having been robbed of it, robbed by the Soviets as well as the Turks.

Only by the 1970s, the ARF revised its stance and discourse vis-à-vis the Armenian SSR and the USSR from radical antagonism to hesitant acceptance and came to a reconciliatory point, exchanging the USSR with Turkey and the Turk as the prime enemy of the Armenians (Aghanian 2007, 102). In fact, by the 1970s, enmity towards Turkey and the Turk and the cause of the recognition of the 1915 tragedy as genocide by the international community and Turkey had become the main concern of the Armenian community in the USA. In fact, it has been the Turk that achieved what neither the Church nor the political parties could; the unison of the Armenians around a common cause.

Overall, between 1920s and 1970s, the potentially contradictory phenomena of integration to wider American society and the prevention of assimilation have been the major concerns of the Armenians in the USA. Besides that, rivalry between the ARF and the anti-ARF camp had been the main determinant of the intra-communal relations among the Armenians, which has been considerably conflictual. As such, the “starving Armenian” of the post-1915 was also the “quarrelling Armenian”. At the center of these conflicts laid different approaches to the Armenian SSR. When, by 1970s the ARF revised its outlook regarding the Armenian SSR the quarrel among the “quarrelling Armenians” began to wane, although never to disappear. Again, by the 1970s Armenians engaged themselves to another cause, this time a cause that caught almost all: the recognition of the 1915 tragedy as genocide and the “restoration of the historical justice”. In fact, this cause proved to be strong enough to keep the Armenians as a community despite the accelerated integration of the new generation into the wider American society.

APPENDIX 5

TRADITIONAL ARMENIAN DIASPORA POLITICAL PARTIES

Traditional Armenian diaspora political parties, namely, Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF. Also called Dashnaktsutyun), Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (ADLP. Also known as the Ramgavar Party) and The Social Democrat Hunchakian Party (SDHP) were established in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries⁴⁶². These parties have different characteristics than conventional political parties. First, they are diasporic organizations; until 1990-1991, these parties carried their activities in different parts of the world from where Armenian communities existed, but Armenia. Certainly, not functioning in Armenia, was not a choice but an imposition of the political reality. Second, traditional Armenian diaspora political parties with their chapters in different countries and networks around them have been trans-state organizations. Lastly, until their establishment in Armenia by 1990-1991, except for Lebanon, they had been extra-parliamentary parties.

Although, traditional Armenian diaspora political parties had been the major organizations in diaspora, the card-holding members of these parties have never been many. However with their sister social, cultural and youth organizations and branches, these parties secured a large sphere of influence and became hegemonic actors. As Sokefeld and Schwalgin (2000, 8) rightly states, socialization rather than deliberative ideological/political choices of the Armenians made traditional Armenian diaspora political parties powerful actors in the social domain.

Sanjian (2011, 1) argues “historians of almost any post-1890 episode concerning the Armenians inevitably also deal with the ARF, usually directly, or, at the very least, indirectly”. This rightful claim is an expression of the immense importance of the ARF in the recent Armenian history that no other entity have had. The Armenian Revolutionary Federation was founded by Christapor Mikaelian, Simon Zavarian and Stepan Zorian in 1890 in Tbilisi. In few years, the ARF became the primary political force and the leader of the Armenian revolutionary activities in the Ottoman Anatolia and the Caucasus. It has also been the major force in the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Armenia in 1918. After the sovietization of the first Armenian republic and the following exile of the ARF from

462 See, Khachaturian (2009), Libaridian (1987), Nalbandian (1963), Shmavonian (1983), Stebbins (2011), Suny (1983a; 1980; 1979), Ter Minassian (1984) for the early development of nationalist ideology and political activism of the Armenians in the Causasus and the Ottoman.

Armenia in 1920, the ARF re-established itself in the diaspora and continued to be the major Armenian organization in diaspora communities. In diaspora, the ARF have also been the champion of the preservation of the Armenian identity, propaganda against the Soviet rule in Armenia, and by the 1970s recognition of the 1915 events as genocide.

The ARF identifies itself as a socialist party and defines social justice, democracy and national self-determination as its primary principles. The ARF rejoined the Socialist International in 1996 that it had joined first in 1907. Since 2003, the ARF has been a full member of the Socialist International. Likewise, the ARF Women's branch and the youth organization, the Armenian Youth Federation (AYF), are the members of the Socialist International Women and the International Union of Socialist Youth, respectively. The AYF is also an observer member of the European Community Organization of Socialist Youth. However, the practice and rhetoric the ARF demonstrates its extremist-nationalist tendencies, notwithstanding the self-claimed socialist stance of the party. In addition to the goal of the recognition of the 1915 events as Genocide and the following reparations, the ARF identifies the establishment of United Armenia as its primary objective. In the present, the ARF defines its organizational structure as the follows:

Presently, the organizational structure of the ARF-Dashnaksutyun is a decentralized worldwide structure, composed of organizational regions, each with grassroots local chapters". The local chapters annually elect their executive committees (Gomideh). On a regional level, at an annual or biennial regional conference composed of locally elected delegates, the regional executive committee is elected. Regional conferences also elect delegates to the ARF World Congress, which is convened once every four years. The ARF World Congress is the highest policy setting organ of the party; it adopts or modifies the party's Programme, statutes (regions decide on their regional structures), and strategy of the party. The World Congress also elects the party's highest worldwide executive body, the Bureau. The regional conferences, guided by the strategy set forth by the World Congress, draw up their regional policies, which are executed by the regional executive bodies (Armenian Revolutionary Federation 2014a).

The ARF since its foundation succeeded to establish many schools, community centers, societies, sports and scouting clubs, youth organizations and relief societies. Armenian National Committee of America headquartered in Washington, D.C. (www.anca.org) , European Armenian Federation for Justice and Democracy (headquartered in Brussels, www.eafjd.eu), Russian-Armenian Friendship Foundation (headquartered in Moscow), Centre for Armenian Studies (based in Tehran, www.arir.org), Armenian National Committee of the

Middle East (headquartered in Beirut, www.ancme.net), Armenian Relief Society, Armenian General Sports and Scouts Union (Homenetmen), Hamazkayin Armenian Cultural and Educational Association, Homenetmen Armenian General Athletic Union, Hamazkayin Cultural Foundation, Armenian Youth Federation, ARF Shant Student Association, ARF Armen Karo Student Association are the important branches of the ARF (see, Armenian Revolutionary Federation 2014b). Furthermore, the ARF has established a wide network of affiliated and/or supported media composed of official daily, weekly and quarterly publications, and radio, television and websites, some of which are listed above (see, Armenian Revolutionary Federation 2014c):

Karabakh – Aparaj Weekly www.aparaj.nk.am (Armenian)

Armenia – Droshak Monthly (Armenian)

Armenia – Yerkir Daily (Armenian, English, Russian)

Iran – Alik Daily www.alikonline.com (Armenian)

Lebanon – Aztag Daily www.aztagdaily.com (Armenian, Arabic)

Egypt – Housaper Daily (Armenian)

Cyprus – Artsakank Monthly www.artsakank.com.cy (Armenian, English)

Greece – Azat Or Daily www.azator.gr (Armenian)

France – FRA-France www.fra-france.com (Française)

Canada – Horizon Weekly www.horizonweekly.ca (Armenian, English, Française)

USA Eastern Region – Hairenik Weekly www.hairenik.com (Armenian)

The Armenian Weekly www.armenianweekly.com (English)

USA Western Region – Asbarez Daily www.asbarez.com (Armenian, English)

Argentina – Armenia Weekly www.diarioarmenia.org.ar (Armenian, Español)

Australia – Armenia Weekly www.armenia.com.au (Armenian, English)

For the official website of the ARF see, <http://www.arfd.info/> (latest access 09.01.2014). For a literature review on ARF see, Sanjian (2011). For previous articles and books on the ARF see, Atamian (1955), Caprielian (1976-1977), Dashnabedian (1981; 1990), Hovanissian (1981; 1969), Khatanassian (1979), Libaridian (1980), Peroomian (1993), Sevian (1981), Tashjian (1979), Varandian (1970a; 1970b; 1970c; 1971; 1972a; 1972b), Vrathan (1979), Vratzian (1979).

The Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (ADLP) was founded in 1921 in Istanbul as the coalition of the cadres that split from the SDHP and liberal Armenian circles. However, the

ADLP relates its roots to the Armenakan Party that was founded in 1885 in Van in the Eastern Anatolia and carried out armed struggle against the Ottoman authority. The ADLP identifies itself as a liberal and capitalist party in contrast to the ARF and the SDHP that identifies themselves as socialist parties.

Today, the ADLP publishes weeklies and dailies in Argentina (Sardarabad), Armenia (Azg), Canada (Abaka), Egypt (Arev), Greece (Nor Ashkharh), Lebanon (Zartonk) and the USA (Armenian Mirror-Spectator; Baikar; Nor Or). Recently, however, a group split from the ADLP formed the Armenakan-Democratic Liberal Party. The effect of this split is yet to be seen. The ADLP with its network of sister and affiliate organizations, clubs and media has been the major element and the engine of the anti-ARF camp in the diaspora. For a critique of the ARF written from within the ADLP perspective see, Papazian (1934).

The Social Democrat Hunchakian Party (SDHP) was founded in 1887 in Geneva, Switzerland by a group of Russian-Armenian Marxist university students influenced by the Russian revolutionaries. The SDHP had been the pioneer of the Armenian liberation movement in the late Ottoman Empire, however lost its power quite soon after its foundation. As such, although not having operational power, the SDHP is the oldest surviving Armenian political party to the present day. After the Soviet takeover of the first Armenian republic, like other parties except the Armenian Communist Party, the SDHP was also exiled and became a diaspora party. However, unlike the ARF, the SDHP did not question the legitimacy of the Armenian SSR. The SDHP's support to the Armenian SSR, along with the ADLP, positioned the party as the antagonist of the ARF.

The SDHP, different from the ARF and the ADLP, has not been able to establish a strong and functioning network of sister and affiliate organizations. The SDHP publishes Ararad daily in Lebanon, Tchahagir Weekly in Egypt, Massis Weekly in the USA, Los Angeles, Nor Serounti Tsayn in the UK and Zank Armenian Journal in Australia. The SDHP publishes online at massispost.com (latest access 09.01.2014), as well.

The official website of the SDHP is at <http://www.hunchak.org.au>. As this web-address shows, this website broadcasts from Australia. Few SDHP documents including the 1887 party program can be found at <http://www.hunchak.org.au/aboutus/historical.html> (latest

access 09.01.2014). For, two studies on the SDHP see, Dashnabedian (1988) and Nalbandian (1949).

APPENDIX 6

ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC, PROTESTANT AND CATHOLIC CHURCHES

According to the hegemonic Armenian historiography, the roots of the Armenian Christianity goes back to the missions of Apostles Bartholomew and Thaddeus, and Armenians are the first people to adopt Christianity as the state religion in AD 301, which is often and proudly expressed by the Armenians as one of their key distinctiveness. The Armenian Apostolic Church has two sees, namely, the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin in Etchmiadzin, Armenia and the Armenian Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia in Antelias, Lebanon, and two catholicoses in these sees. Although, in theory, Etchmiadzin is the supreme spiritual and administrative center of the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia in Antelias functions as an independent center. It is worth mentioning that there are no theological differences between the two and the existence of two independent sees is a result of the ARF's initiative to control the Armenian Apostolic Church. The Armenian Apostolic church has two Patriarchates in the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople (Istanbul) that have jurisdiction over different geographies. The Prelacy churches are those under the jurisdiction of the Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia, whereas the Diocese churches are those which accept the authority of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin. For theological and historical studies on the Armenian Apostolic Church see, Gulesserian (1970), Kalousian (1969), Krikorian (1994), Ormanian (1955 [1911]), Terian (2005; 2003-2004), Thomson (1988-1989), Tololyan (1988). For the Armenian Apostolic Church in the Imperial Russia see, Werth (2006). For the Armenian Apostolic Church in Soviet era see, Alexander (1955), Bournoutian (1983), Corley (1998; 1996a; 1996b), Mouradian (1988). For, the Church and the post-soviet Armenia see, Sarkissian (2008). For a study on the Apostolic, Catholic and Protestant Armenian churches see, Haleblian (1988).

Conversion of the Armenians to Protestantism dates back to the 1830s, when Protestant missionaries began their activities in the Ottoman Anatolia. By the 1840s, the intensity and influence of the missionaries among the Armenians reached a certain level. Missionary activities among the Armenians, however, raised the concerns of the Armenian Apostolic Church that perceived the Protestant mission as a threat. Consequently, the Armenian Apostolic Church began to take precautions that even reached to the level of intimidation. For

example Mirak (1983, 23) cites the manifestation of the Armenian Apostolic Church issued in 1846 stating :

Whoever has a son that is such a one [Protestant]...and gives him bread, or assists him in making money...let such persons know that they are nourishing a venomous serpent...Such persons give bread to Judas...and are destroyers of the holy orthodox Armenian church, and a disgrace to the whole nation.

As the aggression of the Apostolic Church on the Armenians who converted to Protestantism reached a critical level, Britain urged the Ottoman authorities to take measures to provide security for the Protestants in the Ottoman Empire. Consequent to similar demands of the big powers, in 1847 Ottoman authorities granted *millet* status to the Protestants. However, the tension between the Apostolic and the Protestant Armenians did not vanish. This situation even led a Protestant missionary in 1853 to complain as “scarcely ever can we walk the streets but the cry of ‘prote’, ‘prote,’ ...is raised and the words [are] accompanied by stones”. In 1860 in Balat, Istanbul and in 1883 in Erzincan in the Eastern Anatolia quarrels were recorded between the Apostolic and Protestant Armenians (Mirak 1983, 23-25). For studies on the Protestant Mission in the Ottoman Anatolia see, Kurtvirt (1984; 1972), Merguerian (1992-1993), Shelton (2011), Sims (2013), Stone (1982), Westenenk (1986). For historical studies see, Arpee (1936), Mouradian (1988), Tootikian (1982).

According to the official website of the Armenian Catholic Church at http://www.armeniancatholic.org/inside.php?lang=en&page_id=23 (latest access 06.06.2013),

The Armenian Catholic Church of our days, as the successor of the church that Saint Gregory the Illuminator built and that Saint Sahak, Saint Mesrob and the Catholicos protected, can't be classified in the line of the Catholic churches, who were built in the XVI and XVII centuries in the East and who were called "concordants".

Rather, according to the official view of the Armenian Catholic Church there have been Catholic Armenians “from the beginning” in Constantinople, Mardin, Aleppo, Jerusalem, Isfahan, Baghdad, Nakhichevan, Crimea, Poland, Transylvania and Italy. However, only in 1742 a separate Armenian Catholic hierarchy was established in Aleppo by the initiative of Abraham Ardzivian. Before this date, Armenian Catholics remained subjects of the Armenian Apostolic Patriarch of Istanbul on the religion and political levels and were denied a separate clergyman. Armenian Catholics were baptized, got married, entombed in Armenian Apostolic churches, whereas European and Latin Catholics in the Ottoman Empire enjoyed religious

autonomy and had their own churches, clergyman and archbishop. According to the website of the Global Catholic Network at <http://www.ewtn.com/library/CHISTORY/armenia.htm> (latest access 06.06.2013) 10% of Armenians around the world are Catholics. There are Catholic Armenian communities in Armenia, Lebanon, Syria, Iran, Iraq, Egypt, Turkey, Ukraine, France and Argentina, USA, Canada, Greece and Romania.

Armenian Catholics, particularly the Mekhitarist Congregation in Venice founded in 1717 by Abbot Mechitar of Sebastia have been one of the primary agents of the Armenian modernization through their labor of scholarly publications and translation of the western texts. For studies on the history and scholarship of the works of the Mekhitarist Congregation see, Adalian (1994), Goode (1970), Sarkiss (1937). For a brief study on the Armenian Catholic Church see, Whooley (2004).

APPENDIX 7

THE PHOENIX OF THE NEMESIS: THE ARMENIAN MILITANT NATIONALIST RADICALISM BETWEEN 1975 AND 1985

On January 27, 1973, the police headquarters in Santa Barbara, California received a call from 77-years old Gourgen Yanikian, an Armenian-American, reporting a murder at the Biltmore Hotel. The victims were Mehmet Baydar and Bahadır Demir, the Consul General and the Vice Consul of the Turkish Consulate in Los Angeles. The assassin and the informer, however, were the same man: Yanikian. During his trial, Yanikian insisted his innocence. Reenacting the defense of Soghomon Tehlirian in a German court fifty-two years ago, he told the court he was a survivor of genocide and the Turks killed twenty-six members of his family. What he did by assassinating the two Turkish diplomats approximately sixty years later was nothing other than demanding justice. Yanikian was sentenced to life imprisonment on July 2, 1973. He was paroled in 1984 by the then governor of California George Deukmejian when he was 88 year old. Yanikian died two months after his release of natural causes⁴⁶³.

Yanikian decided, planned and executed the murder alone. His was an individual deed, a result of the impossibility of handling the psychological weight of witnessing the terrible events that claimed more than twenty souls from his family, probably besides many other acquaintances. For him, revenge, as he imagined⁴⁶⁴, was the only way to elevate the psychological charge that a witness of a gross atrocity had to carry all his life. However, Yanikian's murder of the two Turkish diplomats as an individual act of revenge was also a

463 Gourgen Yanikian was born in Erzurum, the then Ottoman Empire and present-day eastern Turkey, in 1895. With his family, he left Erzurum and studied engineering in Moscow. During the World War I, he joined the volunteer regiment of the Russian Army against the Ottoman Empire. He moved to Iran in 1930 and migrated to the USA in 1946. In the USA, besides his engineering career he published the following books: *The Triumph of Judas Iscariot* (1950), *Harem Cross: A Novel of the Near East* (1953), *The Resurrected Christ: A novel* (1955), *The Voice of an American* (1960), *Mirror in the Darkness: A Novel* (1966) (see, Bobelian 2009; Kalaydjian 2012).

After the murder, a fund raising group named "American Friends of Armenian Martyrs" was formed for his defense. The Terrorism Research & Analysis Consortium states a terrorist group named "Prisoner Gourgen Yanikian Group" was formed in the USA for his release. The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) headquartered at the University of Maryland mentions "Yanikian Commandos" as another underground organization in the USA. According to the information in the website of the START, "Yanikian Commandos" also sought Yanikian's release from prison. This group claimed an attack on the Turkish Information Office in New York on October 26, 1973 with a smoke bomb. However, the bomb did not explode and no damage occurred. George Deukmejian is one of the renowned Armenian-Americans who extended his helping hand to earthquake torn Armenia as mentioned in Chapter 2.

464 At the time of the murder, Mehmet Bayar was 47 years-old and Bahadır Demir was 30 years old. Neither of them was in this world at the time of the 1915 tragedy. Hence, the victims had no personal responsibility or relation with what has happened at that time.

symbolic deed that opened a new, yet short-lived, phase in the twentieth century Armenian history, that is, the decade of the Armenian militant nationalist radicalism or as many researchers name it “Armenian terrorism” as an interesting and unique episode of the second wave of modern Armenian nationalism.

Armenian Liberation Attempts in the Pre-Modern Era and the Three Waves of Modern Armenian Nationalism

After the fall of the last sovereign Armenian kingdom in Cilicia in 1375, there have been several attempts of liberation that can be broadly classified as those of the pre-modern era until the nineteenth century and those of the modern era. The first attempt for the liberation of Armenia after the fall of Cilicia dates back to 1562, when the Armenian Catholicos Mikael Sebastitsi in Etchmiadzin sent Abgar Toketetsi to the Pope in Rome to negotiate Rome’s support to prospective Armenian rebellion. The Pope demanded Armenians to convert to Catholicism in return of Roma’s support. This demand was denied by Etchmiadzin and this first attempt ended without any result. In the seventeenth century, Israyel Ori and Tavit Beg organized rebellions supported by Echmiadzin, yet, again without any success (Zekiyani 2002). Approximately after a century, in 1800, Armenian cleric Jacques Chahan de Cirbied proposed Catholicos Ghukas in Echmiadzin to contact France for the latter’s support for Armenian independence (Nalbandian 1963, 37). The years between 1630 and 1700 was the most luminous period for the Armenian merchants and colonies for the successful trade networks ranging from Netherlands to Java. In this period, small but vibrant Armenian communities in Madras and Calcutta in India advanced as the most important centers of the Armenian world. However, after the arrival of the British to Bengal, Armenian traders lost their privileged status. This loss caused the raise of ethnic awareness. As a consequence, Madras and Calcutta became the centers of the birth of the ideas of Pan-Armenian nationalism and the movement symbolized by the historical figures Joseph Emin, who travelled to various European countries and Russia to find support for the liberation of Armenia from the Ottoman Empire and Persia, and Movses Bagramyan⁴⁶⁵. Between 1797 and 1852, radical nationalism evolved into a moderate and secular form (Ghougassian 1999, 242). In this period, Armenian Catholic Mekhitarist Congregation in Venice founded in 1715 had been the gate through which Western thought and literature reached the Armenian world (Zekiyani 2002. See, Appendix 6 for Armenian Catholicism).

465 Emin collected his memoirs in his auto-biographical book titled *Life and Adventures of Emin Joseph Emin 1726-1809* (1918).

The *zartonk* period (awakening, in Armenian) in the second half of the 19th century, that lasted until 1915 was the period of the birth of modern secular Armenian nationalism, during which Istanbul in the Ottoman Empire and Tbilisi in Georgia shined as the cultural and political centers of the Armenian world and secular Armenian nationalism (Zekiyan 2002). In this era, Armenian nationalism pioneered first by the cultural elite and then by the new generation nationalist militants and propagandists began to seek an Armenian nation-state. As a matter of fact, early modern secular Armenian nationalism had a trans-state character given that the Armenian population was divided between the Ottoman-Armenia and the Russian-Armenia, and the pioneers of the militant activities in the Ottoman Empire were mostly from the Russian-Armenia. The first wave of the modern Armenian nationalism came to end through three successive events: 1) the 1915 tragedy that resulted in the end of the significant existence of the Armenians in Ottoman-Armenia, 2) Bolshevik annexation of the short lived Democratic Republic of Armenia (May 1918-December 1920) that resulted in the loss of the independent statehood, and 3) the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 that resulted in the invalidation of the Treaty of Sevres (1920), which partite the Ottoman Empire and recognized Armenia as an independent state in the Eastern provinces of the former, and the international recognition of the new Republic of Turkey as the successor of the Ottoman Empire. 1920s-1991 were the years of the second wave of modern Armenian nationalism, which can be divided into two as the Armenian nationalism developed in the Armenian SSR and in the diaspora. Armenian nationalism in the Armenian SSR had common characteristics with other dissident nationalisms in the USSR that were defined by the defiance of the Soviet rule and the will to independence. Armenian nationalism in the diaspora, on the other hand, mainly sought preservation of the Armenian identity and consolidation of the Armenian communities in diaspora, notwithstanding particularly the ARF's persistence on the imperative of the liberation of Armenia from the Turkish and the Soviet yokes, which however remained only a rhetoric. Importantly, the main ideological pillar of the second wave Armenian nationalism in diaspora had been the hatred toward "the Turk, the genocidal enemy" and the following urge for revenge. Particularly by the 1970s, struggle for the recognition of the 1915 events as genocide had become the main urge of the Armenian diasporic nationalism. By the establishment of the third Armenian republic in 1991, the third wave of modern Armenian nationalism began. In the post-1991, concerns over statehood re-incorporated in the nationalist agenda next to the revenge over the Turk.

The Early Post-1920 Militant Nationalist Radicalism: The Operation Nemesis

One of the characteristics of the first wave of the modern Armenian nationalism between 1880s and 1920 was guerilla warfare in the eastern provinces of the then Ottoman Empire carried out by the Armenian militants that also involved ordinary peasants and petty-artisans for both defensive and offensive purposes. The episode of guerilla warfare lasted until 1920 when the Treaty of Alexandropol was signed between the Democratic Republic of Armenia and the Grand National Assembly of Turkey that was followed by the Treaty of Moscow and the Treaty of Kars signed in 1921 between the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and Soviet Russia. The result of this episode was the absolute defeat of the Armenians by the Ottoman-Turkish forces and the sovietization of the Democratic Republic of Armenia. However, soon, as early as 1920, another wave of militancy was launched under the name Operation Nemesis by the ARF, yet in a quite different form. The movement between 1880s and 1920 was more of a popular rebellion. It was a territorialized struggle for the land and the militants were mostly the inhabitants of the land that they were fighting for. The Operation Nemesis, on the other hand, was performed by a small militant cell and its *modus operandi* was conventional terrorism that involved assassinations.

The Nemesis group was led by an Armenian-American, who was later expelled from the ARF, named Hagop Der Hagopian, yet known with his *nom de guerre* Shahan Natalie⁴⁶⁶. The objective of the Operation Nemesis was to bring retributive justice by punishing the “enemies of the Armenians”⁴⁶⁷. To this end, the Nemesis group assassinated a total of ten people⁴⁶⁸.

466 In August 1999 in California, USA, The Shahan Natalie Family Foundation, Inc. (SNFF) was founded as a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. In July 2000, the SNFF was registered as an NGO in the unrecognized *de facto* Republic of Nagorno Karabagh. The SNFF declares its objective as “organizing events which educate, enrich, and foster appreciation for Armenian culture in international communities worldwide” (Shahan Natalie Family Foundation, Inc. 2014). The SNFF broadcasts the “official” biography of Shahan Natalie at <http://www.snff.org/about/shahan-natalie/> (latest access 23.05.2013). In this biography the expression “the fruits of Shahan Natalie’s planning mind were the successive assassinations as follows” after which six names who were assassinated by the Nemesis group are listed is a noteworthy glorification of violence. The names given in this list are, Talaat Pasha (the correct form is Talat), Pipit Jivanshir Khan, Saïd Halim Pasha (the correct form is Said), Behaeddin Shakir Bey (the correct form is Bahattin Şakir), Jemal Azmi (the correct form Cemal Azmi), Jemal Pasha (the correct form Cemal), and Enver Pasha. As regards to Enver Pasha, it is stated that “the third member of the Triumvirate, was killed in 1922 in Turkmenistan (Central Asia) when he was leading the Basmaji Pan-Turanian movement. It is assumed that Enver’s assassin was an Armenian soldier in the Red Army”. The claim that Enver Pasha was killed by an Armenian in the Red Army is a popular myth, the verity of which is yet to be proved. The noticeable point in this biography is the claim that the murder of Enver Pasha was a fruit of Shahan Natalie’s planning mind while, in the same text, writing “it is assumed that Enver’s assassin was an Armenian soldier in the Red Army” that expresses even it is not sure the murder of Enver was an Armenian. Shahan Natalie is also the author of the book “The Turks and Us” published in Armenian in 1928 in Athens that was translated into English in 2006.

467 Hence, the name Operation Nemesis referring to the goddess of retributive justice in Greek mythology.

Among the targets, there were two Azeris, namely, Fatali Khan Khoyski and Bihbud Khan Jivanshir, the former Prime Minister and the former Minister of Interior of Azerbaijan, respectively, both of whom were held responsible for what the Armenian historiography refers to as “Baku Massacres” of 1918⁴⁶⁹. The Nemesis group assassinated three Armenians, who were accused of treason. The rest were the five former Ottoman officials, namely, Talat Pasha, Cemal Pasha, Dr. Bahattin Shakir, Cemal Azmi and Said Halim Pasha, who were accused to be the orchestrators of the “Armenian Genocide”. Among these ten assassinations, Talat Pasha case has been the most famous and important one for its aftermath. The assassin of Talat Pasha was Soghomon Tehlirian, a Protestant-Armenian, who was born near Erzincan in Eastern Anatolia on April 2, 1897. On March 15, 1921 in Berlin, Tehlirian gunned down Talat Pasha in the daytime in the presence of witnesses. Tehlirian was surrendered by the police and tried by the German court by which he was acquitted on the basis of the accusations leveled against Talat Pasha for his key role in the genocide. The exculpation of Tehlirian became the ground of the claims of rightfulness of the “revenge acts” some fifty years after in California and later on in different parts of the world⁴⁷⁰.

Armenian Militant Nationalist Radicalism between 1975 and 1985

Armenian militant nationalist radicalism in the 1970s developed in certain socio-political and socio-cultural contexts. To move from the general to the specific, in different parts of the world revolutionary socialist, anti-imperialist and anti-colonial struggles flourished in 1960s and 1970s. The rebirth of the Armenian nationalist militant radicalism can be grasped better if approached as a movement within such a global context. Although, the specter of revolution was haunting both the first and the third worlds, it was probably more salient in the latter. Establishment of the State of Israel and the preceding chaos, conflicts and wars between the Jews/Israelis and the Arabs, Israeli victories and the subsequent Israeli expansionism, deception and grudge of the Arabs, Palestinian refugees in the surrounding Arab countries and the West, socio-economic inequalities and problems, incompetence of the Arab states to

468 This number does not include Enver Pasha. If Enver has to be added the total number is eleven. See, footnote 467.

469 See, footnote 38.

470 Transcription of Tehlirian’s trial is available at http://www.cilicia.com/armo_tehlirian.html (latest access 09.01.2014). See, Moses (2012) for a MA thesis on the trial of Tehlirian that examines the files created by the German establishment. For narratives on Operation Nemesis see, Alexander (1991), Avakian (1989), Derogy (1990), Hosfeld (2005, in German), Shiragian (1976). For a website dedicated to the Operation Nemesis see, <http://www.operationnemesis.com/> (latest access 09.01.2013). Particularly, the assassination of Talat Pasha by Soghomon Tehlirian has become an element of the hegemonic post-genocide Armenian narrative. For a song and video-clip about Talat and Tehlirian performed by pro-ARF Armenian singer of nationalist songs Sahak Sahakyan see, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LMJCuDe11DY> (latest access 23.05.2013).

establish full authority and stability within their borders and their keenness to utilize clandestine organizations for their political goals made the Middle East, and specifically, Lebanon a prolific soil for the underground militant organizations. Armenian militant nationalist radicalism was born in Lebanon in such a context. It is widely believed that Palestinian groups fighting the Israeli occupation had been a model for the Armenian radicals.

The socio-cultural context determined by the social memory of the genocide that reproduced three major themes, namely, the perpetual victimhood and martyrdom of the Armenians, the “bloodthirsty Turk” as the worst perpetrator of the Armenian and the “selfless valor” of the Armenian heroes who fought the unequally mighty enemies and were martyred heroically, which signifies the moral victory of the Armenians despite the defeat they suffer was the other factor of the militant nationalist radicalism. Stories told by word of mouth in the private family sphere and the public narrations in the form of cultural products such as poetry, novels and plays perpetuated not only the pain of the innocent victims but also the honor of the heroic martyrs. Socialization within such socio-cultural context facilitated the sway of some of the youth to radical means for vengeance against the “evil, the Turk”⁴⁷¹.

In addition to the general political and socio-cultural contexts, three specific factors of the radicalization of the youth can be identified. First, although, traditional Armenian political parties had been the unprecedented actors in the formation of the Armenian communities, hence the major engine of the Armenian communal life in diaspora, they gradually lost their creative capacity and turned into conservative structures that offer the youth little excitement and prospect for glory. These parties while at the rhetorical level continued to replicate the higher ideals of retributive justice against the Turk and the *reconquista* of the historic Armenia, in practice, they did not record any meaningful progress to these ends. As the rhetoric got incapable to hide the practical incapacity, the youth began searching alternatives. Hyland (1991, 24-25) argues, this search, indeed, had begun earlier than the establishment of the ASALA and the JCAG-ARA. He states as early as the second half of the 1960s a group called Zavarian was formed within the ARF ranks. In 1968, another group named “The Youth for Vengeance” advocated armed struggle. Secondly, while traditional political parties were stuck in a state of stagnancy, the Armenian communities were in a state of decline and losing

471 Tololyan (1987a; 1987b) observes militants often referred to and identified themselves with the mythical national heroes. This reveals the important effect of the national myths and hegemonic narratives in the socio-cultural formation of the militants.

their cohesiveness. This was the reason of the increasing concerns about the “white massacre” or “youthocide”. By the 1970s, even the Armenian community in Lebanon, the center of the Armenian world that time, began to lose its vividness. In such a situation, some of the Lebanese Armenians felt a need for a new incentive. They found this incentive in radicalism, which they thought would wake up the blear-eyed Armenians and implement a new hope and energy in them (see, Gunter 1986; Tololyan 1987a; 1987b). As such, Armenian militant nationalist radicalism had not only an extrovert goal, that is, the liberation of the “homeland”, but also introvert prospects, i.e., survival of the Armenian communities in diaspora. Lastly, the absence of any practically meaningful interest of the international community in the tragic fate of the Armenians intensified the fear of being forgotten by the international community, hence the finalization of the extinction of the Armenians. This fear had been a factor in the speeding up of the search for alternatives (Kurz and Merari 1985)⁴⁷².

The ASALA and the JCAG-ARA

The main actors of the 1975-1985 militant nationalist radicalism had been the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA) and the Justice Commandos of the Armenian Genocide (JCAG), which later was renamed The Armenian Revolutionary Army (ARA). ASALA, the more widely known organization, was founded in Lebanon and performed its first attack to the headquarters of the World Council of Churches in Beirut on 20 January 1975⁴⁷³. The founder and the leader of the ASALA is known as Hagop Hagopian, who was also called Mujahed, an Arabic noun that means warrior⁴⁷⁴. The few existing studies on ASALA argue that Hagopian before founding the ASALA joined the Palestinian Liberation Organization in 1967 and then sided with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. This reveals that by the time of the foundation of the ASALA, Hagopian was

472 The fear of being forgotten is a corollary of the sense of being betrayed by the West. This perception is persistently reproduced by the post-genocide Armenian narrative. Arguably, the sense of being betrayed by the West might have been a factor in the formation of the anti-Western stance of the ASALA.

473 ASALA later on stated that the WCC bureau was targeted because this bureau was “promoting the emigration of Armenians to the United States” (Hyland 1991, 26). This statement reveals ASALA’s less explicit goal of preventing the Armenian community in Lebanon against the threat of extinction. Following this opening, ASALA targeted exclusively Turkish targets until 1979. In these years, there were three to four attacks per year including explosions, armed attacks and assassinations performed in Beirut, Paris, Brussels, Geneva, Athens and Los Angeles (Kurz and Merari 1985, 23).

474 Hagopian used different operational names such as Mihran Mihranian, Vahram Vahramian, Bedros Havanassian, Abduh Mohamed Qasim, Henri Titizian or Tezinyan, Minas Ohanessian, Noubar Hovhanessian, Haroutioun Takoushian.

already a trained and experienced militant⁴⁷⁵. Although, Hagopian is surrounded by a smoke screen, it is alleged that he was a son of one Armenian and one Arab parent born in Iraq.

The ASALA identified itself as a part of the wider international revolutionary anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist movements⁴⁷⁶. It adopted a pro-Soviet stance and claimed its final goal as the liberation of the historic Armenia from the Turkish occupation and its unison with the Armenian SSR under the USSR⁴⁷⁷. After 1979, ASALA managed to establish relations with

475 Hyland (1991, 58) reports that Hagopian claimed several attacks prior to the attack on the WCC bureau such as the attack on the Japanese Embassy in Kuwait on 6 February 1974.

476 This was the ideological background of ASALA's cooperation with Palestinian, Kurdish and Turkish revolutionary underground organizations. Certainly, these cooperations had practical reasons.

477 Hyland (1991, 27-28) documents the ASALA's July 1978 and the October 1983 declarations that reveal the ideological stance of the ASALA. The July 1978 declaration announces the following:

1. The only enemy of ASALA is the Turkish Government, occupying nine tenths of the Armenian territory;
2. The allies of the Turkish State are the enemies of ASALA; they will be hit when and where ASALA decides;
3. The revolutionary movements fighting against Turkey and American imperialism are ASALA's friends; the revolutionary parties of the Turkish and Kurdish peoples, both of them oppressed by the State, are the only official allies of ASALA;
4. The Armenians' friends are those who have recognized the genocide: their enemies are those who are obstinately resolved at denying it;
5. The leaders of the Armenian political parties have not obtained any result in sixty years; the time of the ARF [the politically rightist, and powerful, Tashnak Party] 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 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 to anyone;
10. Soviet Armenia is the unique and irreplaceable basis of the Armenian people; it is a free Armenian land; the USSR is a friendly country, but not an allied country.

The October 1983 declaration that was published in the Cypriot newspaper *Al Nashara* expresses the same points as the follows:

1. ASALA is a political organization whose purpose is to mobilize the Armenian people for the struggle to liberate the Armenian territories from the colonialist oppression of the Turks and their imperialist and international reactionary henchmen, by every means of struggle.
2. The Army is guided by the theory of world revolution.
3. The Army represents the ambitions of the Armenian people in its opposition to the national and class servitude imposed upon it by the ruling clique in Turkey.
4. The Army believes in revolutionary violence as a fundamental principle, and as the proper weapon for fighting exploitation and oppression, and eliminating Turkish colonialism-even though the organization does not rule out other methods of conducting its struggle.
5. The Army forms a part of the world-revolutionary movement, for which reason it makes every effort to strengthen its ties with the revolutionary movement, in the belief that worldwide unity of all revolutionaries is one of the requirements for overcoming the problem of the oppressed and persecuted peoples and classes.

the Armenians in different countries and with non-Armenian militant organizations. Among the non-Armenian organizations, ASALA performed joint-operations with the Kurdistan Worker Party (PKK) that was founded in 1978 in Turkey and began an armed struggle for an independent socialist Kurdistan in 1984, and the Communist Labor Party of Turkey (TKEP) (Kurz and Merari 1985, 24-27). As an effect of this organizational advancement, ASALA increased the frequency of its attacks between 1979 and 1982. Moreover, whereas before 1979 ASALA aimed only Turkish targets, after 1979 it began to strike non-Turkish targets, as well.

Overall, Hyland (1991, 79) reports one-hundred seventy-one ASALA attacks. What is noteworthy is that only seventy of them, that is, 42% of the total attacks, were on Turkish targets and the rest were on other countries, ASALA members, and other Armenians. Strikes against the ASALA members and other Armenians were to square the account within the group after the schism within the ASALA ranks by the 1980s and to punish the “traitors”. Attacks on non-Turkish and non-Armenian targets, on the other hand, were to coerce the countries that took precautions against the ASALA. Certainly, ASALA’s anti-imperialist-anti-colonialist stance might have been a factor and/or an excuse of the attacks on Western countries⁴⁷⁸. It can be said that ASALA’s policy of pressuring third countries not to interfere to a certain extent proved successful.

The JCAG-ARA began its attacks on 22 October 1975 in Vienna with the assassination of the Turkish Ambassador to Austria, Danis Tunalıgil just nine months after the first attack of the ASALA. However, almost all commentators believe that the JCAG-ARA had a longer history and deeper roots. According to the common belief, JCAG-ARA was organically linked to the ARF. According to this view, as a response to growing radicalism among the Armenian youth, the ARF organized its own underground organization to prevent the loss of the youth to the ASALA. Given that the Operation Nemesis was orchestrated by the ARF and terrorism

6. The liberation of the Armenian territories from Turkish domination will result in their unification with the adjoining parts of Armenia and the establishment of a single democratic revolutionary organization.

7. The Army will conduct its struggle everywhere in the world where the Armenian people live and where the Turkish enemy maintains its interests and legations.

8. [ASALA's goal is] convincing the Soviet Union and other socialist countries to support the Armenian cause and assist the Armenian people in Soviet Armenia, in order to create a revolutionary spearhead for a long-term people's war, aimed at the destruction of Turkish colonialism.

478 As an interesting fact, Gunter (1990, 7) reports after the bankruptcy of the Mekhitarists in Venice, ASALA threatened the Italian government. For the Mekhitarists in Venice see Appendix 6.

has been present in the repertoire of the ARF, this scenario is not something that can easily be refuted. Whereas ASALA had very strong left-wing rhetoric, JCAG-ARA was anti-communist. While ASALA's final goal was the liberated and unified Armenia under the USSR, JCAG-ARA was simply seeking revenge from the Turk⁴⁷⁹. Accordingly, thirty of the thirty-six JCAG-ARA attacks aimed at Turkish targets. Those attacks killed as much as double of what ASALA attacks killed. This verifies that the JCAG-ARA had operatively more effective than the ASALA⁴⁸⁰.

Other than the ASALA and the JCAG-ARA, seven attacks, three of which were also claimed by the ASALA were claimed a group named the New Armenian Resistance (NAR). Little is known about the NAR and there are two different opinions as to the background of the NAR. According to one opinion, the NAR was a subsidiary of the ASALA when striking the Soviet targets (see Kurz and Merari 1985, 17). However, ASALA was a pro-Soviet organization and not all the strikes assumed by the NAR were against the Soviet targets. The second opinion is that the NAR was an independent organization, which had relations with the National Unity Party of Hayrikyan (see, Hyland 1991, 77-85)⁴⁸¹.

479 Such flatness might partially be explained by the claim that JCAG-ARA was founded as a reaction to ASALA mostly not to lose the youth to the ASALA as mentioned above.

480 Hyland (1991, 61) quotes a top-ranking FBI official stating: "the Justice Commandos were known as a singularly effective group of assassins. When they went to work, somebody usually died".

481 Hyland (1991, 81) mentions a NAR communiqué issued on 30 January 1980. He points out that the date of the communiqué marked "the one-year anniversary of the hangings of the three Soviet-Armenian dissidents for the January 1977 Moscow Subway bombing". He continues that the expressed theme of the proclamation was "neither NATO nor Warsaw Pact-National independence, national sovereignty, and territorial integrity in a reunified, independent, and socialist Armenia". With this communiqué the NAR declared:

The fundamental enemy of the Armenian people is-we could not forget it-fascist Turkey ... but we could not ignore the anti-Armenian nature of the repression which strikes the patriots in Soviet Armenia The fact that the USSR supports certain progressive national liberation movements should not deter us from admitting that within its borders, the Soviet Union respects neither the fundamental democratic liberties nor the rights of the people living within those borders In the case of Armenia, the USSR's behavior is socialist in words but imperialist in facts The so-called 'friendship of the peoples of the Soviet Union' ... is a mere mask meant to conceal the reality of the Russian yoke that afflicts our country Armenia is a zone of tensions but also a zone where the interests of American imperialism and Russian social-imperialism force them to come to terms with each other lest they destroy their respective areas of domination. It would be illusory to think that the building of a reunited, independent, and socialist Armenia could be achieved by negotiations between the two superpowers The road to national unity goes inevitably through the struggle of the people to drive away all the foreign occupation forces from the Armenian soil and through revolutionary struggle to expel their lackeys and allies from eastern and western Armenia

General Organizational Characteristics

There is no solid information on the organizational structure of the JCAG-ARA besides the allegation of being a branch of the ARF. Limited information on ASALA shows that a central committee composed of few militants around a strong leader commanded the ASALA operations. It is believed that ASALA had cells in Australia, Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Iran, Italy, Libya, Spain, Switzerland, Syria, USA, and Venezuela. Besides the underground cells, ASALA-Popular Movement functioned in France, Great Britain, Greece, Canada, Italy, Northern Cyprus, Iran, India, and USA as the legal branch of the ASALA. This demonstrates that the Armenian militant nationalist radicalism was a trans-state phenomenon. Secondly, it was a “diasporic” radicalism not just in the sense that it was performed principally by diasporic Armenian youth but also because of its objective to “liberate the occupied homeland”.

The warehouse of the militants was the Middle East. Yet, there were also militants from the Western countries. Kurz and Merari (1985, 54) argue JCAG-ARA had more westerners in its ranks compared to the ASALA. The exact number of the militants is not known. However, the anticipated number is between several dozens and less than a thousand. For example, Tololyan (1987a, 92-93) argues ASALA and JCAG-ARA had not more than eighty-five and fifty militants, respectively. He adds, only two militants were from the USA and France, and the rest were from Lebanon, Iran, Syria and Turkey. The militants were in their 20s or early 30s. They were mostly males coming from middle class families. The ranks of these organizations were closed to non-Armenians.

One may ask how the ASALA and the JCAG-ARA succeeded to perform attacks for ten years in different countries. Besides their organizational strength and skills, their relations with different political establishments including states and the Armenian communities around the globe provide a partial answer to this question. It is striking that until ASALA’s Orly attack in France in July 15, 1983 that killed eight people and injured fifty-five, very few militants were arrested and those arrested were released shortly. By a stark contrast, after the Orly attack, in few days, fifty-five people were arrested and eleven of them were imprisoned. From that, one may think that French secret service had been tracking the ASALA cells, yet had not taken a measure, which might be interpreted as a passive support. Certainly, this passive support was a part of the game of real politics between France and other states and Turkey. ASALA’s

tactic to threaten and attack the countries that imprisoned its members to pressurize third countries not to “poke their nose into “others’ business” can be thought as another reason of the reluctance of those countries to take an active preventive stance⁴⁸². Thirdly, Armenophilism coupled with Turcophobia as a tacit but strong sentiment in the Western habitus might have been another factor. As regards to non-western countries, Syria’s and Iran’s support has exceeded the passive support and turned into an active one⁴⁸³.

Both tacit and open support of the Armenian communities in different countries such as the fund raising campaign that collected 250,000 USD for the defense of Hampig Sassounian, who assassinated the Turkish Consul-General in Los Angeles, Kemal Arikian in 1982 (Gunter 1986, 74)⁴⁸⁴ had been another important factor of the successful operations of ASALA and JCAG-ARA. Furthermore, some Armenian community leaders, publishers, clergy and even an Armenian-American court judge did not shy away from expressing their approval of the militanism. Levon Marashlian, professor of history at the Glendale College in California, for example, defined the militants as "patriots who have been waiting for 70 years” and Dennis Papazian, professor of history at the University of Michigan in Dearborn stated “in a way, I'm kind of proud of the terrorists" (Gunter, 1986 99-100, see also ATAA, 1997 15-17). In this regard, the propaganda activities of the legal political arm of the ASALA, the Armenian Popular Movement, had also been an important support.

ASALA entered into a stage of decay by 1982. In that, Israeli occupation of Lebanon that pushed ASALA headquarters and training center out of the country and harsher measures of the western countries after the Orly attack in 1983 had been decisive external factors⁴⁸⁵. The schism crystallized within the ranks of the ASALA between the Hagop Hagopian group and Monte Melkonian group⁴⁸⁶ particularly after the Orly incident that led to a number of

482 See, Leman-Langlois and Brodeur (2005, 7) for few examples of such threats.

483 Whitehead (1987, 216) mentions Syria’s support to different underground organizations including the ASALA.

484 See also Assembly of Turkish American Associations (1997, 15-16) for similar campaigns launched in the USA and Europe.

485 Dugan et al. (2008) points out the aftermath of the Orly attack as the beginning of the decline of the Armenian militant nationalist radicalism.

486 Monte Melkonian is a highly respected figure and a national symbol in the Armenian nationalist narrative. Melkonian was born in 1957 in California, USA. He studied Asian history and Archeology in the University of California, Berkeley and graduated in 1978. In the same year, he moved to Iran and took part in anti-Shah demonstrations. In 1979, Melkonian departed to Lebanon and joined the Armenian militant groups in Beirut during the civil war. He joined ASALA in 1980 and took part in operations in different countries. He was arrested in November 1981 in France. After several bombings for his release, he was released and turned back to Lebanon. He was arrested again in France in 1985 and was released in 1989. He moved to Armenian SSR in

assassinations, on the other hand, had been an internal dynamic of the weakening of the ASALA that eventually resulted in the formation of the ASALA-Revolutionary Movement (ASALA-RM) led by Melkonian as an independent organization. After this split, Hagopian's ASALA continued its militant way, whereas the ASALA-RM leaned towards rather political lines without giving up the armed struggle. Nonetheless, Armenian militant radicalism came to end few years after the split. As regards to the demise of the JCAP-ARA there is not much information, although similar dynamics might have been also the case for this organization. Moreover, the demise of the ASALA might have unnecessitated the JCAG-ARA for the ARF.

A Retrospective Assessment of the Militant Nationalist Radicalism between 1975 and 1985

A retrospective assessment of the 1975-1985 Armenian militant nationalist radicalism reveals that this unique phase in the Armenia history had both positive and negative consequences. ASALA militants who took part in the seizure of the Turkish Consulate in Paris, killing one guard and taking fifty-six people hostage for sixteen hours on 24 September 1981 that is referred to as the "Operation Van" justified their action by claiming that that this operation triggered the ethnic awakening of the Armenians in France. This claim was certainly a part of ASALA propaganda. However, it had much of the truth in it. Solidarity events with the convicted militants, letter-writing campaigns, commemorative events in the churches for the "martyred" militants, fund raising for the bail of the convicted militants verifies that militant radicalism not only found support from Armenians in different countries, but also vitalized the idled communities primarily by bringing the "Turkish evil", genocide and struggle against the Turk back into the Armenian reality, although by lifting the scab and causing it to bleed again⁴⁸⁷. Next, militant radicalism proved successful in bringing the debates on the

1990. When the Karabakh conflict turned into an armed struggle, he joined the Armenian forces. Until his death in the battlefield in July 1993, his fame grew as the "Commander Avo" for his military skills and personal qualifications. As regards to the latter, people who had personal contacts with him recount that he had a strong sense of humor and was a polite and humble person (interview with Armenian filmmaker Tigran Khzmalian, September, 2008). He was buried at Yerablur military cemetery in Yerevan, awarded highest military honors, and declared a national hero. A monument was erected in the town of Martuni/Monteapert, Nagorno Karabagh and another at the Yerevan State University dormitory in his honor. In 1995, The Monte Melkonian Fund, Inc. (MMF) as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization was founded in California aiming to pursue projects benefiting disadvantaged children. The MMF has a sister organization with the same name in Armenia (for the MMF projects see, Monte Melkonian Fund, 2002-2007). The MMF website provides a list of quotes from Melkonian that represent his views at <http://www.melkonian.org/quotes.html> (latest access 09.01.2014). Melkonian's brother Markar Melkonian published two books (2005; 1993), one a biographical study on Monte Melkonian (with Monte Melkonian's wife Seta Melkonian) and a selection of the writings of Monte Melkonian. These books provide further and detailed information about life and ideas of Monte Melkonian.

487 One of the expressions of the revitalization of the Armenian communities, however, was probably the bombing of the home and the vandalization of the office of the Professor Stanford J. Shaw a renowned scholar of the Ottoman history at the University of California in Los Angeles, who concluded that the 1915 events did not constitute a genocide (ATAA, 1997, 19).

recognition of the 1915 events as genocide back to the agenda of the international community after years.

On the other hand, militant radicalism caused further schism among the Armenians. Not only the conflict within the ranks of the late ASALA, but clashes between ASALA and JCAG-ARA and the ARF camp caused several murders. Moreover, although, there was a general approval of militant radicalism among the Armenians, some sections of the established Armenians in the Westerner countries felt disquietude worrying that the Armenian underground groups would harm the positive image of the Armenians. Secondly, militants consolidated the image of the “traitorous and cruel Armenian” among the Turks that deepened the already existing suspicions and prejudices toward Armenians. The main victim of the negative sentiments had been Turkish-Armenians in Turkey, who had already been perceived and treated as the “enemy within” by the Turkish state and some sections of the society. Besides, assassination of their colleagues by the Armenian militants had left bitter memories among the Turkish bureaucrats in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The effect of these bad memories revealed when Armenia and Turkey began deliberations on Armenia-Turkey relationships and Karabakh after Armenia gained independence. For example, Libaridian reflecting on his experience as the vice negotiator of Armenia on Karabakh recalls that his Turkish counterparts equated ASALA with the Armenian diaspora and by extension with the new-born Republic of Armenia, not truly accepting neither ASALA was the representatives of the whole diaspora nor were the Republic of Armenia and the Armenian diaspora the same entity. As such, Libaridian tells Turkish bureaucrats in their subconscious related the Republic of Armenia with the Armenian terrorist organizations, the perpetrator of their colleagues that further complicated the already complicated Armenia-Turkey negotiations⁴⁸⁸.

488 Private conversation with Libaridian on January 26, 2012 in Michigan, USA. An interesting fact about the remembrance of the Armenian militant radicalism among the Turks is that 1975-1985 terror is exclusively associated with ASALA. The JCAG-ARA, on the other hand, is mostly unknown or forgotten.

APPENDIX 8

THE TEXT OF THE ARMENIAN DECLARATION ON INDEPENDENCE⁴⁸⁹

The Supreme Council of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic

Expressing the united will of the Armenian people;

Aware of its historic responsibility for the destiny of the Armenian people engaged in the realization of the aspirations of all Armenians and the restoration of historical justice;

Proceeding from the principles of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the generally recognized norms of international law;

Exercising the right of nations to free self-determination;

Based on the December 1, 1989, joint decision of the Armenian SSR Supreme Council and the Artsakh National Council on the "Reunification of the Armenian SSR and the Mountainous Region of Karabakh;"

Developing the democratic traditions of the independent Republic of Armenia established on May 28, 1918;

Declares

The beginning of the process of establishing of independent statehood positioning the question of the creation of a democratic society based on the rule of law;

1. The Armenian SSR is renamed the Republic of Armenia (Armenia). The Republic of Armenia shall have its flag, coat of arms, and anthem.
2. The Republic of Armenia is a self-governing state, endowed with the supremacy of state authority, independence, sovereignty, and plenipotentiary power. Only the constitution and laws of the Republic of Armenia are valid for the whole territory of the Republic of Armenia.
3. The bearer of the Armenian statehood is the people of the Republic of Armenia, which exercises the authority directly and through its representative bodies on the basis of the constitution and laws of the Republic of Armenia. The right to speak on behalf of the people of the Republic of Armenia belongs exclusively to the Supreme Council of Armenia.
4. All citizens living on the territory of Armenia are granted citizenship of the Republic of Armenia. Armenians of the Diaspora have the right of citizenship of Armenia. The citizens of the Republic of Armenia are protected and aided by the Republic. The Republic of Armenia guarantees the free and equal development of its citizens regardless of national origin, race, or

⁴⁸⁹ For the disparity between the titles of the Appendix and the Declaration, see footnote 69.

creed.

5. With the purpose of guaranteeing the security of the Republic of Armenia and the inviolability of its borders, the Republic of Armenia creates its own armed forces, internal troops, organs of state and public security under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Council. The Republic of Armenia has its share of the USSR military apparatus. The Republic of Armenia determines the regulation of military service for its citizens independently. Military units of other countries, their military bases and building complexes can be located on the territory of the Republic of Armenia only by a decision of Armenia's Supreme Council. The armed forces of the Republic of Armenia can be deployed only by a decision of its Supreme Council.

6. As the subject of international law, the Republic of Armenia conducts an independent foreign policy; it establishes direct relations with other states, national-state units of the USSR, and participates in the activity of international organizations.

7. The national wealth of the Republic of Armenia - the land, the earth's crust, airspace, water, and other natural resources, as well as economic and intellectual, cultural capabilities are the property of its people. The regulation of their governance, usage, and possession is determined by the laws of the Republic of Armenia.

The v(SIC!) has the right to its share of the USSR national wealth, including the supplies of gold and diamond, and hard currency funds.

8. The Republic of Armenia determines the principles and regulation of its economic system, creates its own money, national bank, finance-loan system, tax and custom services, based on the system of multiple forms of property ownership.

9. On its territory, the Republic of Armenia guarantees freedom of speech, press, and conscience; separation of legislative, executive, and judicial powers; a multi-party system; equality of political parties under the law; depolitization of law enforcement bodies and armed forces.

10. The Republic of Armenia guarantees the use of Armenian as the state language in all spheres of the Republic's life; the Republic creates its own system of education and of scientific and cultural development.

11, The Republic of Armenia stands in support of the task of achieving international recognition of the 1915 Genocide in Ottoman Turkey and Western Armenia.

12. This declaration serves as the basis for the development of the constitution of the Republic of Armenia and, until such time as the new constitution is approved, as the basis for the introduction of amendments to the current constitution; and for the operation of state authorities and the development of new legislation for the Republic.

Signed by:

Levon Ter-Petrossian

President of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia

Ara Sahakian

Secretary of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia

Yerevan

August 23, 1990

APPENDIX 9

REPATRIATION TO ARMENIAN SSR IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Geographic mobility of the Armenians between the mid-nineteenth century and late-twentieth century had not only been that of diasporization; there had also been repatriation movements, as well as migration from one host-country to another. In brief, the period between the mid-nineteenth century and late twentieth century did not only witness the diasporization of the Armenians, but also their de-diasporization and re-diasporization.

There have been four waves of repatriation in 1920s, 1929-1937, 1946-1949 and 1962-1965. Different factors motivated these waves of repatriation, yet ideology such as the myth of return to the homeland, socio-psychological factors such as religious and cultural sensibilities, practical factors such as the guidance of diaspora community leaders, and socio-political circumstances such as socio-economic conditions in the host-countries and the Armenian SSR, international political conjuncture, Soviet policies had been the primary ones (see, for example Mkrtychyan and Tsaturyan 2006, 3-4). The repatriates of 1920s, whose number was around twenty-eight thousand were mostly the refugees in Greece and Iraq, who were by and large peasants and petty-artisans. The 1929-1937 repatriation mobilized around sixteen thousand Armenians composed mostly of professionals, intellectuals and artists (Aghanian 2007, 99). Besides the obvious differences between the repatriates of 1920s and 1929-1937 in terms of their sociological typology, whereas the repatriation in 1920s was conditioned by the push-effect of the harsh conditions in the Middle Eastern and Eastern European countries, between 1920 and 1937 ideological factors had been an important factor.

Between 1937 and the end of the World War II, there was no significant return movement. Only after December 2, 1945, when the USSR gave green light to the migration of Armenians the third wave of repatriation began. Different from the earlier repatriations, the post-WWII repatriation caused a great thrill particularly among the young and economically deprived Armenians. In that, devastation, chaos and uncertainty that the WWII caused in Europe and other parts of the world had been a decisive factor (Mandel 2003, 196-198). Secondly, the post-War territorial claims of the USSR targeting the Kars Plateau in Eastern Turkey with the prospect to relocate the future Armenian repatriates to this region created an atmosphere of sympathy to the USSR and the Armenian SSR among the Armenians in diaspora (Mandel 2003, 191). Thirdly, Mandel (2003, 188-192) notes the fame of the French-Armenian

communist Missak Manouchian, who was executed by the Nazis on February, 21 1944 and became one of the symbols of the anti-Nazi resistance in France created sympathy among French-Armenians to communism and the USSR. This might have been a factor of the repatriation of approximately seven thousand French-Armenians to the Armenian SSR between 1946 and 1947. Finally, good relations between the West and the USSR until the onset of the Cold War can be counted as another factor in the popularization of the repatriation. As a matter of fact, Mandel (2003, 194) argues by the withdrawal of the USSR's territorial claims and the onset of the Cold War, the thrill of repatriation began to fade away. Yet, until between 1946 and 1949 one hundred thousand Armenians repatriated to the Armenian SSR mostly from Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, France and Greece

It is commonly accepted that the 1946-1949 repatriation had been the most organized repatriation not only for the planning of the Soviet authorities (Mkrtchyan and Tsaturyan 2006, 1), but also for the united efforts of the rival Armenian diaspora organizations to finance the movement. However, this cooperation lasted brief until the ARF drew back after realizing that the Soviet authorities denied the ARF members the entrance to the Armenian SSR (Alexander 2005, 230-231; Mandel 2003, 196-197). Notwithstanding the planning of the repatriation, repatriates faced enormous social, cultural, economic difficulties in the Armenian SSR that was accompanied by the disillusionment of not finding the Armenia that had been idealized in the diaspora. Consequently, some of the repatriates of the 1940s left Armenia when they could. This had been a negative dynamic for the further repatriation to Armenia (see, Malekian 2007, 298; Mandel 2003, 192-193)⁴⁹⁰. Interestingly, on December 13-14, 2008 a conference titled "The 1946-1948 Repatriation and its Lessons: The Issue of Repatriation Today" was organized by the Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia, National Academy of Sciences, Yerevan State University and the Noravank Foundation devoted to the discussion of the 1946-1949 repatriation. In her opening remarks, Minister Hakobyan publicly

490 Malekian (2007) provides statistical information on the repatriates from Iran between 1946-1947. According to this, 26.261 people left Iran and 23.489 arrived to the Armenian SSR. 54.91% of the repatriates were men. 49.37% were from rural regions. Repatriates were mostly between 18 and 26 years old. This reveals there had been an inflow of labor power to the Armenian SSR. The percentage of the singles was particularly high (61.75% among men and 50% among women). The literacy rate was 46.85%. 54.90% of the literates were primary school graduates. Only 0.94% of the repatriates were university graduates. The employment rate of the repatriates was 63.7%.

apologized to the repatriates of 1946-1949. This was the first time that the torment of the 1946-1949 repatriation was officially acknowledged (see, Titizian 2008)⁴⁹¹.

The final wave of repatriation was between 1962 and 1965 (Mkrtychyan and Tsaturyan 2006, 1). Pattie (1997, 110-112) in her study on the reflections of the 1962 repatriation among the Armenians in Cyprus claims the primary motivator was the fear of assimilation and the desire to be an integral part of the nation. Furthermore, she argues, active Soviet propaganda had been another factor. However, just like the earlier repatriates, the repatriates of 1962 soon realized that Armenia was not the heaven that they had heard from their parents and grandparents. Upon this realization, they sent letters warning not to migrate to Armenia to those who remained behind. Like the earlier repatriates, in the coming years some of the 1962 repatriates turned back to Cyprus or other countries.

Overall, from 1920s to 1980s between two-hundred thousand and two-hundred-fifty thousand Armenians repatriated to the Armenian SSR, almost a half of which did so between 1946-1948. However, particularly in 1970s and 1980s some of those repatriates migrated back to other countries (Mkrtychyan and Tsaturyan 2006, 1-2). Those who left Armenia, however, were mostly not welcomed by their fellow Armenians and were even accused of treason most probably for tearing down the dream of the heavenly homeland among the diaspora Armenians and weakening the myth of return that had been an important psychological defense mechanism (see, Björlund 2003, 340). On the other hand, most probably, the returnees also provided a kind of excuse for those who chose to stay in the diaspora despite the hegemonic discourse of the imperative of repatriation.

491 For the literary reflections of the 1946-1949 repatriation wave in Lebanon see, Geukjian (2009). For two memoirs of repatriates to Armenian SSR see, Moouradian (2008) and Touryantz (1987). Note that Moouradian's looks more like a cold-war propaganda.

APPENDIX 10

VOTE PERCENTAGES IN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN ARMENIA BETWEEN 1991 AND 2013

Year	Candidates who got over 5% of the votes	Party	Vote Percentage in the First Round	Vote Percentage in the Final Round
1991	Levon Ter-Petrosyan	Pan-Armenian National Movement		83.0
	Paruyr Hayrikyan	Union for National Self-Determination		7.2
	Sos Sargsyan	Armenian Revolutionary Federation		4.3
1996	Levon Ter-Petrosyan	Pan-Armenian National Movement		51.3
	Vazgen Manukyan	National Democratic Union		41.0
	Sergey Badalyan	Armenian Communist Party		6.3
1998	Robert Kocharyan	Independent	38.5	58.9
	Karen Demirchyan	Socialist Party	30.5	40.1
	Vazgen Manukyan	National Democratic Union	12.2	
	Sergey Baladyan	Armenian Communist Party	10.9	
	Paruyr Hayrikyan	Union for National Self-Determination	5.4	
2003	Robert Kocharyan	Independent	49.48	67.45
	Stepan Demirchyan	People's Party of Armenia	28.22	32.55
	Artashes Geghamyan	National Unity	17.66	
2008	Serzh Sargsyan	Republican Party of Armenia		52.8
	Levon Ter-Petrosyan	Independent		21.50
	Artur Baghdasaryan	Rule of Law		17.70
	Vahan Hovhannisyan	Armenian Revolutionary Federation		6.20
2013	Serzh Sargsyan	Republican Party of Armenia		58.64
	Raffi Hovanissian	Heritage Party		36.75

APPENDIX 11

“OUR VALUES” OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY OF ARMENIA

1) The RPA is a national conservative party.

The objectives and activity of the RPA come from the ideas of the eternity of the Nation and Fatherland.

The cradle of Armenian people is the Armenian plateau, which is the godsent Fatherland of Armenians.

2) The supreme purpose of the Armenian Nation that approves its existence created by God, is the everlasting existence in the fatherland, assertion of its vital force, creative genius and free will. The main guarantee for the achievement of this purpose is the Armenian national ideology in which, according to the RPA's convictions, the theory of Garegin Nzhdeh has its substantial place. The national Armenian ideology is built on the basis of combination of Armenian value system and historical-cultural experience in conjunction with the national values and the ones common to all mankind. It must strengthen the credence of Armenian people in their own power and in the future. And it must be permanently developed as an ideological system.

3) By God's will, we were created Armenians and therefore the eternal contact between God and the Armenian nation is ensured by the perpetuation of the Armenian type. On this basis, the RPA values highly the heathen and Christian periods of our history on the principle of national priority.

Highly valuing the role of the Armenian Apostolic Church in the spiritual life of Armenian people, in the retention of Armenian language and culture, and, thus in the retention of the unity of the Armenain(SIC!) nation, the RPA regards the Church as an integral part of the Armenian essence, a national(SIC!) worldwide entity which is appealed to serve the Nation and God with its creed and dedication

4) The RPA builds its relations with public and political forces and individuals acting in the Armenian present reality on the principle of the priority of the national and state interests which the RPA deems higher than any personal and other individual interests.

5) The RPA takes the following approach to the general principles of the state activity:

The Armenian state is the main and most effective means to attain goals and objectives of Armenian people. The form of the state governance may vary depending on the efficiency of the program solutions and task carried out by the state, while the activity of the system must be based on the programs and conceptions of the supremacy of the right, paramoury of the

law, national security and progress. The State must assist in elaborating the political system, in ensuring democratic process, in continual progress of the society by implementing gradual reforms approach. Any reform must match the traditional system of values of the society and be directed to the modernization of that system.

6) In the field of the foreign policy the activity of the state must be aimed at the natural integration to the international community, at the growth of Armenia's role in it, and the development of mutually beneficial political, economic, cultural, and other relations worldwide.

7) The economic policy of the Armenian state must be based on the global experience, taking into account the national peculiarities. The state must ensure favourable conditions for the efficient activity of the public and private sectors, acting as a guarantor of the development of liberal economic(SIC!) relations and enhancement of the diversity of ownership patterns.

8) The main treasure of the Armenian state is an individual with his physical, intellectual and moral capacities. A major task for the state is to ensure worthy existence for any family, individual, and, hence, the Nation. The state must ensure the security of its citizens, protect their self-esteem, promote the development of their rights and freedoms, and full realization of their abilities. The state must implement efficient measures for the creation of an environment, needed for ensuring its citizens' living conditions, properly recognize their contribution into the state.

9) The basis of the Armenian society is a traditional family. Formation of strong and healthy families, retention and development of national values in a family must be among the matters of high importance for the State.

10) Education must provide a person with deep and versatile knowledge and at the same time must bring to the notion that all the knowledge must serve not only the personal welfare, but also to the strengthening(SIC!) of the Nation and Fatherland. Education system is to form a generation wich(SIC!) must believe in high national and human values and must also be subjoined to the Armenian moral and ideological values, great exploits and losses, making them understand that the secret of nation's empowerment is in its spirit, while a nation's failure is in its weakness. The state must ensure free secondary education for all who wish to obtain it, and sponsor the higher education of the most gifted ones.

11) Science and culture must serve for the restoration, retention and development of the spiritual and material values of the Nation, ascertain the dynastical features, world vision and lifestyle of Armenian people. Education and culture must combine national traditions and the scientific-and-technological advance with this ensuring the moral- psychological, intellectual

and technological leading positions for the Armenian people. Education, science and culture must become the main object of care for the State.

12) The state must create facilities to consolidate the potential of Armenian Diaspora, to strengthen Armenian state with the objective to return Armenians from all over the world to their Native country (The Republican Party of Armenia 2012).

APPENDIX 12

PROJECTS OF THE MINISTRY OF DIASPORA OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA IN 2009, 2010, 2011 AND 2012

Projects in 2009

(http://www.mindiaspora.am/en/Activities_2009, latest access 11.11.2012).

- 1) Publication of “*Hayern Aysor*” online multilingual daily of the RA Ministry of Diaspora.
- 2) History of communities: historical studies on the creation, development of and cooperation between new Armenian communities: Issues and particularities of cooperation between old and new communities.
- 3) Publication and dissemination of the “SPYURK” yearbook-periodical: memorable events and programs in different Diaspora Armenian communities.
- 4) Organizing events in honor of RA National Heroes Alex Manoogian, Charles Aznavour and Kirk Kerkorian.
- 5) Organizing and holding the first pan-Armenian forums of architects, bankers, lawyers and representatives of fine arts in Armenia.
- 6) Periodical visits of Diaspora Armenian youth to Armenia.
- 7) Creating a Department of Diaspora Studies at Yerevan State University with the purpose to prepare and train specialists in the field of Diaspora studies.
- 8) Developing, creating and applying the translation program from Western Armenian-Eastern Armenian and vice versa and dissemination of the program in the Diaspora.
- 9) Teleconferences with the participation of notable individuals of the community who are dedicated to culture, education, the community and preservation of Armenian identity.
- 10) Preparing and delivering publications for Diaspora Armenian children, including fairy-tales, short stories, fables and other interesting instructive materials.
- 11) Visits of foreign members of the RA National Academy of Sciences to Armenia to participate in the Academy’s meetings, scientific conferences and joint activities in spheres of science.
- 12) Create a Department of Diaspora at the Institute of Literature of the RA National Academy of Sciences in order to conduct studies and investigations on the history of Diaspora Armenian communities.

Projects in 2010

(http://www.mindiaspora.am/en/Activities_2010, latest access 11.11.2012).

1. Development and implementation of the “Ari Tun” program (periodic visits of Diaspora Armenian youth to Armenia) in 2010.
2. Development and implementation of the “One Nation, One Culture” Pan-Armenian Cultural Festival
3. Organizing professional forums and scientific conferences.
4. Coordination and organizing of the contest for “Best Armenian School” of the annual pan-Armenian award ceremony “For notable contribution to preservation of the Armenian identity” organized by the RA Ministry of Diaspora and the World Armenian Congress in 2010.
5. Organizing and conducting the “Our Greats” program of events to pay homage to notable Diaspora Armenians.
6. Implementation of the Year of the Mother Language.
7. Organizing to provide public educational institutions and community organizations of the Diaspora with educational, children’s, fictional and scientific literature and RA emblems.
8. Implementation of efforts aimed at expanding the network of one-day schools, the “Sister Schools” program.
9. Organizing efforts aimed at broadening educational opportunities for Diaspora Armenians studying at RA universities and intermediate vocational institutions.
10. “Establishment of an Alley of Armenian Benefactors” program.
11. Organizing the “Armenia-Diaspora” theme-based video-conferences and teleconferences
12. Promotion of uniting the nation and repatriation.

Interestingly, on 29.10.2010, another list of projects in 2010 was available in the same page. This list, which is not available anymore, is as follows. The disparity between the two lists is another reason to doubt the information disseminated by the Ministry.

- 1) "One nation, one culture" program .
- 2) Publication of “*Hayern Aysor*” online multilingual daily of the RA Ministry of Diaspora.
- 3) “History of communities” - studies on Armenian communities of the Diaspora.
- 4) Publication of the 2010 “SPYURK” yearbook: individuals and memorable events in different Diaspora Armenian communities.

- 5) Organizing events praising notable Diaspora Armenian individuals and organizations.
- 6) Organizing pan-Armenian forums of “Diaspora Armenian graduates of RA universities”, “Armenian financiers”, “Preservation of qualities of Armenian identity in mixed marriages” and “State of instruction of Western Armenian in the Diaspora”.
- 7) Frequent visits of Diaspora Armenian youth to Armenia.
- 8) Supporting Master’s students of the Department of Diaspora Studies at YSU to prepare and train specialists in Diaspora studies.
- 9) Broadening of the database of the Western Armenian-Eastern Armenian converter.
- 10) Teleconferences with the participation of notable individuals of the community who are dedicated to culture, education, the community and preservation of Armenian identity.
- 11) Preparing and broadcasting film series, video clips and television programs.
- 12) Programs for support in cultural and educational issues facing Armenian communities of Latin America.
- 13) Pan-Armenian awards ceremony.
- 14) Obtaining the RA emblems (coat of arms and flag) and delivering them to Diaspora Armenian institutions.
- 15) Organizing a pan-Armenian forum for establishing the “National Council”.
- 16) Establishment of an alley for Armenian benefactors.
- 17) Creation of an electronic library.
- 18) Preparing and installing lay-outs of monuments built in different countries and dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.
- 19) Delivering instructional books to public schools in the Diaspora.

Projects in 2011⁴⁹²

(http://www.mindiaspora.am/en/Activities_2011, latest access 11.11.2012).

1. Publication of the “*Hayern Aysor*” multilingual electronic newspaper of the RA Ministry of Diaspora.
2. Expansion of the Western Armenian-Eastern Armenian and vice-versa converter database.
3. Creation of an e-library.
4. “Our Greats”.
5. Organizing of pan-Armenian forums.

⁴⁹² Note that, 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th, 8th, 12th, 15th, 17th, 21st, 22nd ones are the replicas and/or the continuations of the projects of the former years.

6. Pan-Armenian Awards

1. Piece of Homeland: a youth scientific research award ceremony in light of the 20th anniversary of Armenia's independence.
2. Best Armenian Language Teacher: an award ceremony for Armenian language and history teachers in Diaspora Armenian schools.
3. Best Youth Organization: an award ceremony for youth, student organizations and youth community organizations in Diaspora Armenian communities.
7. Support for the development of Diaspora Armenian communities (obtaining and delivering RA emblems (coat-of-arms and flag) to Diaspora Armenian institutions.
8. Establishment of an Alley for Armenian Benefactors.
9. Working with Diaspora Armenian communities.
10. Program for supporting the solution to cultural and educational issues facing Armenian communities in Latin America.
11. Program for supporting the integration of Iraqi-Armenians in Armenia.
12. Creation of unified textbooks in Western Armenian.
13. Virtual Museum of the Diaspora.
14. Preparation and broadcasting of film series, video clips and television programs on the Armenia-Diaspora partnership.
15. "Armenian Diaspora" Yearbook.
16. Delivery of instructional and popular literature to Diaspora Armenian schools, cultural, educational institutions and centers for Armenology.
17. "Ari Tun" program for periodic visits of Diaspora Armenian youth to Armenia.
18. Program of events dedicated to the 20th anniversary of Armenia's independence.
19. Program for supporting education and culture in the Diaspora.
20. Program for estimating and consolidating the existing potential in the scientific, educational, economic, cultural and other spheres in the Armenian Diaspora.
21. "History of Communities": Studies on Diaspora Armenian communities.
22. Supporting Master's students of the YSU Department of Diaspora Studies for organizing, preparing and training specialists in the sphere of Diaspora studies.

Projects in 2012

(http://www.mindiaspora.am/en/Activities_2012, latest access 11.11.2012).

1. "Ari Tun" program for cognitive visits of Diaspora Armenian youth to Armenia.
2. "My Armenia" Festival.

3. Organizing and holding events of homage entitled "Our Greats" dedicated to notable Armenian individuals of the Diaspora.
4. Pan-Armenian Awards "For notable contribution to the preservation of the Armenian identity".
5. Gathering and delivery of instructional and popular literature to the communities.
6. "Diaspora" Summer School.
7. Support to the Development of Communities.
8. Territorial cooperation and pan-Armenian cultural programs.
9. Participation in the process of training experts on the Diaspora of the YSU Department of Diaspora Studies.
10. Applied research of fundamental and important significance.
11. Preparation or ordering of informative materials (films, video clips, articles, TV and radio programs, advertisements); supervision of the publication and website service for the "*Hayern Aysor*" online newspaper and the provision of corresponding materials; study and summary of articles printed in Diaspora Armenian media.
12. Development of programs for support to the solution of key educational and cultural issues in the Armenian communities of the CIS and the coordination of implementation.
13. Implementation of Iraqi-Armenians' integration program.
14. Program for Support to the Solution to Educational and Cultural Issues facing Armenian Communities in South (Latin) America.
15. "Armenian Diaspora 2012": printing of Yearbook.
16. Organizing of a conference for leaders of Armenology centers in the Diaspora.
17. "Virtual Museum of the Armenian Diaspora".
18. Western Armenian-Eastern Armenian and vice versa translator program.

APPENDIX 13

THE NAME-FATHERS OF THE MEDALS OF THE MINISTRY OF DIASPORA

William Saroyan, born on August 31, 1908 in California, USA into an Armenian family emigrated from Bitlis in the then Ottoman Empire (present day Turkey) and died on May 18, 1981, is a renowned Armenian-American author. After his death, half of his remains were brought to Armenia and buried in the Pantheon of Greats in Yerevan. The other half is buried later in the Ararat cemetery in Fresno, California. For the list of his works, see William Saroyan Society (2014).

The Nubar Pasha medal is also named Poghos Nubar medal. However, Nubar Pasha and Poghos Nubar are different persons. As such, this is an ironic exposure of the arbitrary *modus operandi* of the Ministry of Diaspora. Nubar Pasha, born Nubar Nubarian in Izmir, then Ottoman Empire (present day Turkey) in 1825 and died in 1899 in Paris, France, is a renowned Egyptian-Armenian political figure and the first Prime Minister of Egypt. Poghos Nubar, born in 1851 in Alexandria, Egypt and died in 1930 in Paris, France, is the son of Nubar Pasha. Poghos Nubar founded the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) in Cairo, Egypt in 1906. He was the head of the Armenian National Delegation at the Paris Peace Conference in 1918.

Komitas Vardapet, born Soghomon Gevorgi Soghomonyan in 1869 in Kutahya, then Ottoman Empire (present day Turkey) and died on 22 October 1935, in Paris, France in a mental hospital where he spent his last twenty years as a result of the psychological breakdown he suffered after witnessing the 1915 tragedy, is an Armenian priest, composer, musicologist. His remains were brought to Armenia and buried in the Pantheon in Yerevan in 1936 (see, Virtual Museum of Komitas (n.d.)).

Arshile Gorky, born Vostanik Manuk Adoyan around 1902 in Van, then Ottoman Empire (present day Turkey) and committed suicide in Connecticut, USA in 1948, is a famous Armenian-American painter. What he witnessed during the 1915 events, including the death of his mother of starvation in Yerevan in 1919 had an everlasting impact on his short life and artistic works (see, Arshile Gorky Foundation 2014). He was portrait in Atom Egoyan's famous movie Ararat (2002) mentioned in footnote 306.

APPENDIX 14

THE CONTENT OF THE *HAYERN AYSOR*

Category	Section
News	Culture
	Economy
	Social
	Ministry of Diaspora
	Politics
	Sports
	Human Rights
	Video Gallery
Articles	Articles and analysis
	Press (reprinted articles)
Interviews	Interviews
General Knowledge	Armenian Benefactors
	Armenian Organizations and Communities of the Diaspora
	Armenian Women of the World
	Friends of Armenians
	Memorable Figures and Events in the History
	Notable Armenians
	Our Songs
	Prompt
Announcements	Advertisement
	I am Searching for my Relatives
	What?Where?When?
Children	Children Tales
Humor	Jokes

Table 1) Content of the old *Hayern Aysor*. Notably, only one item was present in the “Human Rights” section.

Category	Section
News	Culture
	Economy
	Society
	Ministry of Diaspora
	Politics
	Sports
	Diaspora
	Announcements
Articles	Editorial
	Diaspora Correspondents
	Reprints
	Details
Interviews	Ministry of Diaspora
	Armenia
	Diaspora
	Repariates
	Renowned people
Persons	Renowned Armenians
	Friends of the Armenian Nation
	Benefactors

Table 2) Content of the renewed *Hayern Aysor*.

Country	Number of articles	Percentage	Country	Number of articles	Percentage
USA	8	44.4%	Germany	1	5.6%
Egypt	3	16.7%	Canada	1	5.6%
Russia	1	5.6%	Unmentioned	3	16,7%
Georgia	1	5.6%	Total	18	100%

Table 3) Number and the percentage of the articles of the diaspora correspondents with respect to the country of residence of the correspondents.

News		
Section	Number	Percentage
Diaspora	970	28.1%
Society	816	23.6%
Politics	456	13.2%
Culture	435	12.6%
Ministry of Diaspora	414	11.9%
Announcements	147	4.3%
Sports	141	4.1%
Economy	74	2.1%
Total	3453	100%

Table 4) Number and percentage of the news. *Hayern Aysor* groups its news into eight non-mutually exclusive sections. This means, the same news may exist in different sections like the news with the title “Ambassador Ashot Yeghiazaryan meets with Deputy Minister of Agriculture of Brazil Milton Ortolan” that was published on 12.07.2011 and replicated in diaspora, society and economy sections. Therefore, the total number of the news is fewer than the sum of the number of the news in each section.

Articles		
Subject	Number of the news	Percentage
People	55	26.2%
Homeland Impressions	30	14.3%
Diaspora	25	11.9%
Turkey	25	11.9%
Genocide	20	9.5%
Armenia-Diaspora relations	15	7.1%
Events	15	7.1%
Azerbaijan-Karabakh	11	5.2%
Religious	5	2.4%
Armenia-politics	2	1%
Other	7	3.3%
Total	210	100%

Table 5) Number and percentage of the articles with respect to their subjects. The publishing date of the first article is not given. The publishing date of the second article is 11.2010. By 31 December 2011, 210 articles were published in the article category. To analyze the content of the articles category, first all the articles in each section were reviewed separately to grasp the content and the subject matter of the articles. After this review, 10 groups of subject matters were abstracted and the articles were grouped accordingly. Those articles which do not fit to any category were grouped under the name “other”.

Interviews		
Subject	Number of the news	Percentage
People	22	28.6%
Armenia-Diaspora relations	18	25.4%
Diaspora	6	8.5%
Events	5	7%
Azerbaijan-Karabakh	2	2.8%
Homeland impressions	2	2.8%
Genocide	1	1.4%
Armenia-politics	1	1.4%
Other	14	19.7%
Total	71	100%

Table 6) The number and the percentage of the interviews with respect to their subjects.

Country	Number of news coverage	Percentage	Country	Number of news coverage	Percentage	Country	Number of news coverage	Percentage
USA	15	21.4%	Australia	2	2.9%	India	1	1.4%
Turkey	8	11.4%	Czech	2	2.9%	Italy	1	1.4%
Russia	7	10%	Germany	2	2.9%	Japan	1	1.4%
France	4	5.7%	Iran	2	2.9%	Karabakh	1	1.4%
Georgia	4	5.7%	Syria	2	2.9%	Kuwait	1	1.4%
Lebanon	4	5.7%	Austria	1	1.4%	Romania	1	1.4%
Ukraine	4	5.7%	Brazil	1	1.4%	Spain	1	1.4%
Argentina	2	2.9%	Cyprus	1	1.4%	Switzerland	1	1.4%
						Total	69	100%

Table 7) Number and percentage of the country-wise relevance the news. News in the *Hayern Aysor* are grouped in eight sections News in each section are grouped in 10item in each webpage except the very first page in which the number of the news vary. In order to perform the content analysis of the news, a random sampling was performed by choosing the each 15th news starting from the 5th news in the second page from the beginning. This table demonstrates the number and percentage of the country-wise relevance of the news after this sampling.

Country	Number of articles	Percentage	Country	Number of Articles	Percentage
Turkey	14	35.9%	France	1	2.6%
Georgia	4	10.3%	Iran	1	2.6%
Russia	4	10.3%	Italy	1	2.6%
Syria	4	10.3%	Lebanon	1	2.6%
USA	4	10.3%	Poland	1	2.6%
Afghanistan	1	2.6%	Romania	1	2.6%
Brazil	1	2.6%	Palestine/ Israel	1	2.6%
			Total	39	100.5%

Table 8) Number and percentage of the country-wise relevance of the articles. In composing this table, the same method of sampling with the method of sampling in composing the Table 7 was performed.

Country	Number of Interviewees	Percentage	Country	Number of Interviewees	Percentage	Country	Number of interviewees	Percentage
Russia	23	15.3%	Ukraine	4	2.7%	Argentina	1	0.7%
France	14	9.3%	Turkey	4	2.7%	Chile	1	0.7%
Australia	9	6%	Austria	3	2%	Czech	1	0.7%
USA	9	6%	Germany	3	2%	Estonia	1	0.7%
Syria	8	5.3%	Holland	3	2%	Iran	1	0.7%
Georgia	7	4.7%	Armenia	2	1.3%	Jordan	1	0.7%
Lebanon	7	4.7%	Egypt	2	1.3%	Kuwait	1	0.7%
Canada	6	4%	Italy	2	1.3%	Palestine / Israel	1	0.7%
Romania	6	4%	Macedonia	2	1.3%	Qatar	1	0.7%
Cyprus	5	3.3%	Poland	2	1.3%	Switzerland	1	0.7%
England	4	2.7%	Spain	2	1.3%	Turkmenist-an	1	0.7%
Iraq	4	2.7%	Uzbekistan	2	1.3%	Unknown	6	0.7%
						Total	150	100%

Table 9) Number and percentage of the the interviewees with respect to their country of relevance.

APPENDIX 15

RHETORICAL CONTENT OF MINISTER HRANUSH HAKOPYAN'S SPEECHES

The speech that Hakopyan gave on November 07, 2008 exemplifies her impulsive argumentation. In this speech Hakopyan begins with time immemorial when “Eve was punished to experience painful childbirth” and continues to explain the roots of the differences in the feminine and masculine psychologies as the follows:

Note, that the difference of psychological complexes of men and women was conditioned by unique circumstances of growing their children. In other words, a woman became woman in a cave, where she had to feed and take care of a newborn for several years long, and a man became man by defending this cave. From here took birth various principal duties that a man and a woman had to manage; a woman was keeping peace in cave and a man was ensuring safety of the cave.

These two fundamental tasks of existence of human kind gave birth to 2 opposite directions of male and female development.

Woman's concerns were peace, family and children's care, comfort of hearth, cradle songs, fairy tales, ritual dances and supplication for children's health that by the way probably was an embryo religious basis. Man's tasks were to ensure security and safety of his family, provide food and ensure continuity of his kind. Thus trying to give conditional qualification to this a wife was singing a lullaby and a husband was burnishing and smoothing his black jet, i.e. woman's activity gave birth to culture and man's activity gave birth to civilization (Hakopyan 2008f).

As to the use of concepts such as spirit and idea, on October 04, 2008, for example, Hakopyan stated:

Let us not forget that Nagorno Karabagh brought back the Spirit, Idea but never cannon. Spirit and Idea are driving force, motor of the country, of the existence and progress of the state and of the unity. If there is no spiritual homeland, there is no Armenia and Artsakh. Let us strengthen this Spirit, let us be bearers of the Spirit and fighters for the Spirit and Idea both in Armenia and Diaspora (Hakopyan 2008g).

In addition, “Spiritual Armenia”, “Spiritual values” (Hakopyan 2008k), “the spirit and power of his ancestral lands” (Hakopyan 2008j), “spiritual development” (Hakopyan 2008h), “spiritual links between Armenia and Diaspora” Hakopyan 2008h; 2008e) “spiritual fire of patriotism” (Hakopyan 2009i), “age-old traditions and spiritual mode of life our historical-moral attitude” (Hakopyan 2009i), “the wise spiritual existence of a man” (Hakopyan 2009a), “The Armenian spiritual and cultural values” (Hakopyan 2010j), “inheritors of Armenian spirit and blood” (Hakopyan 2010f), “Armenian spirit and mind,

creative genius sea” (Hakopyan 2010c), “the spiritual bridge of the Armenia-Diaspora cooperation” (Hakopyan 2010b) are the expressions used by Hakopyan.

A paradigmatic example of Hakopyan’s racist outlook is her address on April 25, 2010 at the two-day conference on “Preservation of Qualities of the Armenian Identity in Mixed Marriages”. In this address, reflecting on the dangers of globalization for the small nations, Hakopyan identifies mix-marriages as a major problem, furthermore, a threat to the survival of the Armenian ethno-nation. In order to make her point, Hakopyan refers to the history in the following way:

According to number of scholars one of the main reasons of disappearance of high civilization of ancient Greeks and Romans was the tendency of mixed marriages between honest and free Greeks and Romans and law prisoners. According to those scholars the main reason of the old culture’s death was the mixture of blood (Hakopyan 2010i).

For an example of the use of racist expressions, on November 22, 2008 at the meeting with the representatives of the Armenian Bar Association of California, Hakopyan (2008d) stated:

According to us many and many established Armenians, scientists, specialist left behind their roots, and we have to return these people back to their roots, genes, and Homeland.

Each of you that achieved any success first of all is obligated to *his/her blood, gene, and Armenianhood*. We should not come together only during pain, sorrow and difficulties....

We should forget in which countries we were born; it is a consequence of a destiny or a contingency, we also have to eliminate our separation and promote our Armenian root and gene through consolidation. We say “stay together, remain diverse” (emphasis added).

The quote below is an example of Hakopyan’s expressions with a heavy dose of narcissistic self-love. As discussed in Chapter 2, superiority of the Armenian ethno-nation is one of the themes of the Armenian national ideology, denial of which is accused of self-hatred and nihilism.

Our country is small, but the number of genius ideas, people, its sons spread across the world is constantly increased and they are committed not only to uphold our national beauty, but also to ensure our place in the culture of humanity by compelling values (Hakopyan 2008i)

Hakopyan’s speech on October 29, 2009 at the opening of the Euro-Caucasian Congress of Cardiology, quoted below is a salient example her over-exaggerated and romantic expressions.

[Heart] is an organ that a human being and the humankind can not exist without. So wise are our idioms coming from deepness of our identity: “Burn the heart”, “Heart palpitates”, “Love with heart”, “Live with heart”, “Open an heart”, “Give a heart”, “Take a heart”, “Heart filled”, “Heart becomes cooler” ...

We also say: “a heart talked”, “given from a heart”, “my heart witnessed”, “talked with heart”, “heart is compressed”, “attitude with the pain in heart”, “a man with open heart”, as well as we also say “a man without heart”...

As you can see these philosophical small shreds crystallized during centuries show that the most abyssal and valuable, the most sensitive and holy emotions, the most sublime and clean feelings (love, warmth, honest, devotion, happiness) that give sense and meaning to our lives, are deeply analyzed in a human heart.

Yes, a heart is not only the super motor of a human’s psychological existence but the gold treasure box of human spiritual being and granary of essential vibrations.

Therefore, being a cardiologist does not only mean to be a guarantor of the physical existence of a human being but it also means to be the crusader and torch-bearer of the wise spiritual existence of a man (Hakopyan 2009a).

Although, this is one of the most hyperbolic speeches of Hakopyan, the same tendency can be clearly seen in many other speeches of Hakopyan. For example, presenting the Czech-born poet, playwright, and novelist Franz Werfel, the author of *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh* published in 1933 in German, a classic novel that narrates the defense of the Armenian villagers in the Hatay Province of the former Ottoman Empire against the Ottoman troops in the 1915, as a “great thinker and humanist” (Hakopyan 2010d) or identifying the “noble and hard work” of the Armenian educators as “an overcoming of death and a victory over death” and adding “yes, the work of Armenian teachers is a unique martyrdom, because with their spiritual heroic efforts take birth new energy of Armenian hood, national self-knowledge of generations that tempers the individual and national destiny”(Hakopyan 2009i) are some other examples of the exaggeration in Hakopyan’s speeches.

As to repetitions and clichés, including quoting the same words of a number of renowned Armenians and few non-Armenians, for example, on July 7, 2008, Hakopyan said “Yet 1500 years ago father of poets Khorenatsi said: « We are a small seedbed». In 20th century Sevak declared: «we are small amounted but we are called Armenians»” (1). On April 21, 2009, Hakopyan repeated almost the same sentence: “Yet in the 5th century Khorenatsi considered us as “small seedbed”, in 20th century Sevak announced “We are small-amounted but we are called Armenians” (Hakopyan 2009f). Likewise, the quote from “our great painter Martiros Saryan” (Hakopyan; 2008c, see also Hakopyan 2010b; 2009f) that reads “Armenians are like

a deep-rooted tree the roots of which are in Armenia, while the branches are in different countries of the world and other nations pick up the fruits of those branches” or from William Saroyan (Hakopyan 2009h; 2008l) “wherever you go, scream Armenia” are other recurrently used quotations. As a matter of fact, referring to renowned Armenians and to a much lesser extend to non-Armenians is one of the ways that Hakopyan uses to make her claims. Historical Armenian figures such as Gregory the Illuminator, Mesrop Mashots, Naregatsi, Charents, Abovyan, Vardan Mamikonyan, Levon Shant, Heratsi, Grigos, Amasiatsi Ayb, Ben, Mushag Ishkhan, Mkhitar Gosh and more comtemporany ones such as Vahan Teryan, Tekeyan, Metsarents, Tumanyan, Toros Roslini, Sarkis Pitsaki, Aivazousky, Surenyants, Kochar, Gorky, Gerzui, Tigran Petrosyan, and non-Armenian renowned people such as Nansen, Dante, Ingerson, Verfel, are instrumentalized to this end. To be precise, in twenty of the thirty-four speeches analyzed in this study, Hakopyan referred or quoted one or more of these names.

APPENDIX 16

BIRTHRIGHT ARMENIA GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 1) Birthright Armenia believes that it is every Armenian's birthright to experience Armenia with each person provided an equal opportunity to exercise this birthright through a set of multi-faceted experiences in their homeland.
- 2) Birthright Armenia believes that immersion type programs, especially of longer duration, foster a greater sense of commitment and result in a deeper spiritual, cultural and intellectual understanding of Armenian identity, people and issues.
- 3) Birthright Armenia believes that young adults in the 20-32 year old age bracket are the most impressionable, and are open to a journey of self-discovery of their Armenian identity.
- 4) Birthright Armenia is committed to creating and providing the tools and opportunities that insure every young Diasporan traveling to Armenia can acquire at least basic communication skills to ensure that their experiences in Armenia will be more meaningful, productive, and personal.
- 5) Birthright Armenia believes immersion type programs, ones with a focus on encouraging interaction with and participation of locals, is a key to creating a sustainable bridge between the Diaspora and Armenia.
- 6) Birthright Armenia believes that programs that focus on Armenia and those that focus on the Diaspora are not mutually exclusive. Programs offering such experiences in Armenia will serve as a feeding ground for future leaders of Diasporan communities. It is with strong ties to the homeland and a renewed sense of identity and responsibility that young adults will be energized to take on leadership positions within the Diaspora.
- 7) Birthright Armenia believes that a commitment to a longer term stay in Armenia will go beyond personal development and will serve as a unique, career enhancing experience on the road of professional development.
- 8) Birthright Armenia believes it can best maximize its impact by serving as a clearinghouse that supports and complements existing organizations and institutions, rather than duplicating infrastructures already in place.
- 9) Birthright Armenia is committed to encompassing the most forward thinking approaches, and incorporating a continual self-evaluation process as integral parts of insuring that we maintain a high level of quality.
- 10) Birthright Armenia believes by increasing the influx of Diasporan youth into Armenia through longer term stays, there will be a multiplier effect through consumption based economic development, which is a critical component for the short and long term stability of our developing nation.
- 11) Birthright Armenia believes that the time has come to lay the foundation to encourage repatriation (Birthright Armenia 2012b).

APPENDIX 17

LIST OF THE TEXTS ANALYZED IN CHAPTER 5

Name	Date	Title	Country	Language	Sex	Where
Aline Goganian	21.12.2011	My Ideal Nature	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Ashod Papazian	24.11.2011	Force d'attraction	France	French	Male	BR/DH
	09.11.2011	Déjà un mois que je suis ici au Karabakh !				BR/DH
Shoghag Jabrayan	23.11.2011	Airing Some Laundry: Feelings of Uprooting and Rerooting	Canada	English	Female	BR/DH
Nicholas Avedisian-Cohen	15.11.2011	Three Songs about Armenia	USA	English	Male	BR/DH
Tamar Najarian	14.11.2011	Moments to Last a Lifetime...	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Nare Avagyan & Shoghik Chilingarian	28.10.2011	Teaching English to the Youth in Hrazdan – Next Step Project	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Melissa Mazman	25.10.2011	From Ideas to Action: Side by Side	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Jorge Matias Yamgotchian	11.10.2011	Haciendo "Patria" todos los días	Argentina	Spanish	Male	AVC
Mariana Ferraro Kehyayan	03.10.2011	Armênia	BR/DH zil	Portuguese	Female	BR/DH
	03.10.2011	Processo de criação!				AVC
Julia Madden	28.09.2011	Connecting with My Heritage	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Ani Grigorian	23.09.2011	Writing My Own Chapter	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Michael Ajemian	09.07.2011	A New Perspective- By: Michael Ajemian	NM	English	Male	CYMA
Philipe Arapian	05.09.2011	Redação para o Birthright Armenia	BR/DH zil	Portuguese	Male	BR/DH
Liana Grigorians	02.09.2011	Reflections by Liana Grigorians	NM	English	Female	CYMA
Michelle Metchikian	29.08.2011 19.08.2011 1	The Breakfast Club of 58	USA	English	Female	BR/DH AVC
Alex Sarkisian	27.08.2011	My True Armenian Experience-By: Alex Sarkisian	NM	English	Male	CYMA
Tigran Tufenkchyan	25.08.2011	A Dream Within a Dream- By Tigran Tufenkchyan	NM	English	Male	CYMA
Jacqueline Tufenkchyan	15.08.2011	Chinnari and Thoughts- By: Jacqueline Tufenkchyan	NM	English	Female	CYMA
Sarina Tchobanian	12.08.2011	Armenien intensiv	Germany	German	Female	AVC
Serop Sayadian	07.08.2011	A story about Berd- by	NM	English		CYMA

		Serop Sayadian				
Tallene Hacatoryan	28.07.2011	The Land of Logic	NM	English		CYMA
Ani Ishkhanian	22.07.2011	My Birthright Armenia Experience	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
	22.07.2011	Finding Myself Through Volunteering				BR/DH
Greg Bilazarian	05.07.2011	Volunteering Changed my Life	USA	English	Male	AVC
Andrés González Kazazian	29.06.2011	Mi Hogar, 14.300 km. Lejos de Casa	Chile	English - Spanish	Male	BR/DH
Meredith Derian-Toth	24.06.2011	A Time for Reflection	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
	02.06.2011	Trip to Artsakh				BR/DH
Aleksan Giragosian	21.06.2011	Notes from Gyumri	USA	English	Male	AVC
Dawn Hucklebridge	17.06.2011	A Gift that Keeps on Giving	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
	21.04.2011	"I didn't expect to find an exact fit"				AVC
Karinné Andonian	07.06.2011	My Path Since My Time in Armenia	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Ani Grigorian	30.05.2011	Continuing to Give Back to the Homeland	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Vicken Sylvain Muradian	02.05.2011	Un investissement qui vaut vraiment la peine	France	French	Male	BR/DH
	13.04.2011	Serving Armenia's Competitiveness		English		AVC
Nathalie Demirdjian	07.04.2011	Volunteering - the Other Side	USA	English	Female	AVC
Marie Hagopian	22.03.2011	On Volunteering	USA	English	Female	AVC
	28.02.2011	Coming Home				BR/DH
Sima Cunningham	22.02.2011	Leaving Armenia	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
	15.01.2011	Volunteering in Armenia-- A reflection				AVC
Jirair Garabedian	11.02.2011	The Best Laid Plans	Canada	English	Male	BR/DH
	18.11.2010	Creative Technology in Armenia				AVC
	06.09.2010	Volunteering and Animation				AVC
Beatriz (Betty) Arslanian	09.02.2011	Hasta pronto Armenia	Argentina	Spanish	Female	BR/DH
	02.02.2011	Todo lo que siembras, cosechas (Harvest what you sow)				AVC
Ashley Mahserjian	01.02.2011	Big Help in Small Places	USA	English	Female	BR/DH

Ashley Howard	31.01.2011	A Special Journey with Special Adults	USA	English	Female	AVC
Rubina Shaldjian	24.01.2011	Philanthropy, not Charity	USA	English	Female	AVC
Pauline Mardirossian	21.01.2011	Two Hundred Children and Counting...	Palestine	English	Female	BR/DH
Charis Tyrrel	19.01.2011	From Australia to Armenia	Australia	English	Female	AVC
Serda Ozbenian	17.01.2011	Finding Hope in Armenia	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
	20.11.2010	The Quest of an Environmentalist in Armenia				AVC
Haig Balian	13.01.2011	Volunteering in Gyumri - Armenia's Second largest city	Canada	English	Male	AVC
	24.09.2010	A Volunteer's First Impressions				AVC
Shake Khachatrian	17.12.2010	Armenia: My Vibrant Immortal Motherland	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Vana Nazarian ⁴⁹³	13.12.2010	Gyumri, Armenia: Word on the Streets	Canada	English	Female	AVC
	07.09.2010	Store Incident	USA			BR/DH
Meghrig Jabaghchourian	05.12.2010	Not the end but the beginning: Meghrig's Journey	Syria	English	Female	AVC
Fernando Avakian	17.11.2010	Mi Armenia	Argentina	Spanish	Male	BR/DH
Diana Muratova	10.11.2010	Returning to Armenia and Finding Organic Farming	USA	English	Female	AVC
Alis Nini	22.10.2010	A Letter to Grandfather	Greece	English	Female	BR/DH
	18.10.2010	I Love Armenia				AVC
Talene Ghazarian	13.10.2010	Talene's Time in Talin	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Elina Sarkisian	01.10.2010	Yerevan State of Mind	Canada	English	Female	BR/DH
Nora Injeyan	30.09.2010	1) My Nine Weeks in Gyumri	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
	30.09.2010	Beyond the Stereotypes				AVC
Vrej Haroutounian	16.09.2010	2) The Burden Continues	USA	English	Male	BR/DH
Alexandra Achkarian	15.09.2010	Volunteering: A Give and Take Between Peers	Canada	English	Female	AVC
Lori Baltazar	09.09.2010	3) Mon voyage en Arménie	Canada	French	Female	BR/DH
	NM	Lori au pays des khachkars (Lori in the country of Khatchkars)		French		AVC

⁴⁹³ Note that the same person is represented as Canadian and American in two different texts.

Selin Sookiasian	07.09.2010	Final Thoughts	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Nora Kayserian	02.09.2010	I came to teach and I became a student	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Ara Koulayan	01.09.2010	Live, Life, Love	USA	English	Male	AVC
Shant Mardirossian	31.08.2010	Another Day in Gyumri, Armenia	Canada	English	Male	AVC
Alex Sarafian	31.08.2010	AVC and Birthright Armenia: A Great Link to Our Origins	Argentina	English	Male	BR/DH
	31.05.2010 29.07.2010	AVC Y Birthright Armenia: Un Gran Nexo A Nueestros Origenes		Spanish		BR/DH AVC
Nouny Benchimol	23.08.2010 22.08.2010	2 Mois et Demi en Arménie!	France	French	Female	BR/DH AVC
Noushig Hovhannesian	17.08.2010 17.08.2010	My Armenia	USA	English	Female	BR/DH AVC
	01.10.2010	Now When I Think of Armenia...I think about the next pages of our history				AVC
Zach Dyer	06.08.2010	38.576 Pictures a Day	USA	English	Male	AVC
	04.08.2010	Picture a Day: Baby Steps				AVC
	03.08.2010	Picture a Day: Family				AVC
	NM	Picture a Day: Mountains Beyond Mountains				AVC
	15.07.2010	10 Things I Hate/Love About You				AVC
Kristene Ghazarian	02.08.2010	When Nothing Else Could Possibly Go Wrong	USA	English	Female	AVC
Rebecca Kandilian	28.07.2010	9) Two Things Got Me to Come to Armenia	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
	19.10.2010	Armenia's Environmental Issues Through the Eyes of an AVC Volunteer Sponsored by Birthright Armenia				AVC
	21.07.2010	Last Recap with sunChild Rebecca				AVC
	11.07.2010	Last Recap with sunChild Rebecca				AVC
	06.07.2010	Last Recap with sunChild Rebecca				AVC
	27.06.2010	Last Recap with sunChild Rebecca				AVC
	20.06.2010	Last Recap with sunChild Rebecca				AVC
	15.05.2010	Last Recap with sunChild Rebecca				AVC
	12.06.2010	Non-Sunday Recap with sunChild Rebecca				AVC
	06.06.2010	Sunday Recap with sunChild Rebecca				AVC
	01.06.2010	Sunday Recap with sunChild Rebecca				AVC

	25.05.2010	Sunday Recap with sunChild Rebecca				AVC
Tatjana Crossley	27.07.2010	Tatjana on Nathan's Archeological Dig Site	USA	English	Female	AVC
Kareen Boyadjian	25.07.2010	Six weeks in Armenia...Volunteering	USA	English	Female	AVC
Tigran Khatchikyan	24.07.2010	Getting Started	USA	English	Male	AVC
Zaruhi Avetisyan	22.07.2010	Artsakh trip	Russia	English	Female	BR/DH
	10.06.2009	The Smell of Life				BR/DH
	13.05.2009	"SOS" People!				BR/DH
Edna Baghoumian	20.07.2010	This Armenian Life: In Volunteers We Trust	NM	English	Female	AVC (Reprinted from Hetq.am)
Tatevik Tigranyan	20.07.2010	Reflections by Tatevik	NM	English	Female	CYMA
	06.07.2010	Five days in Armenia				CYMA
Arek Ashjian	12.07.2010	Soorp Echmiadzin	NM	English	Male	CYMA
Ani Khatchadourian	11.07.2010	Reflections by Ani Khatchadourian	NM	English	Female	CYMA
Kris Tatioossian	11.07.2010	Reflections by Kris Tatioossian	NM	English	Male	CYMA
Sevan Movsesian	11.07.2010	Reflections by Sevan Movsesian	NM	English	Male	CYMA
Silva Boghossian	30.06.2010	Civic Advocacy, CASP, and Silva	Canada	English	Female	AVC
Zepur Simonian	16.06.2010	Teaching and Learning	USA	English	Female	AVC
Nigel Sharp	10.06.2010	A Technology Leap	UK	English	Male	AVC
Valeria Cherekian	29.05.2010	Mi experiencia en Armenia	Argentina	Spanish	Female	BR/DH
Tatevik Revazian	15.05.2010	My experience in Armenia	Denmark	English	Female	BR/DH
	03.03.2010	Wednesday with Tatevik - March 3, 2010				AVC
	24.02.2010	Wednesday with Tatevik - February 23, 2010				AVC
	17.02.2010	Wednesday with Tatevik - February 17, 2010				AVC
	10.02.2010	Wednesday with Tatevik - February 10, 2010				AVC
	03.02.2010	Wednesday with Tatevik				AVC
	27.01.2010	From Armenia to Denmark and back to Armenia INTRODUCTION				AVC
Brielle Veselsky	25.02.2010	I'll Always Have a Family to Go Back to	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Tracy Serdjenian	31.01.2010	Back in New York	USA	English	Female	AVC

						e	
Edwin Akopyan	25.01.2010	Meet Edwin from Maryland	USA	English	Male		AVC
Aram Pirjanian	25.11.2009	Dig. Yes, dig. Dig deep and dig often.	USA	English	Male		BR/DH
	12.10.2009	Ah-buh					AVC
Kevork Kojayan	17.11.2009	A little bit about Kevork	Lebanon	English	Male		AVC
Geraldine Guner	10.11.2009	Estoy de Vacaciones en Buenos Aires...	Argentina	Spanish	Female		BR/DH
Talene Ghazarian	19.10.2009	... and they add up quick!	USA	English	Female		BR/DH
Shahan Nercessian	09.10.2009	Being a volunteer in Armenia has no end to the possibilities...	USA	English	Male		BR/DH
Maral DerSarkissian	30.09.2009	I Am Going to Go Back to Armenia... Back to Gyumri...	USA	English	Female		BR/DH
Mandy (Amanda) Ani Messer	29.09.2009	"When we read we begin with ABC. When we sing, we begin with do re mi." When we browse, we begin with HTTP.	USA	English	Female		AVC
	29.07.2009	Being Armenian is borderless...					BR/DH
Sarah Mergeanian	28.09.2009	Reflections by Sarah Mergeanian	NM	English	Female		CYMA
	02.08.2007	Achkuh Patz	NM	English			CYMA
	16.07.2007	Hike to Barz Lake was not so "Barz" Afterall					CYMA
	26.06.2007	Etchmiadzin					CYMA
Natalie Hecht	22.09.2009	Nursing in Gyumri	USA	English	Female		AVC
Fr. Avedis Abovian	17.09.2009	Reflections by Der Avedis	NM	English	Male		CYMA
Dyron Daughrity	17.09.2009	Reflections by Dr. Dyron Daughrity	NM	English	Male		CYMA
Andrew Moltz	17.09.2009	Reflections by Andrew Moltz	NM	English	Male		CYMA
Tatiana Semerjian	17.09.2009	Reflections by Tatiana Semerjian	NM	English	Female		CYMA
Robert Petrossian	17.09.2009	Reflections by Robert Petrossian	NM	English	Male		CYMA
Cynthia El-Khoury	17.09.2009	Falling in love through a Marshrutka	Canada	English	Female		BR/DH
Anush Mirbegian,	15.09.2009	Handicrafts in Gyumri	USA	English	Female		AVC
Tsoler Aghamal	14.09.2009	Gyumri Love	USA	English	Female		BR/DH
Nareg ABR/DHhamian	11.09.2009	There's No Place Like Home	Canada	English	Male		BR/DH
Marin Preske	10.09.2009	From Unemployed in New	USA	English	Female		AVC

		York to Fully Employed in Gyumri			e	
Anne-Sophie Mounier	08.09.2009	Tu Ne Le Regretteras Pas!	France	French	Female	BR/DH
Amy Hunter,	07.09.2009	Just the Right Fit	USA	English	Female	AVC
	01.09.2009	My Summer Camp in Armenia	USA	English	Male	BR/DH
Gabrielle Kaprielian	18.08.2009	From Arizona to Yerevan	USA	English	Female	AVC
	17.02.2009	Marshrutkas...				BR/DH
Cerise Fereshetian	14.08.2009	Running with a smile	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Talene Boodaghians	12.08.2009	The Power of Barev Dzez	NM	English	Female	BR/DH
Azatuhi Ayrikyan	10.08.2009	Armenia	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Sophia Shahverdian	10.08.2009	Coming and Going	USA	English	Female	AVC
Mariana Mardirosian	04.08.2009	ás real, más conectada, más cercana y más mía.....	Argentina	spanish	Female	BR/DH
Adrik Grigorian	31.07.2009	Gyumri is a very distinct city...	USA	English	Male	BR/DH
Anahid Matossian	24.07.2009	Because of this summer, my life has forever changed...	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Karina Nigoghossian	25.06.2009	Uma experiência para repensar sobre o valor das coisas...	BR/DH zil	Porteguese	Female	BR/DH
Jennifer Pichard	03.06.2009	La danse a toujours été partie intégrante de ma vie...	France	French	Female	BR/DH
Armen Yerevanian	01.06.2009	A Wall of Flowers	USA	English	Male	AVC
Diana Ovsepien	21.05.2009	Armenia Fashion	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Nyree ABR/DHhamian	26.03.2009	Making it work in Armenia: Perspectives from a repatriate	Canada	English	Female	BR/DH
Yetvart S. Majian	20.03.2009	(Video) Everyone's discovery can be equally magical...	USA	English	Male	BR/DH
Cesar Gabriel Arabeian	19.03.2009	Una experiencia en mi vida única...	Argentina	Spanish	Male	BR/DH
Anabela Avadesian	25.02.2009	Respirando Armenia...	Argentina	Spanish	Female	BR/DH
Christine Serdjenian	19.01.2009	How confusing a language barrier could be...	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Karl Armen Boudjikianian	23.12.2008	Prelude to a Second Journey: My Birthright Experience	Canada	English	Male	BR/DH
Armando Topalian	17.11.2008	El primer argentino en Artsakh	Argentina	Spanish	Male	BR/DH
Dalila Eujanian	13.11.2008	Este hermoso país...	Argentina	Spanish	Female	BR/DH

Basmalian			na		e	
Gabriel Meghruni	16.10.2008	Armenia, mi tierra...	Argentina	Spanish	Male	BR/DH
Lara Talverdian	31.08.2008	Gyumri is the place...	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Gayane Rose Keshishian	30.08.2008	The Sweet EmBR/DHce	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Shuntt Tanielian	29.08.2008	Gyumri	Lebanon	English	Male	BR/DH
Ani Dikranian	27.08.2008	Three Months in Yerevan, and...	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Meghrig Terzian	25.08.2008	A Day I Will Never Forget!	Lebanon	English	Female	BR/DH
Christopher Gasparian	13.08.2008	My Armenia	USA	English	Male	BR/DH
	20.05.2008	An artist finds inspiration volunteering in Armenia				BR/DH
Simon Sarkisian	23.07.2008	Inside the Operating Room with Armenia's Finest Doctors	USA	English	Male	BR/DH
liana	18.07.2008	Goodbye Hayastan	NM	English	Female	CYMA
	11.07.2008	Thankful				CYMA
	08.07.2008	brow down!				CYMA
kevin	17.07.2008	thanks	NM	English	Male	CYMA
	17.07.2008	My first legitimate post!				CYMA
	06.07.2008	First Impressions				CYMA
mark	17.07.2008	mark's second post	NM	English	Male	CYMA
	06.07.2008	sticky moose!!				CYMA
sarin	14.07.2008	No way jose!!!	NM	English	Female	CYMA
	07.07.2008	armenian rain...				CYMA
	06.07.2008	First blog ever !!!!!				CYMA
nathalie	14.07.2008	second time around	NM	English	Female	CYMA
bedros	13.07.2008	To Bridge the Gap	NM	English	Male	CYMA
nora	10.07.2008	The Game	NM	English	Female	CYMA
Maria Balian	16.07.2008	Barev Tsez	France	French	Female	BR/DH
TamaraK	28.06.2008	Return Home	NM	English	Female	CYMA
Inna Djanians	28.06.2008	Return to Armenia	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Ani Colekessian	18.03.2008	The language, the culture and the people	Canada	English	Female	BR/DH
NM	21.02.2008	Hiking in Karabakh	NM	English	NM	AVC
Alessia Berghoudian	09.11.2007	The experience	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Veronica Siranosian	05.10.2007	Working together to renovate the Gomk	NM	English	Female	BR/DH

		Community Center				
Carine Liberian	30.09.2007	My dadik beats me... and I like it!	Canada	English	Female	BR/DH
Mary Vardazarian	21.09.2007	Kapan's first Model UN	USA	English	Female	AVC
Katie Riley	29.08.2007	Mama Sveta and Papa Vahan	NM	English	Female	AVC
Sevana Naaman	07.08.2007	Dancing in Gyumri	USA	English	Female	AVC
Elyssa Karanian	31.07.2007	The heart of Armenia	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
Emilie Tchobanoglu	28.07.2007	J'ai quitté trop vite l'Arménie	France	French	Female	BR/DH
Johnny Boghossian	10.07.2007	NM	Canada	English	Male	AVC
Christina Manoukian	07.07.2007	Taking in every moment of Armenia	Canada	English	Female	BR/DH
Karen Kazanci	18.02.2007	What has taken you so long to visit Armenia?	USA	English	Female	BR/DH
	13.07.2007	Planting trees				
Armen Boyajian	23.05.2007	Transparency Armenia	USA	English	Male	AVC
Serop	16.08.2007	Fortune	NM	English	Male	CYMA
	01.08.2007	Fashionably Late Post				CYMA
Vaughn Eyvazian	14.08.2007	CYMA	NM	English	Male	CYMA
	02.08.2007	War, Peace, Segway, Family...				CYMA
	16.07.2007	Julfa. Golden Apricot				CYMA
	16.07.2007	Bedrest				CYMA
	05.07.2007	BLoGGaGE till now...				CYMA
Alex Giragosian	12.08.2007	Reflections on Armenia and Artsakh	NM	English	Male	CYMA
	27.06.2007	Reflections on a Trip to Tavoush				CYMA
Boghos Keutelian	05.08.2007	Pictures again!	NM	English	Male	CYMA
	26.07.2007	Pictures 2007 V 2.0				CYMA
	08.07.2005	Culture and Connection				CYMA
Rita Manoukian	05.08.2007	Departing Wounds	NM	English	Female	CYMA
	17.07.2007	Anxiety, Desperation, and a sore throat				CYMA
	03.08.2005	reflections				CYMA
	10.07.2005	Cry No longer				CYMA
	02.07.2005	yay #2				CYMA
	27.06.2005	awesome				CYMA
Alene Tchekmedyan	03.08.2007	Tragedy, tradition, and gender roles	NM	English	Female	CYMA
	25.07.2007	It's a Small World After All				CYMA
	16.07.2007	Cleanse yourself: Literally and Figuratively				CYMA

	11.07.2007	The Talent, the Hope, the Passion				CYMA
	02.07.2007	Visiting our Roots				CYMA
	27.06.2007	Its like 10,000 spoons, when all you need is a knife				CYMA
	25.06.2007	A Bittersweet Arrival				CYMA
Levon	02.08.2007	Say it aint so...	NM	English	Male	CYMA
	30.07.2007	Lovin It				CYMA
	17.07.2007	Armenia Through the Eyes of a Pilgrim				CYMA
	27.07.2005	Eench gunerek				CYMA
	13.07.2005	Episode 3 – Revenge of the Pictures				CYMA
	06.07.2005	Pictures 2				CYMA
	30.06.2005	Some pics				CYMA
Lena Rakijian	27.07.2007	LiGhTs OuT	NM	English	Female	CYMA
	19.07.2007	Why are we here???				CYMA
	16.07.2007	Mokhrodig				CYMA
	28.06.2007	A Breath of Fresh Air				CYMA
Mary Keutelian	23.07.2007	I don't want to leave yet!!!	NM	English	Female	CYMA
	17.07.2007	Recollections and thoughts so far...				CYMA
Armine	15.07.2007	Armine's blog	NM	English	Female	CYMA
Susan	13.07.2007	Artsakh	NM	English	Female	CYMA
Rose	11.07.2007	Rose's blog	NM	English	Female	CYMA
Arman	10.07.2007	Arman's blog	NM	English	Male	CYMA
	06.07.2007	The Pilgrim return				CYMA
Maro Siranosian	07.12.2006	NM	USA	English	Female	AVC
Laura Tashjian	06.12.2006	NM	USA	English	Female	AVC
Armen Khatchadourian	27.11.2006	NM	Canada	English	Male	AVC
Dr. Ishkhan Babajanian, M.D. & Mrs. Anahit Babajanian, C.N.A	14.11.2006	NM	USA	English	Male & Female	AVC
Sevan Ohanian	NM	NM	USA	English	Male	AVC
Laurence Manessian	NM	NM	France-UK	English	Female	AVC
Lusine S	11.09.2006	STUCK IN THE UK	NM	English	Female	CYMA
	16.07.2006	Sanahin and Haghbad Weekend				CYMA

Lena Maranian	18.08.2006	NM	USA	English	Female	AVC
Maral Melkonian	27.07.2006	AVC LiBR/DHry Project	NM	English	Female	AVC
Brooke H	09.07.2006	hhmmmm	NM	English	Female	CYMA
	08.07.2006	helow				CYMA
Nick Bazarian	06.06.2006	NM	USA	English	Male	AVC
Maral & Sayat Arslanlioglu	05.06.2006	NM	Turkey	English	Male & Female	AVC
Mary Keyork	02.06.2006	NM	Canada	English	Female	AVC
Julie Couston	24.05.2006	NM	France	French	Female	AVC
Lisa Hosbayar	31.07.2005	ugh	NM	English	Female	CYMA
	28.07.2005	see you soon....				CYMA
	28.06.2005	yay!!!!				CYMA
Noush	28.07.2005	Mayr Hayasdan	NM	English	Female	CYMA
	12.07.2005	Whaaaaa?				CYMA
	18.07.2005	Mid trip reflection				CYMA
	09.07.2005	Top of the mornin'				CYMA
Victoria Nahabedian	12.07.2005	Tarakh	NM	English	Female	CYMA
Anahid Ovanessoff	07.07.2005	Wow...	NM	English	Female	CYMA
	07.07.2005	2-4-6-8 what do we appreciate?				CYMA
	03.07.2005	It's been a week!				CYMA
Carla Yaldezian	29.06.2005	Armenia 2005	NM	English	Female	CYMA

APPENDIX 18

CHRISTIAN YOUTH MISSION TO ARMENIA (CYMA) PARTICIPANT SARAH MERGEANIAN'S BLOG TITLED *ACHKUH PATZ* (OPEN YOUR EYES; IN WESTERN ARMENIAN) AT THE CYMA BLOG (<http://www.cyma-wd.org/2007/08/02/achkuh-patz>, latest access 21.05.2014)

I have always been very "Armenian" imitating my parents and their accents, taking a jezveh and soorj to convention, and always being the one to flip out when meeting a new Armenian wherever I go. I am a very proud Armenian girl, so naturally when these taxi drivers in Yerevan ask me if I like the city, I grin from ear to ear and start gushing about how amazing of a place Armenia is. So with only about 2 weeks left in Armenia, I constantly find myself in reflection...always trying to hold on to every moment for as long as I possibly can...

All I have ever known my whole life, (with the exception of short trips to various countries) is the United States. This trip being the longest period of time I have lived outside of the states, it has definitely changed me in ways that I had never expected to change. While at the lake, I had the chance to see the Armenian Olympic sailing team practice on the lake, right in front of my eyes! I met the sailor, who didn't think extra highly of himself, just because he was an Olympian. He played with the kids and engaged in normal conversation just like any other regular guy. These experiences are the "little" things that have changed me. In comparison to my life back in the states, these people have next to nothing, yet they're lives are more fulfilled than mine. Rather than dwell on what they don't have, they take what they do have and serve as inspirations to spyurkahye's like me. Just because I was born in the United States, I have opportunities that they could only dream of having, but I haven't taken because I take them for granted; I know I will always succeed because the United States facilitate success with minimal effort. I used to have dreams of being a neurosurgeon, but pushed them aside because "its SOOO HARD!!" This trip has made me more "achkuh patz" (literally, eyes open) in more ways than one. I guess you can say it is life changing, because I plan on changing a lot of things in my life when I get home. I am going to become the doctor that I once aspired to be, I am going to take advantage of my endless opportunities and I am going to reach out to my fellow Armenians and push them to experience Hayastan because as rewarding as it is for the eyes, it is even more rewarding for the soul.

My people look to me as their role model; being a “successful” diasporan in the “land of advantages”...I must live up to their expectations and be that inspiration that they are for me.

Seerov,

Sarah Jan.