Charles University in Prague
Faculty of Social Sciences
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Master's Thesis

Diasporas – a Challenge to State Sovereignty?

The Case of Armenians

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May 2011

Acknowledgements

I got the first idea about the topic of my thesis when I was an exchange student at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. I have gained additional ideas about diasporas during my stay at the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya, Israel, but I have finalised my research (and written most of the text) at my alma mater, Charles University in Prague. I am grateful to all three institution for providing stimulative environment for my research.

I am especially thankful to PhDr. Ondřej Ditrych, MPhil. for discussing the research proposal with me and for his valuable comments on an earlier version of this thesis. I also want to thank to Robert Avetisyan, Representative of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic in the United States, and Taniel Koushakjian, from the Armenian Assembly of America, for kindly giving me interviews.

I declare that I have written this thesis on my own and that I have dutifully indicated all works of other authors that I have cited.

20 May 2011 Pavlína Buzková

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Abreviations

AAA	Armenian Assembly of America
AGBU	Armenian General Benevolent Union
AIPAC	American Israel Public Affairs Committee
ANCA	Armenian National Committee of America
ARAMAC	Armenian American Action Committee of America
ARF	Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnak Party)
ASALA	The Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EU	European Union
JCAG	Justice Commandos against Armenian Genocide
NGO	Non-governmental organization
US	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Introduction

While a number of scholars have pointed out the increasing role of transnational actors (Wolfers 1959, Keohane and Nye 1971) and others have problematized the classical perspective on state sovereignty (Ashley 1984, Walker 1993) and argued that state-centred approaches are obsolete as they do not sufficiently describe the contemporary world inherently associated with global interconnectedness (Wakeman 1988), Koopmans et al. (2005) found these arguments to be unconvincing and expressed doubt over the relevance of transnationalism and post-nationalism. Based on an analysis of migrant's political claims-making, the authors concluded that transnational and post-national claims remain a limited phenomenon, moreover decreasing over the last decades.

While the phenomenon of transnationalism may well seem insignificant in a quantitative analysis of this kind (as for the study by Koopmans et al. transnational claims-making accounted for mere 3 to 5 per cent of the total), the hypothesis of this inquiry is that political engagement of transnational communities can make a difference in qualitative terms. Even though migrants' transnational engagement appeared marginal in the overall statistics, its impact can become manifest on the basis of individual case studies. Diasporas, as political formations which transcend territorial boundaries, can serve as a good example of this phenomenon.

Koopmans et al. suppose that if the post-nationalist/transnationalist hypotheses were true, there would be more similarities and less differences within the researched countries. The similarities would, apart from the actual migrant situation within the researched countries relate also to the character of claims making in individual states (this applies to the actors as such and also to the authorities they address and issues they seek to resolve).

There are multiple ways or approaches towards the study of diasporas, however, when conceiving of diasporas as political actors, two approaches seem to prevail. The first approach consists of examining the influence of diasporas on the governmental policies in their countries of residence, whereas the second approach focuses on the influence of diasporas on the politics in their countries of origin. Within the first approach, the study of ethnic/diasporic lobbies gained a particular salience, especially in the United States, where it already occasioned several controversies.

Already in 1975, Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan have observed that ethnic influences have become, “the single most important determinant of American foreign policy” (1975: 23-4). More recently, Samuel Huntington warned against the “erosion of American national interests” as a result of narrow policy agendas of diasporas that “promote the interests of people and entities outside the United States” (Huntington 1997: 38), and Tony Smith argued that the influence of ethnic groups on the making of American foreign policy undermines the nation’s 'common good' (Smith 2000: 94).

Others, however, have contradicted the claim that ethnic lobbies erode national interests of the host countries, and conceived diaspora lobbies as part of democratic pluralism and as counterweights to traditional political elites. Moreover, they argued that diasporas are able to promote transnational ties, they can act as bridges or mediators between their home and host societies, they can transmit democratic and pluralist values to their homelands, and assist transformation of the homelands’ economies (Shain 1999, Tölölyan 2005, Cohen 2007).

This study will examine the Armenian diaspora. It will pay special attention to the communities of Armenians in France and the United States, and to the impact of these groups on foreign relations of the respective countries. It will also explore the relations between the diaspora and the kin-state, Armenia, with a special emphasis on the post-Cold War period.

There are reasons why the study of the Armenian diaspora could be conceived as a unique (intrinsic) case study. First of all, the culture and history of Armenians is remarkably complex; second, there are twice as many Armenians in the diaspora than in the homeland; and finally, the Armenians in the diaspora succeeded in forming an efficient ethnic lobby, which has occasionally affected policies of the host countries and made an impact in the homeland.

Although this study will present various instances that make the Armenian case unique, it may be instrumental in accomplishing something other than understanding the practices and institutions of the Armenian diaspora. In the first issue of the field journal *Diaspora*, Tölölyan (1991: 5) identified diasporas as the "exemplary communities of the transnational moment", suggesting that the study of diasporas is particularly suitable to facilitate our understanding of transnationalism. Therefore, the case studies in this thesis will be used instrumentally, to verify the transnationalist hypothesis.

Shain and Barth (2003), who have written extensively on the Jewish diaspora, made an attempt to incorporate the concept of diaspora in international relations theory. They located the phenomenon into theoretical space shared between liberalism (with the emphasis on domestic politics) and constructivism (with the emphasis on identity). This is also the general theoretical assumption of this thesis, however accompanied by the discussion of how transnational interactions challenge the classical state-centric view of international relations.

In order to demonstrate the importance of collective memory and identity in forming the diaspora, the study will describe the life of the diaspora since its establishment and explain its 'web of significance' – the shared cultural narrative, identity, and institutions. The bulk of this research will examine what Wendt called constitutive, rather than causal relationships (Wendt 1999: 25).

The other key focus of the case studies will be on the role of the diaspora in the post-Cold War era, in which the preferences of the Armenian lobby will perform as an independent variable and the foreign policies of the researched countries as a dependent variable. Since other variables also influence the outcome (e.g. the political systems in the researched countries, the vital foreign interests of the researched countries as well as the identification of their societies with the preferences of the diasporas) it is problematic, given the low number of cases, to draw straightforward conclusions about causality. As Khachig Tölölyan pointed out, "influence is notoriously elusive and difficult to trace when non-state entities interact with states, and second by the fact that this diaspora is neither a unified social formation nor a monolithic polity" (Tölölyan 2007: 109).

Therefore, it will be appropriate to follow Wendt in question-driven rather than method-driven research strategy (Wendt 1992: 423). The main question to be answered in this thesis is whether diasporas can work as agents of world politics, and if so, how and under which circumstances. Further, the thesis seeks to examine if diasporas may pose a challenge to the state-centric view of world affairs, that has traditionally been the orientation of most political scientists.

1. Diaspora as a Social Category

This chapter will explain the meaning of the term 'diaspora' and its origin. It will compare several definitions of diaspora and draw attention to the recent developments in application of the concept. Further, it will reflect on the multiplicity of discourses surrounding diasporas and offer some relevant conceptualizations of the term.

1.1 Origins of the Term

The central concept of this thesis, ‘diaspora’, has a considerable history. The term originated from Greek words *speiro* (to sow) and *dia* (over). Its usage is documented as early as the 5th century B.C. in the writing of Greek authors including Sophocles, Herodotus and Thucydides. However, it has not been proven that the ancient Greeks themselves ever referred to their dispersal as a diaspora (Sheffer 2003: 46). Instead, the usage of the word by Greek authors should be understood in a very general sense. For instance, in *The History of the Pelopennesian War* (from 431 B.C.), Thucydides states that Atheneans lived scattered over Attica or that Aeginetans were scattered over the rest of Hellas.

The word was turned into a concept only after the (Jewish) Bible was translated in Greek. The text of the Septuagint[1] contains the word diaspora four times: twice scattering is used as a threat of punishment (Deuteronomy 28:25, Jeremiah 15:7), twice there is a promise that the scattered will be assembled (Deuteronomy 30:4, Nehemiah 1:9). Thereafter, the word became to be used in reference to the Jews residing outside the Land of Israel following the Babylonian Captivity.

It is sometimes incorrectly assumed that the word came about as a translation of the words *gola* or *galut*, which are the Hebrew words for 'diaspora' and 'exile' (an example of such an error may be found in Berthomière 2005 and elsewhere). In fact, the legendary authors of the Septuagint used the word diaspora to translate a relatively wide range of Hebrew words, such as *tefuzot* or *le'zaava*, which, in the latter case, is quite a non-literary translation.

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[1] The first translation of the Hebrew Bible was produced between the third and second century B.C. The name Septuagint is an allusion to seventy-two Jewish scholars who were responsible for the translation.

For a long time the term was associated exclusively with the Jews living outside of their ancestral homeland. Sheffer (2003) demonstrates this point by quoting major English dictionaries, which until the early 1990s did not account for the possibility of a different diaspora than Jewish. The word was often used capitalized when relating to the Jews, suggesting that it refers to a particular nation.

As Tölölyan (1996) points out, the occurrence of the plural form 'diasporas' is recent. The first groups that adopted the term as a self-description did so because of their similarity with the Jewish case. For Afro-Americans, the history of enslavement provided a vivid comparison with the Babylonian Captivity of Jews. Afro-American spiritual leaders referred to the land, in which they were enslaved, as Babylon.

The holocaust of the Second World War, on the other hand, provided an analogy for commentators of the Armenian diaspora. As Dekmejian (2007) pointed out, in contrast to the massacres of earlier historical periods, the Armenian genocide and the holocaust of Jews were orchestrated by “supranationalist ruling elites” who were bureaucratically organized. Although, as Cohen (2008: 40) adds, the Ottoman Empire did not possess the level of technological sophistication comparable to the Nazi Germany, the “scale, speed, and efficiency of human destruction and its systematic implementation through impersonal bureaucratic rationality” (Dekmajian 2007: 86) which characterized the twentieth century genocides were unprecedented in history.

1.2 Definitions of Diaspora

Today the term diaspora is more and more often used for populations of different ethnic origins that form communities separated from their national territory. As Tölölyan (1991) points out, the term diaspora, once confined to the dispersed communities of Jews, Greeks and Armenians now shares meaning with a larger semantic domain which includes immigrants, expatriates, refugees, guest workers, exile communities and oversees communities.

Similarly, Vertovec (1999) remarks that the term often used today to describe practically any population which is considered ‘deterritorialised’ or ‘transnational’ -- that is, which has originated in a land other than which it currently resides, and whose social, economic and political networks cross the borders of nation-states.

Definitions of diaspora range from broad to very narrow. John Armstrong, for instance, the author of a seminal article titled *Mobilized and Proletarian Diasporas* (1976), applied the term “to any ethnic collectivity which lacks a territorial base within a given polity” (Armstrong 1976: 393). This broad definition, which does not include allusion to an ancestral homeland, may be applied to such particular cases such as the Gypsy diaspora.

On the other hand, in an article published in 1991, William Safran delimited six defining characteristics of a diaspora, thus offering a rather narrow definition. According to Safran, members of diasporas, or their ancestors, 1) have been dispersed from a specific original 'center' to two or more 'peripheral', or foreign, regions; 2) retain a collective memory, vision, or myth about their original homeland - its physical location, history, and achievements; 3) believe that they are not - and perhaps cannot be - fully accepted by their host society and therefore feel partly alienated and insulated from it; 4) regard their ancestral homeland as their true, ideal home and as the place to which they or their descendants would (or should) eventually return -

when conditions are appropriate; 5) believe that they should, collectively, be committed to the maintenance or restoration of their original homeland and to its safety and prosperity; and finally they 6) continue to relate, personally or vicariously, to that homeland in one way or another, and their ethnocommunal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such a relationship (Safran 1991: 83-84).

Though Safran's definition has been criticized by many ever since its publication, it has become a vital point of departure for anybody wishing to present a definition or a conceptualization of a diaspora. It should not be forgotten that Safran himself did not insist on the fulfilment of all the six criteria in order for a group to qualify for a diaspora; instead, he suggests that members of diasporas share several of the above mentioned features.

Cohen (2008) amended Safran's definition suggesting that the dispersal from an original centre included in the first characteristic is often accompanied by the memory of a single traumatic event that provides the folk memory of the great historic injustice that binds the group together. Further, he has broadened the fifth characteristic to account for not only the maintenance or restoration of a homeland, but its very creation (Cohen 2008: 6).

Although definitions of diaspora vary, most scholars seem to agree on some basic features of diaspora. First of all, there must be a dispersion to a minimum of two destinations. Most definitions either emphasize this point or they take it for granted. Second, there must be self-awareness of the group's shared identity and a myth of common origin. Although many authors discuss diasporas in context of hybridization or creolization, there often remains an element of boundary-maintenance (Brubaker 2005). Next, some authors stress diaspora's permanency, ie. diasporas must exist for over at least two generations (Butler 2001, van Hear 1998). And finally, many definitions emphasize organizational structures and transnational activities of diasporas which link them to their real or imagined homeland and to each other.

Yet another perspective was adopted by Steve Vertovec (1999), who distinguished three categories of the meaning of diaspora. According to him, diaspora exists as a 'social form', as a 'type of consciousness' and as a 'mode of cultural production'. For Vertovec, the first category refers to the most common usage of the term diaspora; the second category focuses on describing diaspora as an experience, a state of mind and a sense of identity; and the third category is related to the production of global cultural phenomena.

Recently, Fiona Adamson (2008) pointed out to a group of scholars with interest in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union which have begun to study diasporas that are formed not by “peoples crossing boundaries”, but by “boundaries crossing peoples”. However, most scholars agree that diasporas are not formed simply by ethnic minorities that migrate a settle in places that are not immediately adjacent to their original homeland (Sheffer 2003). Even Brubaker, one of the authors mentioned by Adamson, seems to have accepted this point in his later work (2005).

1.3 Typologies of Diasporas

Most scholars agree that the circumstances surrounding the formation of a diaspora have a profound effect on the nature of the diaspora. As Butler puts it, “a people that is expelled will necessarily develop a different cultural ethos from those who flee, or who are taken as captives. A group that leaves en masse also differs from a group that gradually constitutes itself after a protracted period of individual emigrations” (Butler 2001: 199).

Armstrong (1976), for instance, differentiated between 'mobilized' and 'proletarian' diasporas, arguing that migrants' background would have an impact on the diaspora organizations they would establish, a point later contested by Sheffer (2003).

Alain Medam (1993) suggested a categorization of diasporas based on the degree of cohesiveness and the dynamics within the diasporic organization. From this perspective, Medam distinguishes betweeen 'crystallised diasporas' with highly efficient transnational networks and 'fluid diasporas' on the other side of the continuum.

Michel Bruneau's (1995), categorization is based on the prevailing character of the diaspora. Thus he differentiates between 'entrepreuneurial diasporas' (ie. Chinese or Libanese), 'religious diasporas' (ie. Jews or Greeks) and finally, 'political diasporas' (ie. Palestinians, Tibetans).

Gabriel Sheffer (2003) recognized the the fundamental difference between state-linked and stateless diasporas. Such a distinction is well-founded, since most definitions of diasporas seem to agree that the relation towards homeland is an essential characteristic of a diaspora. Today, Jews and Armenians represent state-linked diasporas, while Kurds or Palestinians are in the stateless category. With the formation of a new state, a stateless diaspora can become a state-linked diaspora. Sheffer assumes that such a change would result in more moderate attitudes among diaspora's membership – whether this really was the case with Armenians will be discussed later.

Another important distinguishing feature is the age of the diaspora. Sheffer (2003) distinguishes between 'historical', 'modern' and 'incipient' diasporas. 'Historical' diasporas are those formed in pre-modern times, 'modern' diasporas originated after the industrial revolution and 'incipient' diasporas are those of very recent origin.

Similarly to Bruneau, Cohen (1997) categorizes diasporas based on their primary raison d'être. He applies labels such as 'victim', 'labour', 'imperial', 'trading' and 'cultural' diaspora depending on their origin, character or the primary occupation of its members. Thus, Armenians and Afro-Americans are considered victim diasporas; Greeks, British, Portuguese and other colonizers are in the imperial category; Indians are regarded as a labour diaspora; Chinese and Lebanese formed trading diasporas and finally the Carribeans, who are not indigenous in the area from which they are dispersed, belong to the cultural category. Although Sheffer (2003) criticizes Cohen's classification according to these sociological and functional criteria as inadequate and stereotyping,Cohen's typology has already gained popularity.

1.4 Broadening of the Concept

The popularity of the term diaspora has been on the rise ever since the 1980s. Various authors have attempted to apply the term diaspora on non-ethnic transnational groups, including language, religious and pan-ethnic groups. Examples of such works include research on the 'Muslim diaspora' (Jenkins 1999), 'Arab diaspora', 'Latino diaspora' and even 'queer diaspora' (Patton and Sanchez-Eppler, 2000). Clearly, these groups do not have in common much more than geographical dispersal, possibly, a status of persecuted minority.

As a result, it has become less clear what defines diasporas and what makes them a distinct category. This was the reason for Khachig Tölölyan (1996) to complain that “the ease with which diaspora is used as a synonym for related phenomena” on one hand empowers the term, but on the other, causes conceptual problems.Similarly, Rogers Brubaker (2005) lamented that “if everyone is diasporic, then no one is distinctively so. The term loses its discriminating power – its ability to pick out phenomena, to make distinctions” (Brubaker 2005: 3). According to Brubaker, stemming from the need to accommodate various intellectual, cultural and political agendas, the meaning of diaspora has been stretched to the extent that the result could be called a 'diaspora' of diaspora, a dispersion of the meaning of the term.

Nonetheless, other authors have welcomed the broadening of the concept. James Clifford (1997), for instance, observed that groups which not long ago might have called themselves 'minorities' are increasingly calling themselves 'diasporas'. Apparently, the term seems to invoke more positive sentiments than other attributions, such as “migrants” or “refugees”. Diaspora involves hopes for return, but at the same time carries a sense of continuity, permanency and institutionalization. As Clifford puts it, oppressed peoples that may have once conceived of their situation in the context of 'majority-minority' power relations are now embracing diasporan discourse as an alternative (Clifford 1994: 311).

Likewise, Wahlbeck (1998) argued for he inclusion of the concept of diaspora can contribute to refugee studies. Drawing from his research conducted among the Kurdish migrants, he concluded that their relation to the society of origin was not only a matter of memories, but an ongoing and continuous relation. Thus he contended that “the concept of diaspora, understood as a transnational social organisation relating both to the country of origin and the country of exile, can give a deeper understanding of the social reality in which refugees live” (Wahlbeck, 1998: 2).

As Butler (2001) summarizes, membership in the diaspora now implies potential empowerment based on the ability to mobilize international support and influence in both the homeland and hostland (Butler 2001: 190).

As these contributions indicate, diaspora does not need to be merely a *descriptive* term of material realities, but it can become a *prescriptive* concept which suggests organizational forms and strategies which can be taken up by political entrepreneurs and state elites and which can lead to political action across national borders (Adamson and Demetriou 2007, Clifford 1994).

Nonetheless, other diaspora scholars have tried to restrict the phenomena of diasporism. According to Khachig Tölölyan (1996), diasporan status should not be conferred on members of a community because they were born abroad, but rather based on an active involvement of its members in diasporic activities. Tölölyan's contribution will be discussed further in the next subsection.

1.5 Diaspora Membership

Most scholars agree the it is extremely difficult to obtain precise figures concerning the size and composition of ethnic diasporas, since many diasporas present numbers that are ambiguous or somewhat inflated. According to Sheffer (2003: 99), this is a result of the 'data politics' exercised by diaspora organisations as well as an indicant of the great social and political sensitivity of the issue. Diaspora organizations often try to manipulate statistical data concerning the membership or they are reluctant to reveal them, in order to appear more influential in the face of other potential members or political actors which they seek to influence.[2]

Another obstacle to obtaining precise data is the conceptual difficulty of defining migrants, ethnic minorities and diasporans. In particular, it is difficult to estimate when migrants become diasporans, since the decision to join or establish a diasporic entity have been taken only after migrants have settled in new territories (Sheffer 2003: 83).

Scholars of the Armenian diaspora have suggested that diasporan status is not necessarily conferred on individuals automatically based on their ethnic origin or on the fact that they were born in dispersal. For instance, Tölölyan (2001: 3) differentiates 'the ethnic' and 'the diasporic', while only the latter stands for an active diasporan identity requiring involvement. According to Tölölyan, a community of Armenian Americans (or another diasporic community) consists of three fractions: the assimilated, who are counted only for the purposes of inflating the figures of the community; the ethnic, who retain some connections with one or more communal institutions and identities; and finally, the diasporic members who evince efforts to sustain organized and perhaps institutionalized connections with other diasporic communities and with the homeland, when possible.

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[2] The vice-versa may also be true, when intolerant governments attempt to suppress information about diasporas group in order to downplay their significance and potential political power (Sheffer 2003: 100-101).

Similarly, Sheffer (2003) differentiates between 'core members', 'marginal members', 'members by choice' and 'dormant members' of diasporas. In his view, the 'core members' are those who avidly maintain their identity, who openly identify with their diasporic entity and who are ready to act on behalf of their community and the homeland. 'Members by choice' are descendants of mixed families, converts, and others, who actively participate in the life of the diaspora. 'Marginal members' are persons who maintain their ethnic communal identity but do not identify as such or purposely distance themselves from the community. Finally, 'dormant members' are individuals who have assimilated and who abstain from the activities of the diaspora, but retain awareness of their origin. Under certain circumstances, these persons can become mobilized by its leaders and organizations. Since membership in a diaspora is to a large degree a matter of identification, it can easily change over time. A sudden mobilization can be triggered by a major event, which either endangers the homeland (natural disaster, outbreak of war) or promises new opportunities (regaining independence). The awakening of the Armenian diaspora following the earthquake of 1988 and the subsequent dissolution of the Soviet Union is a case in point. During such events, modern means of communication, such as real-time television coverage, have a great effect.

1.6 Diaspora Strategies

Not all diasporas exhibit the same level of political activity that others do. Migrants who decide to settle permanently adopt different strategies vis-à-vis the host societies, governments, their homelands and other members of their community. According to Sheffer (2003), these strategies range from assimilation to various modes of accommodation and, in the case of stateless diasporas, end with support to separatist and irredentist movements. The full list of migrants' strategies includes assimilation, integration, acculturation, communalism, corporatism, isolation, autonomism, secession, separation, and irredentism.

It is questionable whether those who successfully assimilate should be included in the diaspora number. However, as has been noted, even after generations have passed, some assimilated migrants are rediscovering their ethnic identity, they start to support their ethno-national cause and participate in diaspora organizations.

Conversely, migrants who opt for integrationist strategy aim at social, economic and political participation in the host society, but not assimilation. Acculturation entails adopting cultural traits and social pattern of the host society, while remaining a distinct group.

The communalist strategies are aimed at maintaining ethno-national identity and strengthening diaspora communities. The corporatist strategy is closely related to communalism, but it differs in that it is based on formal status for communal organizations within the political systems of the host countries. Those organizations become official representatives of their members before the host-country authorities (Weiner 1991, Sheffer 2003).

The autonomist strategy is oriented towards gaining special political and cultural rights and freedoms for diasporans within the polities of the hostlands. Separatism and secessionism are efforts to seize land from the dominant society and create an independent state. Diaspora entities that choose to adopt these strategies are the most likely to come into a conflict with the host country authorities.

1.7 Diaspora Activities

Activities and functions of diasporas are manifold and often intertwined. Sheffer (2003) suggested to abstract five levels of political activities of diasporas: the domestic level in host countries, the regional level, the trans-state level, the level of the entire diaspora, and the level of homeland politics. Furthermore, Sheffer contends that on each level, diaspora functions fall into one of the three categories: maintenance, defense, and promotion of its communities' interests.

The maintenance functions include fundraising, administration of schools and religious institutions and performing cultural and social role. The defense function is usually executed by a specialized agency that provides protection to diaspora members when that is deemed to be necessary. Finally, the promotional functions include cultural and political activities as well as promotion of economic interests. In the cultural sphere, diasporic entities organize ethnic festivals and exhibitions, they run museums, hold lectures or film screenings. Those activities are intended to increase membership, advance diaspora visibility and status as well as to strengthen ties between diasporas and their homelands. In the political arena, diasporas establish advocacy and lobbying organizations, political action committees, as well as fundraising and investment organizations. In operating promotional structures, they resemble many other interest groups, though they differ from other transnational networks in pursuing particularist, rather than universalist goals (Adamson 2008).

Tölölyan (2007) provides a brief introduction to diaspora activities in international affairs. According to him, the most visible of these activities is the way in which diasporas lobby the governments of the countries of which they are citizens, the purpose of which is pushing governments of the host countries to conduct policies favourable to their kin-states or original homelands. Secondly, diasporas seek to influence the media and public opinion in the countries where they reside. The desired outcome is to have their homelands and the causes or conflicts they are engaged in represented in a favourable light. Third, diasporas appeal to various inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, in an attempt to draw attention to their cause or negotiate material aid to their countries. Finally, many diasporas seek to influence the governmental conduct in their homelands. These efforts may be particularly strong during the transitional periods that mark a passage to sovereignty after an independent state is established.

Diasporas are active in advancing and defending economic interests of their homelands in their host countries. In many cases, they also advance economic interests of their host countries in their homelands. As Shain (1999) points out, diasporas often serve as bridges between friendly segments in their host societies and in their homelands.

Tentative Conclusions

Though ancient in origin, the meaning of the term diaspora has evolved precipitously during the last couple of decades. This led to multiplication of discourses and conceptual difficulties. Yet, the plurality of discourses is somewhat appropriate given the fact that diasporas are “historical formations in process, they change over time and respond to the political and social contexts in which their members find themselves” (Werbner 2000: 5).

This thesis will conceive diaspora in the ethno-national sense. Most of the time, it will employ the narrow definition of diaspora promulgated by Safran, Cohen and Tölölyan. The reason for this is not an outright opposition to broader conceptions, but the apprehension that the narrow definition is the most suitable in the case of the dispersed Armenian communities, which, according to many, most closely resemble the 'paradigmatic' example of the Jewish diaspora.

2. Transnationalism

2.1 From International to Transnational Relations

In the previous chapter, I have pointed out the long history of a diaspora as a concept. Although the study of transnationalism is more recent, it is not such a novel research area as one could think. Already in 1959, Arnold Wolfers noted that "the Vatican, the Arabian-American Oil Company, and a host of other nonstate entities are able on occasion to affect the course of international events. When this happens, these entities become actors in the international arena and competitors of the nation-state (1959: 23)." In the next sentence, the author explicitly refers to the above mentioned as international or *transnational* actors. Not less engaging is Wolfers's explanation of "[t]heir ability to operate as international or transnational actors may be traced to the fact that men identify themselves and their interests with corporate bodies other than the nation-state" (ibid).

Nevertheless, since few scholars followed Wolfers's advice to inspect the importance of the state as an actor, it was not before the 1970s that the research was specified and synthesized to the extent that one could speak of an alternative perspective on international relations. In the Introduction to the edited volume *Transnational Relations and World Politics* (1971), Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane argued that "[a] good deal of intersocietal intercourse, with significant political importance, takes place without governmental control" (1971: 330). Furthermore, they are convinced that "states are by no means the only actors in world politics" (ibid.).

Keohane and Nye have further enlisted four major types of global interaction, which are, according to them, communication, transportation of goods, finance and travel. The authors also proposed five main areas of inquiry: 1) the net effects of transnational interactions; 2) the implications for the study of international relations; 3) the allocation of value under the new circumstances (ie. who benefits, who loses, who controls transnational networks); 4) the implications for US foreign policy; and finally 5) the challenges raised for international organizations.

Although this may seems as an altogether heterogeneous list of topics, it is true that these areas of inquiry have received a significant attention during the last four decades.

Keohane and Nye further elaborate on the effects of transnational relations on the international system. They predicted that growing transnational interactions would result in 1) attitude changes; 2) increasing international pluralism; 3) creating new forms of dependence and interdependence, making states dependent on forces that none of them controls; 4) creating new instruments of influence; and finally 5) increasing presence of autonomous or quasi-autonomous actors in world politics.

This framework for research presented by Keohane and Nye can be, with some adjustments, useful until today. The last two points are particularly relevant for this thesis. It is interesting to note that the authors specifically name “the cultivation of sympathetic ethnic or religious groups in other states” (Keohane and Nye 1971: 340) as an example of a new instrument of influence or 'informal penetration', an idea already mentioned by Scott (1965) and Cottam (1967).

In the Conclusion of the volume, the authors foresaw possible objections of a “skeptical scholar” and listed the main demurs at the world politics paradigm that they presented. These objections were: 1) in direct confrontation with transnational actors governments prevail, 2) transnational relations have always existed, and 3) transnational relations do not significantly affect the 'high politics' of security, status, or war. The relevance of these objections will be considered in the Conclusion of this thesis.

Although influential, the publication of *Transnational Relations and World Politics* by Keohane and Nye has not led to the establishment of a novel research programme the relevance of which would not be further questioned, though the criticism of the concept of state sovereignty has continued to mount by scholars who became to be known as poststructuralists, postmodernists, and postpositivists.

Andreas Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller (2003) explain the prevalence of state-centrist approaches in the study of international relations. According to them, the nearly parallel birth of the social sciences and the modern nation-state system has had an impact on the way in which we see the world. It has led to 'methodological nationalism', or the assumption that the nation state is the natural mode of social organization, while it has blinded us to the many social processes that transcend national boundaries (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2003).

Similarly, Richard Ashley has criticised positivist structuralism for “treat[ing] the given order as the natural order” (Ashley 1984: 21). This approach, according to Ashley, “limits rather than expands political discourse, negates or trivializes the significance of variety across time and place, subordinates all practice to an interest in control, bows to the ideal of a social power beyond responsibility, and thereby deprives political interaction of those practical capacities which make social learning and creative change possible” (ibid.)

The study of transnationalism has attracted ever greater attention in the 1990s and 2000s. This renewed interest has been propelled by further progress in long-distance communication and increase of international migration. In Baubock's words, this has the effect of creating “a mismatch between territorial and personal boundaries of polities” (Baubock 2003: 702).

According to Vertovec, the study of transnationalism is necessitated by the growing number of people who “now live in social worlds that are stretched between, or dually located in, physical places and communities in two or more nation-states” (Vertovec 2001: 578). Ulf Hannerz (1996) even argues that many people reside in diverse ‘habitats of meaning’, that are not unequivocally territorially restricted.

2.2 Transnationalism as a Research Field

In its broadest sense, transnationalism stands for “multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across the borders of nations-states” (Vertovec 1999: 448). Naturally, these kind of relationships have existed since long ago. However, with the introduction of new means of transport and communication, the volume and the intensity of these ties has been strengthened to the extent that we can actually speak of a whole new arena of activity, or even of an emergent research field (Portes et al. 1999). Such study will be occupied with identifying “variants and exceptions to the transnationalist hypotheses, as well as forces giving rise to each of them” (Portes et al. 1999: 224).

Nevertheless, as Mitchel pointed out, the study of transnationalism is characterised by disciplinary unboundedness (in Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 765). While it comprises “a whole gamut of economic, political and social initiatives” (Portes et al. 1999: 217), it may be studied under various disciplines, such as political science, sociology, anthropology, economics or international relations. It is not widely agreed that transnationalism constitutes a novel research field: Vertovec (2001: 576), for instance, questions this idea.

Not surprisingly, transnationalism has been criticised for describing too wide of a range of phenomena (Vertovec 2001: 576), while at the same time, it lacks single typology or conceptualisation. As it is the case with diaspora, studies on transnationalism published so far work with disparate units of analysis (such as individuals, groups, organizations and states) and mix diverse levels of abstraction (Portes et al. 1999: 218).

2.3 Areas of Transnational Activity

Transnationalism may pertain to various areas of human activity. A volume of International Migration Review which was dedicated to the study of migrants' transnationalism examined the phenomenon in regards to four areas: economic, political, sociocultural and religious.

Vertovec (2003) names several areas of inquiry pertaining to transnationalism, such as transnational social movements, transnational business networks, ethnic diasporas, worldwide terrorist networks, transnational organized crime, transnational policing activities, religious organizations, the so-called 'transnational capitalist class' of corporate executives, etc. He suggests that by examining one transnational social formation we might gain insight into another, not least because it is increasingly recognized that participation in one transnational social formation might lead to, or overlap with, another (Vertovec 2003, Hannerz 1992).

2.4 Conceptualizing Transnationalism

Analytical frameworks suggested by scholars so far do not always complement each other.

Guarnizo (1997), for instance, speaks of transnationalism ‘from above’ and ‘from below’ . While the former pertains to that kind of transnational activities which are initiated by powerful institutional actors such as multinational corporations and governments, transnationalism ‘from below’ refers to grass-roots initiatives by migrants.

Itzigsohn (1999) distinguishes between ‘broad’ and ‘narrow’ transnationalism. He regards the two as two poles along a continuum, which are categorized by three factors: the degree of institutionalization of various practices, the degree of involvement of people in the transnational field, and the degree of movement of people within the transnational geographical space.

According to Vertovec (1999), there are six main conceptual areas of transnationalism.

Transnationalism can be conceived as ‘social morphology’, as a ‘type of consciousness’, as a ‘mode of cultural production’, as an ‘avenue of capital’, as a ‘site of political engagement’, and as ‘reconstruction of place and locality’.

Østergaard-Nielsen (2003) offers a conceptualization of migrants' transnational political practices, which could fit as a further categorisation of the fifth transnational area suggested by Vertovec – the site of political engagement. The basic distinction she makes is between immigrant politics and homeland politics. While the former concerns efforts by migrants to better the situation in the receiving country, which includes obtaining more political, social and economic rights, fighting discrimination and the like, the latter concerns relate to migrants' and refugees' activities pertaining to the policies of the homeland. Within this area, Østergaard-Nielsen makes a further distinction between emigrant politics, diaspora politics, and translocal politics. Emigrant politics are conducted by migrants and are aimed at securing their own legal, economic, and political status in the homeland or to increase their influence on politics at home. Østergaard-Nielsen names advisory councils, absentee voting rights and the right to be candidates in elections, among the main claims that are raised by migrants. Diaspora politics concerns groups who either do not have a homeland political regime of their own or who are barred from direct participation in it. Finally, translocal politics refers to initiatives from abroad to better the situation in local communities of origin. As the author mentions, these dimensions overlap and blend into each other.

2.5 Transnationalism or Diaspora?

Transnational political practices, according to Eva 0stergaard's definition (2003), include “various forms of direct cross border participation in the politics of their country of origin by both migrants and refugees, as well as their indirect participation via the political institutions of the host country."

According to Baubock (2003), this definition should be broadened in two ways. First, it should not only refer to politics across borders but ought to consider also how migration changes the institutions of the polity and its conception of membership. Second, migrant transnationalism affects both the institutions of the country of origin and of the receiving state.

These definitions of transnationalism are strikingly similar to definitions of diaspora. The famous statement by Khachig Tölölyan (1991) that "diasporas are the exemplary communities of the transnational moment" as well as his decision to name the field journal *Diaspora – A Journal of Transnational Studies* suggests that there is a great overlap between the research on diasporas and transnationalism.

Undoubtedly, the current usage of the term diaspora differs from its original meaning – a fact that is well documented in the previous chapter. The latest definitions of diaspora, place a greater emphasis on its transnational dimension. For instance, Berthomière (2005: 29) complains about the difficulty of differentiating diasporas and transnational communities, and he actually presents the hypothesis that there is no difference between the realities covered by the two concepts. Yet other authors make a subtle distinction between the two.

With an undeniable esprit, Cohen (1997) remarks that diaspora literature often uses gardening tropes, such as family trees, ancestral soil, uprooting, replanting or hybridity. On the other hand, Faist (2010) notes that taxonomies used by transnationalism scholars originate in spatial relations, they speak of transnational spaces, use classifications such as 'broad' and 'narrow', transnationalism 'from below' etc. It is questionable whether that is a sufficient indicative of the different character of diaspora studies and transnationalism, however, it gives us a hint that diaspora studies do not completely disregard organic social structures and primordial social phenomena, such as kinship and ethnicity, despite recognizing the paramount importance of socially constructed identity.

Faist (2010: 9) also notes that while diaspora usually denotes religious or ethnic groups living outside their homeland, transnationalism is often used both *more narrowly* – to refer to migrants' ties across countries – and, *more broadly*, to refer to all sorts of social formations, such as transnational networks and organisations.

At the same time, diaspora has often become a politicised notion, used by nationalist groups or governments to pursue nation-state-building or for controlling populations living abroad (Faist 2010). This was the rationale behind Brubaker's warning that we should think of diaspora at the first place as "an idiom, a stance, a claim", rather than as an impartial analytical category (Brubaker 2005: 12). According to Brubaker, diaspora is a category that does not so much describe the world as it seeks to remake it. Transnationalism has not entered political debates in the same degree.

Finally, the concept of diaspora is an inherently enduring phenomenon including multiple generations. Transnationalism, on the other hand, is rarely understood as an intergenerational project (Baubock 2003: 718).

Tentative Conclusions

For historical reasons, diaspora studies and transnationalism have emerged as distinct research areas. While this thesis will work with narrow definition of diaspora, it will conceive of transnationalism broadly as a paradigm of international relations which is in opposition to state-centric approaches.

3. On Armenia

3.1 Diaspora and the Homeland

One could not fully understand the meaning of any diasporic community without having some knowledge about their country of origin. This is a point strongly articulated in Safran's influential definition of diaspora (cf. chapter 1). Four out of six points in his definition discuss the relationship of diasporans to their homeland. Thus in Safran's perspective, diasporic identity is to a large extent defined by the existence of such a relationship.

This chapter will first illustrate the complexity of the diaspora/homeland relationship, after which the geopolitical situation of Armenia will be discussed. Next, it will offer an insight to two issues in Armenian history, the genocide of Armenians (1915) and the Nagorno Karabakh war (1988 – 1994). The reasons for including the former issue are unequivocal. Not only has the number of Armenians living in the diaspora increased significantly as a result of the genocide, but also the experienced trauma became a major integrating force for the Armenian people and remains so until today. Most diaspora organizations have originally formed and developed their contacts around the issue of the genocide recognition.

The discussion of the Nagorno Karabakh war is included not because its gravity and significance is in any way comparable with the former, but because it can shed some further light on the relation between the diaspora and the homeland. Armenian diaspora organizations often list Nagorno Karabakh as concern 'number two', ranking it just after the genocide recognition.[3] Another reason for including this subject is the fact that the both events became interlinked in the minds and discourse of Armenians, particularly after the Sumgait massacre (1988). No matter how misleading that was, it may have affected the outcome of the conflict – according to Suny (1999), the successful construction of national identity by Armenian elites was a major factor which made it possible for mobilization in the Karabakh war.

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[3] Based on interviews by author. The importance of the issue may be also deduced from the content of diaspora organization's websites and the proportion of allocated funds, such as development aid.

3.2 The Complexity of the Diaspora/Homeland Relationship

Often, the relationship between diaspora and the homeland does not exist without complication. Most diasporans tend to idealize their homeland; in some cases, the homeland, as they remember it, exists only in their collective memory. The pecularity of the Armenian case is the fact that most members of the diaspora trace their origin to places which do not appear on the map of present-day Armenia. Their memory of ancestral homeland (if successfully passed onto the next generation) is more likely to portray Armenian life around the Lake Van (in a village which has changed its name), or in Constantinople, rather than present-day Armenia. Their language, if they managed to retain it, is a dialect of Western Armenian - intelligible in Armenia, yet different from the Eastern dialect spoken there.

The commentators of the Armenian diaspora (such as Hovanissian 2005: 90) frequently point out the fact that Eastern Armenia, which centred around Yerevan, was historically kept undeveloped and agrarian, while Armenian capital found more lucrative outlets in Batum, Tiflis, Elizavetpol or Baku. On the other hand, diasporans are frequently a subject of otherization in Armenia. This is indicated by the use of the word *akhbar* which in Armenia refers to repatriated Armenians. The word is a peculiar pronunciation of the word for brother, which presumably mocks the dialect of Western Armenian as well as their tendency to see every Armenian as a brother or sister (Totoyan 1998).

In popular culture, the complexity of the diaspora/homeland relation was depicted in 1993 Atom

Egoyan's film *Calendar*. The film portrays a triangulated love relationship involving a Western-born Armenian photographer (played by Egoyan himself), his Middle-Eastern-born Armenian wife, and a driver, native of Armenia. The photographer comes to Armenia with an assignment to capture images of the country for a calendar. He is accompanied by his wife, who is also acting as an interpreter. The chauffeur takes up a role of a self-appointed guide and tries to present a different view of Armenia and Armenian history than as the couple knew it. Yet the photographer remains detached from what he sees, content to experience the country only through the lenses of his camera, uninterested to learn more than what is necessary for the completion of his project. Gradually, the interpreter becomes uncomfortable with the purposeful detachment of her husband and starts to lean towards the driver...

There has been endless discussions in the diaspora as who represents the true 'Armenianess'. In Egoyan's film, it is a native Armenian driver who becomes the true representation of the homeland, but for many diasporans, this is a stereotypical image. In an interview for *Haratch*, Paris-based Armenian newspaper, Khachig Tölölyan expressed his disappointment with being viewed as less-Armenian. “[I]n Armenia, people whose vocabulary is one-third Russian are convinced that they are pure or real Armenians and we in the diaspora are not. They are as Russian, as *odar* [alien], as I am American. The difference is that I am conscious of this fact and they are not” (Tölölyan 1998).

3.3 Awakening of the Diaspora

In spite of all, the diasporans see Armenia as their kin-state, to which they relate in one way or another. The Cold War era disfavoured contact between the diaspora and the homeland. Not only were contacts between the two controlled and programmed by Soviet authorities, but the diaspora organizations themselves were caught up in political and ideological confrontation.

Diaspora scholars agree that a sudden mobilization of the diaspora, including its 'dormant members', can be triggered by a major event, which either endangers the homeland (natural disaster, outbreak of war) or promises new opportunities (regaining independence). In the Armenian case, all of these happened practically at the same time.

On 7 December 1988, Armenia was hit by a disastrous earthquake, which killed at least 25,000 people and rendered hundreds of thousands homeless. For the first time after the World War II., the Soviet government, being unable to provide sufficient aid for the quake victims, requested help from the West. Diaspora organizations were among those who were ready to help, and so the earthquake is widely regarded as a moment of awekening of the diaspora.

The ensuing dissolution of the Soviet Union and the independence of Armenia is regarded as an equally critical event for the Armenian diaspora. Nonetheless, in contrast to other diasporas (e.g., Ukrainian or from the Baltic states), creation of an independent Armenian state was not on the agenda for the mainstream diaspora in Soviet times (Frankman 2000: 339). In fact, the opposite view was quite widespread: "that Armenia could not become an independent state in face of dangers of pan-Turkism" (Suny 1999: 3). Therefore, Armenian diaspora was quite unprepared to deal with an independent Armenia, and it was even less prepared to deal with Armenia already caught up in a conflict with neighbouring Azerbaijan.

3.4 Armenian Geopolitics

There is a legend which tells that when Armenians came to God to ask for their piece of land, all good land had already been distributed, and so God gave them the remnants, full of stones. That gave birth to a saying "Armenians squeeze bread out of stone". The history of each nation includes some myths and legends. What is true about this one is that the geopolitical location of Armenia is far from ideal. Present-day Armenia is a small, land-locked country with scarce natural resources, such as fuels.

What makes the situation even harder are tense relations with neighbouring countries. This concerns two countries in particular, Turkey in the west and Azerbaijan in the east. Armenians hold the Ottoman Empire – of which Turkey is a successor – responsible for the greatest tragedy of their history: genocide of about one and half million Armenians during the World War I. The genocide was never recognized by Turkey, which is why the events – now nearly hundred years remote in history – continue to sour the relations between the two countries.

The dispute with Azerbaijan evolves around Nagorno Karabakh, a region encapsulated in Azerbaijani territory, which was assigned to Azerbaijan in the Stalinist era, in spite of having an Armenian majority. In 1988, the Armenians of Karabakh started an irredentist movement to unite with Armenia, and the struggle escalated as the Soviet Union disintegrated in the early 1990s. In May 1994, both parties agreed to a cease-fire, after which Nagorno Karabakh and surrounding areas stayed under de facto Armenian control.

As an ally of Azerbaijan, Turkey responded by imposing an economic blockade and shutting its border to Armenia. This further intensified the economic hardship Armenian was facing in transition from communism. Deprived of fuel imports from Azerbaijan, Armenia had to deal with a severe energy crisis.

In 1993, the Armenian government decided to mitigate the crisis by reactivating the Metsamor nuclear power plant, which resumed operation in 1995. The power plant had been shut down since 1988 over safety concerns following the earthquake. Today, the power plant is considered one of the most dangerous nuclear plants in the world, but remains to cover more than 40 per cent of the country's electricity needs.

The plant is considered dangerous both due to its design and location; the plant was built without primary containment structures, and it is located in a seismic zone.

The war in Nagorno Karabakh had the effect of isolating Armenia from vital infrastructure projects such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline (BTC), the South Caucasus (or Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum) natural gas pipeline and the Kars-Tbilisi-Baku railway. All of these projects bypass Armenia, in spite of the economic logic of including it.

For several years, Armenia relied solely on imports of oil and natural gas from Russia. The so called North-South pipeline importing natural gas through Georgia was built in 1993, but its operation was regularly interrupted due to instability in Russia's North Ossetia province. In 2006, a new pipeline has been launched importing natural gas from Iran, breaking the Russian monopoly on natural gas imports to the country. Apart from frequent shut-downs of the North-South pipeline, Armenia's desire for an alternative import route was compelled by the interest of Azerbaijan to buy the pipeline from Georgia.

In 2008, the South Ossetia War once again prompted concerns over stability of energy routes in the region. This situation motivated the latest Armenian attempt for rapprochement with Turkey. Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan invited his Turkish counterpart Abdullah Gül to attend a football match between both national teams in Armenia. The Turkish President accepted and so, in September 2008, he became the first ever Turkish head of state to visit Armenia. This high level visit was expected to set the ground for a thaw in diplomatic relations between both countries. Indeed, in October 2009, accords were signed between Armenia and Turkey which promised establishing diplomatic relations and re-opening the border between Armenia and Turkey.

However, in April 2009, the ratification process was suspended, as Turkey conditioned the normalization of relations with Armenia by a peace settlement in Nagorno Karabakh. In April this year, Erdoğan himself ordered the dismantiling of 'Peace and Brotherhood' statue in Kars, which was dedicated to friendship with Armenia. The deeper roots of the Turkish – Armenian enmity will be discussed in the next section.

3.5 The Armenian Genocide

Western Armenia became a part of the Ottoman Empire during the fifteenth and sixteenth century, while the Eastern Armenia, which centered around Yerevan, came under Russian control following the Russo-Persian war (1826 – 1828). The Russian ambition was to continue the expansion into the Armenian land as to reach the Mediterranean, which caused conflict between the both empires, eventually culminating in the Russo-Turkish War (1828-1829).

The Armenians in the Ottoman Empire were organized in a confessional community called millet, which granted them certain privileges and a considerable level of autonomy. At the same time, Armenians often faced different forms of maltreatment, such as over-taxation. As a religious minority, they were not allowed to carry weapons and their testimony against Muslims was inadmissible in courts of law.

In 1890, the Sultan Hamid II. created the so called Hamidiye, paramilitary groups made of Kurdish irregulars. They were supposedly tasked to guard the Russo-Ottoman border, but more often they were used to harass Armenians living in the eastern provinces. In the last decade of the nineteenth century, the Hamidiye killed as many as many as 200,000 people in a series of assaults, and forced many other to emigrate (Arkun 2005: 82).

Another massacre took place in the Adana province in 1909, which left about 30,000 people dead. Zabel Essayan, who took part in a delegation sent to Adana by the Armenian patriarchate of Constantinople to help the victims and to organize the search for orphans, later wrote a book titled *Among the Ruins.* The book begins with the word *aghed*, the catastrophe. Nobody expected that the disaster, for which it would be difficult to find words to appropriately describe it, was yet to come.

As the World War I. broke out, the Ottomans feared that Armenians could ally with their brothers on the side of the enemy, Czarist Russia. At night before the 24th April 1915, about 250 Armenian community leaders and members of intelligentsia were arrested in Constantinople and murdered. A similar fate awaited those Armenians who were serving in the Ottoman Army. In the months that followed, same pattern was applied in city after city and province after province. First, the community leaders and intelligentsia were arrested and executed, men were separated from the rest and slaughtered, and women and children were sent to death marches in the deserts of Syria and Iraq.

Arnold Toynbee (1916), a young British historian, was one of the first to provide a comprehensive account of the massacres. He collected statements of survivors and eyewitnesses which provided for a 700 pages long publication. It was published (with an official endorsement of the British government) under the title 'The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire'. It renders a graphic picture of atrocities committed with the consent of Ottoman authorities.

For instance, in a letter addressed to the German ministry of foreign affairs in Berlin, members of the German mission in Aleppo referred the following

> In face of the scenes of horror which are being unfolded daily before our eyes in the neighbourhood of our school, our educational activity becomes a mockery of humanity... Out of 2,000 to 3,000 peasant women from the Armenian Plateau who were brought here in good health, only forty or fifty skeletons are left. The prettier ones are the victims of their gaolers' lust; the plain ones succumb to blows, hunger and thirst (they lie by the water's edge, but are not allowed to quench their thirst). The Europeans are forbidden to distribute bread to the starving. Every day

> more than a hundred corpses are carried out of Aleppo. All this happens under the eyes of high Turkish officials (in Toynbee 1916: xxxiii).

Another witness, an elderly Armenian, who was thrown into the Euphrates, but saved herself by clinging to a boulder in the river, reported that "hundreds of children were bayoneted by the Turks and thrown into the Euphrates… men and women were stripped naked, tied together in hundreds, shot and then hurled into the river." She further recalled that "in a loop of the river near Erzindjan… the thousands of dead bodies created such a barrage that the Euphrates changed its course for about a hundred yards" (Toynbee 1916: 239).

Fully aware of the fate that awaited them, the Armenians of Erzeroum made desperate appeals to Tahsin Bey, the Vali (governor) of the province, for protection. The latter's reply was that he could not defy the instructions sent by the Central Government.

It is now widely accepted that close to one million people (that is about half of the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire) were exterminated during the period of 1915 – 1916 (Melson 1992). If those who perished in the ensuing period up to 1922 are added to the figure, the total death toll rises to around one and half million (Henham 2007; Marshall Lang and Walker 1987).

The Turkish perspective is different, though. Turkish government estimates the number of Armenian casualties to be much lower, about 300 000. These deaths are considered to be a side effect of a global war (in which the Turks died as well), and not as an action orchestrated by the Ottoman government. For these reasons, the killings do not, in the eyes of the Turkish government, amount to genocide.

Alternatively, the argument of the deniers (and of of the Ottoman government at the time) is that the Armenians were removed from the war zone for their own safety and because they constituted a security risk. However, this argument is not convincing since the deportation included the whole expanse of the empire from Constantinople to the most remote valleys (Hovanissian 2005: 93). Finally, the argument which blames the Armenian casualties on a situation in which the Ottoman Empire find itself in a global war is not credible enough, considering the pogroms which preceded and which followed the genocide.

3.6 The Nagorno Karabakh[4] Conflict

The dispute with Azerbaijan evolves around Nagorno Karabakh, a region encapsulated in Azerbaijani territory, but with a majority of Armenian population. In the run of history, Nagorno Karabakh fell under control of several empires. The recent conflict has its roots in the inter-war period. When the Russian Empire was taken over by the Bolsheviks in 1917, the three nations of the Caucasus, Georgians, Armenians and Azeris made an attempt at autonomous existence. They established the Transcaucasian Federation, but its duration was ephemeral. The state dissolved after only three months of existence, and fighting erupted between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the regions of Nakhchevan, Zangezur and Karabakh.

In 1920, the whole area was invaded by the Soviet Army, and by 1922 it was incorporated into the Soviet Union as the Transcaucasian SFSR, which existed until 1936, when it was divided into three separate Soviet republics. By that time, a committee headed by Stalin had already decided that Nagorno Karabakh will be a part of Azerbaijan, which was officially justified by economic considerations: the underdeveloped Karabakh needed to be linked to the industrial region of Baku, which was much more advanced at that time. It was also logical to make the Karabakh pastures accessible to Azeri herdsmen from the lowlands. Therefore, the Azeris believe that the decision was taken in the interest of the Armenian population, which have, as a result, improved their standard of living.

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[4] Karabakh (alternatively transliterated as Karabagh or Gharabagh), is a word of Turko-Persian origin. It is compounded of the word kara/ghara meaning 'black' and the word 'bagh', which means 'garden'. Gharabagh has been applied since 14th century by the Turkic Muslim conquerors of the region to both Lower or Plains Karabakh, and to a smaller region which under Russian administration became Nagorno ('Upper' or 'Mountainous') Karabakh. More nationalistic Armenians prefer to use the name Artsakh, an old Armenian name used for Nagorno Karabakh and some adjacent regions.

However, the circumstances of the decision remain obscure (especially since the Nakhchevan region, equally separated from the Azerbaijani territory, was granted to Azerbaijan), and thus it is believed by Armenians that this was a strategy to placate Turkey, for Azeris are closely related to Turks. What Azeris saw as an unlawful and unjust insurgency, Armenians perceived as 'correcting the error of history'.

The recent conflict erupted in the 1980s. At that time, the announcement of glasnost and perestroika aroused many hopes, including the accommodation of grievances of suppressed nations. A formal appeal was made by the Karabakh local Soviet authority in February 1988 for a change of the legal status of the region and its unification with Armenia. The appeal was supported by massive demonstrations in Stepanakert and Karabakh, and some Azeris had left the region as a result of ethnic confrontations.

On 28 February, eight day of the contention, there was an assault on the Armenian community of the Caspian city of Sumgait in Azerbaijan. The pogrom, which lasted three days and left 31 people dead, to a large degree predetermined the next sequence of events.

Ethnic struggles intensified in Nagorno Karabakh and along the Armenian – Azerbaijani border and refugees poured in both directions. Moscow played a rather ambiguous role in the conflict, as it appeared to side with Armenians at one time and with Azeris at another. Its steps were rigid and often dilatory; the fact that the warring parties viewed the Soviet presence as an occupying power has contributed further to its ineffectiveness.

Following the victory of anti-communist group in the first free elections in Armenia in spring 1991, the first military action took place, which escalated into full scale violent warfare as the

USSR disintegrated. In Karabakh itself the dissolution of the Soviet constitution provided an opportunity to proclaim that the decision on Karabakh's status taken in the Stalinist era has lost its legitimacy (Kurkchiyan 2005: 156).

A blockade was imposed by Azerbaijan of all transport and energy across the border, contributing to the economic hardship of post-communist Armenia. In spite of that, the Karabakh army (supported from Armenia) eventually prevailed. In spring 1994, it took over most of the region, together with the land which had previously separated Karabakh from Armenia and the surrounding regions – overall, about double the size of what has previously been the Nagorno Karabakh Autonomous Region. Only then an armistice was signed.

Kurkchiyan quotes one of the Armenian leaders on the circumstances that influenced the decision to agree on a ceasefire: “Our army was advancing and it was in the clear interest of the Azeris to sign the armistice to stop the continual losses of territory. We also had to sign, because we were losing international prestige, and it was not good for us to go on from the political point of view. To break the peace was not in the interest of either of the parties” (quoted in Kurkchiyan 2005: 157).

Until today, the region remains under de facto Armenian control, and in spite of various efforts at mediation, it remains as far away from settlement as it ever was.

By the rivers of Babylon we sat down,
there we wept when we remembered Zion
On the willows near by
we hung up our harps.
Those who captured us told us to sing,
they told us to entertain them:
“Sing us a song about Zion.”
How can we sing a song to the Lord in a foreign land?
May I never be able to play the harp again
if I forget you, Jerusalem!
May I never be able to sing again
if I do not remember you,
if I do not think of you as my greatest joy!

Psalm 137:1-6

There is a walnut tree
Growing in the vineyard
At the very edge of the world.

My people, you are like
That huge ancient tree—
With branches blessed by the graces

But sprawling
Over the small corner of land
Roots and arms spread out
And spilling your fruit
To nourish foreign soils.

Silva Kaputikyan

4. History and Institutions of the Armenian Trans-Nation

Having explained the geopolitical situation of Armenia and some of the nation's history, it is now easier to understand the significance of the diaspora. While the population of Armenia is less than 3 million people, perhaps three times as many Armenians live in other places of the world.

Armenian communities exist in Russia (between 2 and 3 million), the United States (500 000 to 1 million), France (250 000 to 500 000); communities of over a hundred thousand exist in Georgia, Syria, Lebanon, Argentina; and tens of thousand of Armenians live in other countries in Europe, Central Asia, in Canada and Australia.

To estimate the exact size of Armenian communities is difficult. For reasons provided earlier (see p. 17), many diaspora organizations try to overemphasize their membership. However, not only Armenian organizations use numbers that are somewhat inflated. For example, Barack Obama (2008), in a speech given one year before he sworn in as a president, addressed “one and a half million Americans of Armenian heritage in the United States”, although only about one fifth of them declared themselves Armenian in a census.

4.1 History of the Diaspora

In Sheffer's terms, the Armenian diaspora may be characterized both as 'historical' and 'modern'. Ancient Armenia was located on the the crossroads of international trade, and thus already in the fifth century, colonies of Armenians existed in Anatolia and Bulgaria. At that time, the word diaspora was not used when referring to the Armenians. Instead, until quite recently, Armenians spoke of their dispersed population as kaghuts (colonies) and kaghutahayutiun (Armenians of the colonies).

In the sixth century, the Byzantine Emperor Maurice set an ominous precedent, when he deported thousands of Armenians to Cyprus, Macedonia and Pergamon. Some consider these deportations as the origin of the Armenian diaspora (Cohen 2008: 49). Relocated Armenians established successful trading communities and later occupied senior positions in the government. Thus in the eighth and ninth centuries, Byzantium had four emperors of Armenian origin (Sheffer 2003: 59).

From the tenth century on, Armenians settled in large cities of western Europe, such as Venice, Marseilles, Paris, Bruges and London. As a result of the collapse of the Bagratid dynasty in the eleventh century, colonies of Armenians were established in Cilicia and Crimea. The Crimean peninsula attracted so many Armenian immigrants, that by the late fourteenth century it was mentioned in some travellers' accounts as Armenia Maritima (Tölölyan 2005: 38). Moreover, the Crimean diaspora was a departure point for many Armenians who later settled in Hungary, Poland and Moldavia.

In the thirteenth century, Armenians established their presence in the Holy Land, where until today, the Armenian Church shares jurisdiction over some of the most important Christian sites, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and the Nativity Church in Betlehem.

At a similar time, Armenian communities appeared in Egypt, Iraq, India, Tibet and China. A second large wave of Armenian migration was engendered by the collapse of the Armenian Cilician kingdom in the fourteenth century. As part of this migration wave, Armenians settled in Romania and Lithuania. In the mid-fourteenth century, the Polish King Casimir the Great, allowed foreign merchants and craftsmen who were willing to settle in the city of Lvov to live by their own communal and religious laws. Armenians from the Crimea (as well as Jews from central Europe), resourceful and already diasporic people, came in large numbers and helped to turn the city into a prosperous trading crossroads. According to Tölölyan (2005), this process illustrates a more general principle of diaspora formation in pre-modern times: "politically powerless to impose themselves, most diasporas develop when a niche opens up in a host society that its rulers choose... to fill by encouraging diasporic migration" (Tölölyan 2005: 38). As a result, fifteenth century Poland hosted the largest and richest Armenian diasporic community of that time. That community already exhibited signs of what later became known as transnationalism: Polish

Armenians toured other diasporic communities while Armenian clerics from other countries travelled to Poland to raise funds. The bishop of the Armenian church in Jerusalem in the 1380s was Polish-born.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, a large group of Armenians was deported from the homeland to populate Persia's new capital Isfahan. From there, Armenians migrated and traded all the way to India, Tibet, China and the Philippines. As Tölölyan notes, dispersed communities of Armenians functioned both as 'pipelines' of innovation and as 'intelligence networks' which may have accounted for their commercial advantage (Tölölyan 2005: 38-39). Thus, the first printed Armenian book appeared in Venice in 1512, and the first Armenian gazette-newspaper was published in Madras, India, in 1794, long before one appeared on the homeland's territory.

In the first quarter of the eighteenth century, refugees from the Persian-occupied parts of Armenian homeland enlisted in the Russian army and fought in the Caucasus, hoping that the Russians, as Christians, would free the homeland from the caprices of Muslim rulers in the increasingly chaotic state of Persia. According to Tölölyan (2005), this practice points to a long tradition of Armenian diasporic lobby – long before contemporary ethnic lobbies emerged, Armenian leaders and clergymen were lobbying Christian rulers, ready to summon divisions for their armies, if the rulers intervened for a regime change in the homeland.

If we wanted to apply Cohen's classification of diasporas, we would could very well speak of Armenians up until this point as a (successful) 'trading diaspora', though many were leaving the homeland as a result of recurrent wars and forced deportations. That perception of the diaspora has changed radically as a result of the events of 1894-96 and 1909 and the genocide of 1915. As Herzig and Kurkchian (2005) note, since that time almost every Armenian family has either itself experienced a trauma of a politically motivated death, or knows others who have.

For Armenians after the WWI., and for nationalists throughout the time, it has become somewhat blasphemous to think of positive aspects of the diaspora. As it is expressed in Psalm 137 (see heading of this chapter), the Jews in Babylonian Captivity (ie. the paradigmatic diaspora), perceived their separation from the homeland as an outright disaster, which can be observed only with mourning. The psalm portrays diasporic existence as an utmost tragic event, which leads to near resignation to life, and in which the idea of *Return* is the only thought entertained with joy.

Nevertheless, though Psalm 137 has become a popular hymn in the Jewish diaspora, it does not express the reality of diasporic life that precisely, not even when it comes to Babylon. As Cohen (2007: 7) points out, Jews in Babylon, in the Islamic world as well as in Europe were responsible for many advances – in medicine, theology, philosophy, science, art, literature or business. Cultural fermentation together with the feeling of anxiety may have been factors which motivated their achievement and encouraged creativity.

A similar can be said about the Armenian diaspora, which, from its inception, has excelled in trade and in other fields of human activity. Printing of the first book, the standardization of language, the founding of political parties and even the proclamation of independence of the first Armenian Republic (in 1918) – all took place in the diaspora. Naturally, the question may be raised, whether these attainments have been made *because of* or *despite* the diasporic character of the nation.

The perception of diaspora from within Soviet Armenia may be deduced from the poem by Silva Kaputikyan in the heading of this chapter. Kaputikyan, an Armenian poet born to parents who were originally from Western Armenia, portrays the nation as an ancient walnut tree. A walnut tree, with roots extending to the four corners of the world, is a popular symbol in Armenian culture, signifying productivity and longevity of the nation. Although spilling of fruit offers a substantially more positive image of diasporic life than incessant weeping by the rivers of

Babylon, the general tone of the poem remains dreary. The separation from the homeland (which is figuratively located “at the edge of the world”, ie. isolated) is conceived as a problem, while the spilling of fruit evokes an irrevocable loss.

4.2 Institutions of the Armenian Transnation

It is important to say that the Armenian diaspora does by no means act as a single unified actor. Numerous cleavages have affected the life of the diaspora. Among those differences, political polarization have been the most apparent. Political differences have existed in the diaspora from the outset and continued throughout the Cold War. Whereas some members of the diaspora supported Soviet Armenia from its inception, some were willing to cooperate with it only on patriotic and pragmatic grounds, and yet others adopted a radically anti-Soviet stance and sided with the US during the Cold War.

This section will introduce some institutions of the Armenian diaspora. It will focus on those that are transnational in their operation – as they exist in several countries it would be unnecessary to explain their role in each country separately. Those are primarily organizations which were established before the events of 1915, after which the number of Armenians in the diaspora increased significantly.

4.3 Armenian Church

All over the world, the main institution of the Armenian diaspora is the Armenian Apostolic Church. About 90% of diaspora Armenians adhere to it (Tölölyan 2007: 126). The Church traces its origin to the mission of the Apostles Bartholomew and Thaddeus in Armenian in Armenia in the first century. In the year 301 AD, Christianity became the official religion in the country, and thus Armenians pride themselves to be the first nation which has become officially Christian, 79 years before Rome. Commentators of the Armenian diaspora agree that this conversion to Christianity by a whole nation marked the single most important turning point for the Armenian identity (Tölölyan 2005, Herzig and Kurkchian 2005).

In the sixth century the church rejected the authority of the Council of Chalcedon and became the Armenian Apostolic Church, an autonomous branch of the universal church. As Herzig and Kurkchian note, the Armenian culture laid heavy stress on all those facts, and as a result, the words 'Christian', 'first' and 'unique' became deeply embedded in Armenian psyché. Living on the edge of the Christian world surrounded by Muslim communities, religion became a defining characteristic for Armenians, which set them apart symbolically from their neighbours (Herzig and Kurkchian 2005: 3).

In the run of history, Armenian homeland became repeatedly subjected to invasion, plunder, deportations and massacre, and as the commentators put it, “the Church was the one social institution that could resist one alien rulership after another” (Herzig and Kurkchian 2005: 4) and so it played an indispensable role in preserving national identity and cultural integrity of Armenian communities both inside the homeland and in the diaspora.

A segment of the Armenian nation always claimed that the early adoption of Christianity determined the orientation of the nation to the West. Yet according to Zekiyan, this is an oversimplification. Apart from the fact that Christianity in general has deeply Oriental roots, as Zekiyan points out, the Armenian Church in particular, especially in its earlier phases, derived from the Jerusalemite and Proto-Syriac Christian traditions, which represent the most profoundly Oriental faces of early Christianity (Zekiyan 2005: 49).

The fact that the Church has its mission not only in the homeland, but also in the diaspora, was acknowledged by the head of the Church, catholicos Nerses the Gracious, already in the twelfth century. He directed his encyclical

> “to all the faithful of the Armenian nation, those in the East who inhabit our homeland Armenia, those who have emigrated to the regions of the West, and those in the middle lands who were taken among foreign peoples, and who for our sins are scattered in cities, castles, villages and farms in every corner of the earth.”

From a grammatical point of view, the usage of the word by Nerses does not differ from Thucydides, who spoke of dispersal without establishing diaspora as a social category (cf. Chapter 1), yet there is a difference in implication. For Nerses, diasporization of the people challenges the until-then territorialized sense of the Church's mission (Tölölyan 2007: 112).

Currently, the Armenian church is split between two sees, each headed by a catholicos. The 'Catholicos of All Armenians' is located at Etchmiadzin in Armenia, while the 'Catholicos of Cilicia' resides in Antelias, Lebanon. The schism has its roots in earlier historical periods, but it intensified during the Soviet era, when the Church headquarters at Etchmiadzin was ruthlessly disciplined and made subordinate to the communist authorities. This led to dissatisfaction of many diaspora congregations, who rejected any but formal association with the see at Etchmiadzin and gave their loyalty to the catholicos of Antelias (Suny 2005: 118). In the United States, Etchmiadzin churches would not accept members of the Dashnak party, who for a change discouraged people in the Armenian community from attending those churches. As a result, all major diaspora communities in the United States have two churches, one affiliated with Etchmiadzin, the other with Antelias.[5]

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[5] Since the end of the Cold War, there has been numerous efforts at unification. For instance, in 1995, Karekin I., who had previously headed over the See of Cilicia, was elected the Catholicos of All Armenians. However, in spite of having headed both sees, he was not able to unite them.

Due to its national character, the Armenian church has often been entangled in political struggles. In his discussion of involvement of the diaspora institutions in the Karabakh conflict, Kchachig Tölölyan (2007) pointed out the legacy of sacrifice within the Armenian Church. According to Tölölyan, "the Church's complex discourse of martyrdom contributes importantly to uniting the older discourse of Christianity with a more recent discourse of political sacrifice" (Tölölyan 2007: 112). Although Tölölyan's original research of the culture of martyrdom was related to Armenian terrorism, it is possible that the same cultural narrative has influenced those who came to assist the homeland militarily during the Karabakh war.

The Armenian Church is an organization with 1600 years old history, which in spite of its recent decline, internal division and the presence of Armenian Catholics and Protestants, remains an important pan-Armenian organization. It influences the work of other diaspora organizations as well as the nation's lay elites. As a unifying force of the dispersed population, the Church was unrivalled until the idea of Armenian nationalism began to spread in the 18th century (Dufoix 2008: 51) and occasioned the emergence of Armenian political parties.

4.4 Political Parties of the Diaspora

There are three political parties that have traditionally played a role in the diaspora: the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF; called Dashnaktsutyun or Dashnaks by Armenians), the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (also called Ramgavars) and the Social Democratic Hnchakian Party. All three parties have their origin in the 19th century and symptomatically, none of them emerged within the borders of present-day Armenia.

The Dashnaktsutyun has traditionally been the leading political organization of the diaspora, though on occasion it was successfully challenged by others. It was formed in Tiflis (Tbilisi) in

1890. Between 1890 and 1920, the ARF functioned as an Armenian 'national liberation front', participating in armed resistance in Ottoman Turkey, Tsarist Russia and even briefly in Persia. It was also instrumental in creating the short-lived Democratic Republic of Armenia (1918 – 1920).

Following the incorporation of Armenia into the Soviet Union, the ARF was banned in the homeland and its leaders were exiled. At that time, the party had already established itself in other countries in which the Armenian diaspora was present, with Lebanon and the United States as its main centres.

In spite of its socialist world-view, the party was strongly opposed to the Soviet power. Their slogan was “Free, Independent, and United Armenia”, which indicated their desire to establish independent Armenia within the borders suggested by the Treaty of Sèvres. The party also campaigned for the recognition of the Armenian genocide, and advocated the right to reparations.

When Armenia gained independence in 1991, the ARF soon established as a major political party in the homeland. As ARF appeared to be the leading opposition force in the country, president Levon Ter-Petrossian banned the party in December 1994, accusing it of planing acts of terrorism against his administration. In addition to that, 31 party affiliates were arrested and the party's daily newspaper, *Yerkir*, which at the time was the newspaper with highest circulation in Armenia, was also banned.

Most of the detainees were released several months after the elections which took place the following year, but the ban on the party was lifted only when Robert Kocharyan, who was supported by the Dashnaks, replaced Ter-Petrossian in 1998. Since then, the Dashnaks managed to attract no more than 4.5 – 8 per cent of votes in Armenian elections, but as Tölölyan suggests, thanks to the lobbying role of its diasporic component, its organizational discipline and passionate nationalist ideology, it has mattered more than those figures indicate (Tölölyan 2007: 112). Until 2009, the Dashnaks had ministers in Armenia's government.

In January 1991, the Dashnaks won the elections in Nagorno Karabakh and ruled the entity throughout the war. The ARF also dominate the Armenian politics in Iran, where they occupy both seats of the Majlis allocated to Armenian minority. Until 2000, the ARF played a leading role in Lebanon, where it used to receive majority of the Armenian vote (there are six seats allocated to Armenians in the Lebanon's National Assembly).

In the United States, the ARF sustain a powerful lobbying arm, the Armenian National Council of America (ANCA), considered as the most influential Armenian lobby group in the US. In 2000, the Dashnaks founded a new advocacy group in Brussels, the European Armenian Federation for Justice and Democracy, to lobby the European Union. Other organizations affiliated with the Dashnaks include the Armenian Relief Society, the Armenian Youth Federation, the Hamazkayin Cultural Foundation or the Homenetmen Armenian General Athletic Union.

Another Armenian party which has played a role in the life of the diaspora is the Ramgavar Party, established in Istanbul in 1921, even though its roots go back to the Armenagan Party established in Van in 1885. While the Dashnaks have retained strong political orientation throughout the time, both Hnchaks and Ramgavars have oriented more towards educational and philanthropic projects, although they have not abandoned political activity either – for instance, in Lebanon, the Ramgavars have attained a seat in the national assembly every time since 2000.

The Armenian General Benevolent Union, philanthropic organization dominated by the Ramgavars, is alone considered as one of the most important institutions of the diaspora. It was founded in Cairo, Egypt, in 1906, but with the onset of the WWII its headquarters moved to New York. Once a conservative philantropic organization, it now operates as a closely held corporation led by a few major philanthropists, but still supported by others (Tölölyan 2007: 113). Its chapters are located in 24 countries of the world. The stated purpose of the organization is to preserve and promote the Armenian identity and heritage, and it does so through a number of educational, cultural and humanitarian programmes. It sustains a number schools, provides scholarships, supports cultural production, runs summer camps and so on.

The last, Hnchakian Party was founded by Armenian students in Geneva in 1887. Its name was taken from its newspaper *Hnchak*, which means 'bell' in Armenian. Similarly to Dashnaks, the party was involved in the resistance against the Ottoman Empire during the WWI and took part in the Karabakh war in the 1990s. Currently, the party has one representative in the Armenian National Assembly. There are a few organizations affiliated with the Hnchaks, which are most active in Lebanon. These are the Armenian Educational Benevolent Union, which offers education to underprivileged children and provides healthcare and social care. There are also two youth organizations and and the Homenmen sporting association associated with the Hnchaks.

4.5 Armenian Terrorism

The list of Armenian organization which have operated in the diaspora would not be complete without mentioning Armenian terrorist groups. According to Gunter (2007), Armenian terrorism is unique in two aspects. First of all, it is a prominent example of what the well-known cliché describes as “One person's terrorist is another person's freedom fighter.” Secondly, Armenian terrorism manifested in two periods of activity separated by more than half a century.

The first series of attacks took place immediately after the WWI. In a covert campaign called Operation Nemesis, a group affiliated with the ARF and consisting mostly of genocide survivors assassinated several former Ottoman officials who were believed to be the main planners and perpetrators of the genocide.

One of the assassinations targeted Talat Pasha, an Ottoman official who ordered the arrest of Armenian community leaders in Constantinople. Talat was shot dead in Berlin in March 1921. The assassin, Soghomon Tehlirian, was a genocide survivor who had lost most of his family during the 1915 massacres. Tehlirian later stood before the German court, which found him innocent – a precedent frequently cited by Armenian activists in defence of Armenian attacks on Turkish diplomats in the 1970s and 1980s (Gunter 2007).

However, in contrast to the Operation Nemesis, Armenian terrorism of the second era targeted Turkish diplomats not because of their involvement in the massacres, but simply because of the nationality they represented.

The sudden outburst of Armenian terrorism in the 1970s, six decades after the genocide, was motivated by three factors. First of all, in 1973, an Armenian American Gourgen Yanikian, a genocide survivor aged 77, assassinated two Turkish diplomats in California. Yanikian, who had lost 26 members of his family during the genocide, is famous for having declared "[holocaust survivors] have had their Nuremberg, we have not"[6]. Later, Yanikian became an iconic figure, which is said to have inspired emergence of Armenian terrorist groups.

The second factor motivating Armenian terrorism was Lebanese Civil War, which engulfed the 200000-member Lebanese Armenian community in an environment of chaos. The third factor is deemed to be the failure of the peaceful method in pursuing the Armenian Cause. The disappointment occurred in 1973-74 in reaction to the deletion of paragraph 30 from a report discussed within the Commission on Human Rights of the ECOSOC. The paragraph specifically mentioned the Armenian massacres of 1915 "as the first case of genocide in the 20th century", and it was included in a progress report to a study entitled *Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*. However, when Turkey objected the report, the paragraph was deleted and the Armenians frustrated (Gunter 2007: 110-111).

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[6] New York Times, 3 July 1973.

This is how, in 1975, two Armenian terrorist groups emerged. One was called the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA), the other were the Justice Commandos against Armenian Genocide (JCAG), which later used the name Armenian Revolutionary Army (ARA).

The ASALA group was founded in 1975 in Beirut with the objective to compel Turkey to acknowledge its responsibility for the deaths of 1.5 million Armenians, pay reparations, and cede territory to an Armenian homeland. The training of its members took place in the camps of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

As a target of its first attack, the ASALA chose the local office of the World Council of Churches in Beirut "for promoting the emigration of Armenians to the United States" (Al-Majallah 1982). Although the attack left no casualties, acknowledgement of responsibility by ASALA three years later was shocking for many members of the Armenian Lebanese community, since the targeted office belonged to a worldwide ecumenical organization in which both branches of the Armenian Church were represented and which had been supportive in the process of the genocide recognition by the United Nations.

The Justice Commandos against Armenian Genocide were the military arm of the Dashnak party. This link was established in May 1976, when a group member was killed by his own bomb in the Paris headquarters of the ARF. The JCAG is said to have been established so that young party members would not abandon the ranks of ARF to join ASALA (Gunter 2007: 112).

Both organizations shared the goal and tactics, but they differed in ideology. Whereas ASALA had Marxist orientation, the JCAG were rather right-wing nationalists. Both organizations continued to operate until 1980s.

5. Armenians in France

Franks and the Armenians were linked through commercial and political links already in the Middle Ages. As has been mentioned earlier, Armenians settled in large cities in western Europe, including Paris and Marseilles, from the tenth century. In the eleventh century, the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia, located on the Mediterranean cost, served as a safe heaven for Frankoman Crusaders on their way to Levant. The last king of the Cicilian Kingdom was in fact of Frankish origin. He died in Paris and was buried in Saint Denis Basilica alongside notable French kings.

As it is the case with most Armenian communities around the world, the French diaspora has increased dramatically with the influx of Armenian refugees who managed to flee the Ottoman empire during the World War I. Famously, the Armenians of Musa Dagh[7], who held up resistance against the Ottoman forces, were rescued by French warships which were passing by in the Mediterranean. The French Armenian community was later boosted by those Armenians who originally sought refuge in other countries, such as Lebanon, Syria, Iran and Egypt. Most recently, France has also received Armenian migrants from post-communist countries, whose motives for resettlement have been mostly economic.

Eva Østergaard-Nielsen mentions that there are relatively few studies (in English) on French Armenians, who she considers “one of the only successful ‘diaspora political’ lobby groups in Europe” (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 764). She attempts to explain the void saying that Armenians in France are not an ‘immigrant group’ on par with those groups that are in the focus of most migration research, which means groups that originate in labor migration or have arrived as asylum seekers during the last few decades.

While Østergaard-Nielsen speaks of success in connection to the French Armenians, this has not always been the case. Aram Shehigian, who works voluntarily as the unofficial historian of the Marseilles community, recalls that “the atmosphere was very hostile until about 1940. While there was no open discrimination on the part of the French government...I cannot say Armenians felt comfortable out in the streets.” Shehigian further explains that the most of the first generation Armenians were farmers, laborers or craftsmen, few of whom were educated and even fewer spoke French (Zenian 1995).

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[7] *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh* is a fictional account of the events by Franz Werfel, a Prague-born Jewish novelist.

The first Armenians arriving to France during the WWI. made a considerable effort to preserve their language, culture, and history and thus resisted assimilation. Most French Armenians settled around Paris, Marseilles and in the Rhone valley, and they soon organized themselves by founding churches, schools and other institutions. In 1921, Boghos Nubar, founder of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), the largest Armenian non-profit association, moved to Paris, and AGBU soon become the leading organization of the French diaspora, which numerous chapters throughout the country.

Up until today, the French diaspora sustains over 30 churches, dozen of schools, clubs and non-profit organizations. Many of these institutions would not exist without volunteer work. So it was the case with *Haratch*, an Armenian newspaper which was published daily since 1925, and until recently run by the founder's daughter.[8] There are also two magazines, the *Nouvelles d'Arménie* and *France-Arménie*, and three local radio stations, which serve the French Armenian community. There are two Armenian research institutes located in France, both in Paris: the Nubarian library and the Armenian Diaspora Research Center. Each institute holds collections of several thousand books, newspapers, letters, reports, films, photos and audio records, which document all important aspect of Armenian life. Both institutions meticulously preserve materials which document the Armenian genocide.

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[8] Since 2009, it is published bi-weekly under the name *Nor Haratch*, the New Haratch.

The Armenian – French relations could appear almost idyllic had France not become a site of operation for Armenian terrorists in mid-1970s, when Armenian terrorist groups started targeting Turkish diplomats. These attacks included killing of the Turkish ambassador and his chauffeur in Paris (October 1975), bombing of the Turkish Airlines office (November 1979), assassination of the Turkish attaché for tourism in the centre of Paris (December 1979), shooting of the press secretary of the Turkish embassy (September 1980), bombing of the Turkish Consulate in Strasbourg (for which the ASALA claimed joint responsibility with the PKK in November 1980), blowing up a car of another employee of the Turkish embassy (January 1981), killing of two attachés of the Turkish embassy (March 1981) and the occupation of the Turkish Consulate in Paris (September 1981).

During the latter incident, four terrorists affiliated with the ASALA demanded release of Armenian political prisoners by Turkey and threatened to blow up the consulate building including 56 hostages if the French police intervened. A Turkish security guard was killed in the attack and five other hostages were wounded. It took 15 hours before the group surrendered.

The French press reported that the Socialists, who assumed power in May 1981, made a secret deal with the ASALA – that there would be no further attacks on French soil provided that France recognizes the massacres of 1915 as genocide (Echikson 1983). Although this claim was never confirmed, France faced severe criticism for its lenient approach towards Armenian militants. Famously, the president of the French Court ruled that referring to the defendants as 'terrorists' would not be allowed, since anyone participating in a struggle can be called a terrorist by someone who opposes that struggle (Gunther 2007: 110).

The belief about a secret deal between the government and the ASALA was strengthened when the French Interior Minister Gaston Defferre declared the Armenian cause 'just'; and the four Armenians arrested in connection to the occupation of the Turkish Consulate were given relatively light sentences.

Whether there was a secret deal or not, the French authorities soon regretted their permissive approach when another attack followed in July 1983. A bomb placed in a suitcase, intended to explode in the air, blown up a check-in counter of the Turkish Airlines at Orly Airport. The attacked killed 8 people and injured 55, most of whom were French.

The Orly attack compelled the French government intervene and crack down on the network. The ASALA itself became internally split following the Orly attack and the number of its actual and tacit supporters declined, as they did not approve the high number of unintended casualties.

Yet, the French government, which showed more sympathy for the Armenian cause than other European countries, was unwilling to anger the Turkish government by recognizing the massacres of Armenians during the WWI. as genocide.

However, the attention of the Armenian French community began to focus elsewhere since 1988, when Armenia was hit by an extensive earthquake. Jean-Claude Kebabdjian, the founder of the Armenian Diaspora Research Center, refers that "the huge mobilization of the French Armenian community in aid of the victims served not only to underline how numerous they were, but also proved that contrary to what was thought, they did care" (Kebabdjian 1995).

When a few days after the earthquake, members of the Karabakh Committee, a group which advocated for unification Karabakh with Armenia, were arrested by Soviet authorities on charges of obstructing humanitarian aid from Azerbaijan, the French diaspora groups rallied in their support.

They exerted effective pressure on Gorbachev, through the European media and the EU parliament, for their release (Tölölyan 2007: 119). The Karabakh committee, headed by Levon Ter Petrossian, later formed the Pan-Armenian National Movement and became the first government of Armenia.

A few individuals from the diaspora chose to join the ranks of the Karabakh army. There are no official accounts of their number, but in any case, the group was not numerically significant. At least one of the commanders in the Karabakh war, Colonel Hovsep Hovsepian, was born in France. Hovsepian came to Karabakh in 1991, he commanded a regiment during the war and continued to live in Yerevan after his retirement.

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the door was open for establishing stable contacts between Armenia and the diaspora. Development aid for Armenia was organized through French municipalities and NGOs. Some cooperation was coordinated by the AGBU, like the initiation of a training program for volunteers from Armenia involved in grassroot activities. Other initiatives were undertaken by successful individuals from the Armenian French community. Charles Aznavour, for instance, rallied thousands of Francs through his beneficial concerts. In Paris and Marseilles, the city authorities started to subsidize community projects such as art exhibitions and cultural events. Several towns with Armenian population have decided to grant a sister-city status to a town in Armenia.

Finally, there is a need to discuss what Østergaard-Nielsen meant when she spoke about political success of the Armenians in France. The success relates to the main political objective which unites communities of Armenians around the world – the recognition of the Armenian genocide. The governmental statement to condemn the events was a joint telegram by France, Great Britain and Russia addressed to the US Department of State in May 1915. The document did not use the word genocide, but it made no bones about accusing the Ottoman authorities for the massacres.

Then, for nearly half a century, the issue was not on the agenda for any government of the world, until Uruguay recognized the events as genocide in a parliamentary resolution. Since then, 21 countries have done so. Most of the times, it was expressed through parliamentary resolutions; sometimes, the genocide was recognised by law.

A majority of the countries from the list have one thing in common: a presence of the Armenian diaspora. This is also true for Lebanon, the only country from the list which has a Muslim majority. Its case is the and is geographically close to Turkey.

In France, a resolution condemning the genocide of Armenians existed since 1998, and it was turned into law in 2001. However, in 2006, France caused a public controversy when its National Assembly adopted a law which set a punishment for anyone who would deny the Armenian genocide. The punishment was set equal as for the case of denying the holocaust, which under French law may lead to a maximum of one year prison term and a fine of 45 000 euros. The new law was welcomed by a group of Armenians with banners.

France was aware that passing the law could damage Euro-Turkish political and economic relations. Indeed, after the bill was passed, the Turkish Foreign Ministry issued the following statement: “Turkish-French relations, which have been meticulously developed over the centuries, took a severe blow today through the irresponsible initiatives of some short-sighted French politicians, based on unfounded allegations” (BBC 2006).

The bill, which was passed by 106 votes to 19, arose from a parliamentary initiative without support of the French government. The bill was not, until today, approved by the Senate. However, the French position has been advocated many times since then. For instance, during his visit to Yerevan, the then-French president Jacques Chirac proclaimed: “Should Turkey recognize the genocide of Armenia to join the EU?… I believe so. Each country grows by acknowledging the dramas and errors of its past… Can one say that Germany which has deeply acknowledged the holocaust, has as a result lost credit? It has grown.” (McConalogue 2006).

France and other EU countries, such as Austria, are often suspected of viewing the Armenian genocide recognition as a way to stop Turkey rather than as an issue in its own right (Souleimanov 2006). The recognition of the genocide has not been set as one of the conditions Turkey must fulfil in order to qualify for EU membership. However, the so-called Copenhagen criteria, set out in December 1993 by the European Council, require a candidate country to have stable institutions that guarantee democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities.

Some of the human rights requirements, such as freedom of speech, represent a problem in Turkey, where 'insulting the Turkish nation' represents a crime under the Article 301 of the Penal Code. Those charges was raised against the acclaimed Turkish novelist Orhan Pamuk, for comments which recognized the massacres of Armenians. In an interview with a Swiss publication *Das Magazin*, Pamuk said that “thirty thousand Kurds have been killed here, and a million Armenians. And almost nobody dares to mention that. So I do” (in Peuwsen 2005). Although Pamuk did not use the word genocide and did not blame the killings explicitly on the Turkish nation, a law suit was issued against him for insulting Turkishness. The 2005 trial with Pamuk was famously called by the EU Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn 'litmus test' of Turkey's commitment to the criteria for EU membership. The charges against Pamuk were later dropped and the controversial Article 301 modified. However, it has not entirely disappeared from Turkey's legislation.

6. Armenians in the United States

The first group of Armenians who arrived in the United States were students sent by US missionary organizations. They came to study theology and later also other programmes at universities like Yale and Princeton. While most of them returned to Armenia, there was a group of about seventy who decided to stay, thus ensuring that the first Armenians in the US were also the most educated (Kantarci 2001).

Soon they were followed by what we can already call the first wave of immigration. Before the WWI, over about sixty thousand Armenian merchants, craftsmen and farmers came to the United States, often as a way to avoid maltreatment in the Ottoman Empire. The second wave of Armenian immigrants were about thirty thousand refugees who fled during the WWI.

In 1924, the number of immigrants from Armenia was limited by official restrictions to 150 per year. Thus the third wave of immigration came only after the WWII, and consisted of a small number of those who fled Armenia, now part of the USSR; and by large of Armenians from Southern Europe and the Middle East, when the US government adopted an immigration law which made it possible for 'displaced persons' to enter the country and become legal residents, eligible for citizenship (Papazian 2001). The latest wave of immigration came in the 1990s-2000s, and consisted mostly of Armenians from the former USSR, including those who fled Azerbaijan as a result of the conflict over Nagorno Karabakh.

The first Armenian migrants to the US settled mostly in New York and Boston, later, Los Angeles became the most popular destination. It is estimated that 75% of Armenians who arrived in the 1980s settled in Los Angeles area, which by that time became the domicile of the largest Armenian community outside the former Soviet Union, while Los Angeles alone became the second largest Armenian city in the world after Yerevan.

There is a difference between the Armenian communities of the East Coast and the West, which to some extent reflects the difference in American culture in general, though in this case it is also caused by the much higher intake of Armenian migrants to California in the last three decades (Pattie 2005: 135).

The East Coast has a smaller Armenian population, but it is the base of major Armenian institutions. The Boston area is the domicile of the Armenian Relief Society, Armenian International Women's Association (both are in Consultative Status with ECOSOC), the Zoryan Institute, the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA), Project Save (photographic archive) and other. Most of these organizations are concentrated in the Boston suburb of Watertown.

The Zoryan Institute is a non-profit research institute devoted to the documentation, study, and dissemination of material related to the life of the Armenian people. In 1988, the Zoryan Institute played an advanced role in affecting the views of American policy-makers when it published the first informative texts on the history and the then-current situation in Nagorno Karabakh, naturally giving preference to the Armenian viewpoint. This information was distributed them to US media and statesmen.

The world's largest Armenian philanthropic organization, the Armenian General Benevolent Union, is based in New York City, but its membership is found in local chapters in a number of places in the United States and around the world. However, the AGBU does not play the role of the most important Armenian organization in the US as it does in France. The most influential Armenian organizations in the US are the Armenian advocacy groups.

A Turkish academic Senol Kantarci and Khachig Tölölyan, the most influential scholar of the Armenian diaspora, both agree that Armenians were successful in linking with US and Russian political representatives already at the end of the 19th century. In the United States, Armenians found a protector in several Protestant churches, who frequently supported the Armenian cause when addressing the White House and the Congress. It has become a tradition for top American representatives to give speeches to Armenian communities who gather each year on 24 April to commemorate the outbreak of the genocide in 1915.

The largest Armenian advocacy groups are the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) and the Armenian Assembly of America (AAA), which have their natural home in Washington, D.C. Though headquartered in the American capital, the ANCA coordinates efforts of a large number of grassroots associations, which operate in California and Michigan as well as in the North East. In line with the ideology of its founder, the ARF, the ANCA is committed to fostering public awareness in “support of free, united and independent Armenia”. Furthermore, it seeks to influence US policy on issues of concern to the Armenian American community. Among such issues, the ANCA lists “strengthening Armenia as a secure, prosperous and democratic state; supporting Nagorno Karabakh's right to self-determination and independence within secure borders; increasing US aid levels to Armenia to promote economic and democratic development; securing direct US aid to Nagorno Karabakh; ensuring the appropriate commemoration of the Armenian Genocide; and encouraging Turkey and Azerbaijan to lift their blockades and adhere to international standards for human rights and humanitarian practices.”[9] Although this may be to some degree self-righteous account of the organization's concerns, presumably the chosen order in not arbitrary, and thus they are an indication of the organization's priorities.

Another influential lobby group is the Armenian Assembly of America (AAA). It is a non-partisan group, formed in the 1970s by a coalition of long-settled Armenian Americans and recently arrived Armenian immigrants from the Middle East. Its membership is numerically small in comparison to ANCA, yet growing through recruitment among the more prosperous members of the Armenian community (Tölölyan 2007: 113). It is in Special Consultative Status with the United Nations's ECOSOC.

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[9] Quoted directly from the organization's website, http://www.anca.org/ancaprofile.php.

Both AAA and ANCA address the Armenian American community, journalists, and the wider public and educates them about Armenian history and culture. They meet the US Congressmen and Senators and the White House staff. They initiate legislation and give recommendations to Armenian Americans about which candidates to choose in US elections. They publish their political views, position papers as well as news digests from Armenia. Last but not least, they raise aid for Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh, and try to secure direct aid from the US government for both entities. Interestingly, the Armenian lobby has many times succeeded in securing direct aid for the break-away republic, though it is considered to be against Washington's principles and it was fiercely opposed by Azerbaijan.

Both the ANCA and the AAA advocate for the settlement of the status of Nagorno Karabakh; whereas the ANCA supports Nagorno Karabakh's right to “self-determination and independence”, the Armenian Assembly of America sees the future of NKR as “either as an independent state or as an integral and contiguous part of the Republic of Armenia”. None of the official documents of the ANCA (nor the AAA) mentions the issue of Turkish reparations or secession of territory, though this has traditionally been on the agenda of conservative Dashnaks, and the issue of “occupation of Western Armenia” is mentioned by European Armenian Federations, another association affiliated with the ARF.

The AAA runs a grassroots advocacy program, the Armenian American Action Committee (ARAMAC). Modelled after the influential Pro-Israel lobbying group AIPAC, ARAMAC mobilizes Armenian Americans throughout the country to contact their Members of Congress and the White House on issues that are considered critical to the community.

Other organizations affiliated with the Armenian Assembly are the Armenian Genocide Museum of America (located down the street from the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington. D.C.), the Armenian National Institute (dedicated to the study and affirmation of Armenian genocide) and the Armenia Tree Project, based in Watertown and Yerevan, which is preoccupied with reforestation projects in Armenia, having planted around 3.5 million trees since 1994.

A certain measure of effectiveness of the Armenian lobby is the size of the Caucus on Armenian Issues in the House of Representatives. As of 30 March 2010, it had 150 members[10]. This means that roughly 35 per cent members of the House belong to it, while Armenians comprise less than 0.3 per cent of the total US population.

The Armenian community regards as a major success of its lobbying efforts imposing the language in the Section 907a of the Freedom Support Act. The Section, which was signed into law on 24 October 1992, prohibited government-to-government aid to Azerbaijan. Its primary architect was the Armenian Assembly of America.

Only in the aftermath of 9/11, when Azerbaijan became a promising ally in the war on terror, the Congress modified the law. The President can now waive the Section for a one-year period on the grounds that aid to Azerbaijan would serve national security interests.

The Section has been waived every year since 2002. As Cornell (2005) notes, the US Department of Defense regularly submits requisitions for substantially larger amounts of military aid to Azerbaijan than to Armenia. This has indeed been the case in 2004, when the American financial aid to Azerbaijan exceeded the amount granted to Armenia. Nonetheless, after pressure from the Armenian organizations, funding parity was restored again by the US Congress in 2005 (Nixey 2010: 131).

According to Cornell (2005), the provision of the Freedom Support Act has formed a formidable obstacle to US efforts at acting as an honest broker in the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, as well as it hinders the US from furthering its security interests in the region.

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[10] See http://www.aaainc.org/index.php?id=39.

Lobbying in the US Congress was not the only way how the diaspora supported Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh. As Tölölyan (2007) notes, the US diaspora combined political work and financial assistance to enable the de facto state of the Nagorno Karabakh to establish and maintain offices in Washington, Moscow and Paris. As Tölölyan points out, none of the other quasistates in the post-Soviet space – Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, not to mention Chechnya – enjoys such a high level of foreign representation that the Nagorno Karabakh has enjoyed since 1991, thanks mostly to the Armenian diaspora.

Above that, Congressmen belonging to the Armenian Caucus have repeatedly spoken in favour of self-determination of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic (Tölölyan 2007). The Armenian diaspora also continues to send delegations to the Nagorno Karabakh which sometimes include US and French officials. They do so without asking for Azerbaijani permission, to the displeasure of Baku.

Armenian groups have traditionally had strong ties with Jewish groups which were established around the issue of genocide recognition. However, as Yossi Shain notes, in the late 1990s, the Azeri and Turkish governments have both improved ties with Israel in part as a way of compensating for their lack of a strong diaspora in the United States. As the Azeri ambassador to the United States said: "We understood that we needed to make friends in this country. We knew how strong Jewish groups are. They have asked us about the condition of Jews in our country. I helped them to go to Azerbaijan and open Jewish schools. They came back with [a] good understanding [of the conflict]."[11] Ilham Aliyev, who later became the President of Azerbaijan boldly announced in 1999: "we now have a lobby in the United States and that is the Jewish community" (Ottaway and Morgan 1999).

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[11] Hafiz M. Pashayev in an interview with Yossi Shain.

7. The Impact of the Diaspora on Armenia

The previous two chapters demonstrate the impact that Armenian diaspora organizations makes on Armenia by influencing foreign policies of the hostlands. Tthe purpose of the last (and short) case study it to examine the ways in which the diaspora directly affects Armenia, in economic, military and political terms.

First of all, the diaspora has been a source of capital inflow, indispensable to a country undergoing economic transition, entangled in a conflict with a neighbour state and facing a blockade by two of its neighbours. The capital inflows took the form of development assistance, foreign direct investment (FDI) as well as private transfers and remittances.

For economies in transition, inflows of FDI are regarded as especially important because they generate employment and thus further support economic growth. Since Armenia became independent, the inflow of FDI has been steadily growing as to reach 661 million US dollars in 2007 (UNCTAD). In a report issued by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Armenia is categorised as a country with low investment potential, whose achievements in attracting FDI have nevertheless been above the potential (UNCTAD 2006).

Hergnyan and Makaryan (2006) conducted a detailed survey among foreign investors to Armenia to examine the impact of the Armenian Diaspora on generating FDI to the country. Hergnyan found that about 69% of all foreign investors that directly invested in the Armenian economy between 1998 and 2004 had attachments to the diaspora. Although this portion of investment was less important in financial terms (it made up only 24% of total FDI), the Armenian diaspora represents an important source of investment to Armenia.

The work of numerous Armenian philanthropic organizations has been already mentioned. Their efforts make a difference in Armenia. The AGBU, the largest Armenian philanthropic organization, currently has an endowment of around 500 million USD, and in recent years it has been spending annually around 35 million dollars on educational, cultural and charitable projects.

Another major contributor to the Armenian economy is the Haiastan or Armenia Fund, which is headquartered in Los Angeles, but operates globally. It has been raising several million dollars every year in the diaspora and spending it in Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh. It has financed, apart from other, strategically important roads linking Armenia to Karabakh and portions of Karabakh to each other.

The previous chapter has demonstrated the impact the Armenian diaspora lobby groups made the balance of power between Armenia and Azerbaijan by influencing the foreign policy of the United States. However, it is important to mention that some members of the diaspora have opted for a more direct role in the conflict. As Tölölyan (2007) notes, there is anecdotal evidence that early in the conflict the Armenian communities in the Crimea, Moscow, and Abkhazia sent significant assistance in the form of weapons and money to purchase weapons on the black market and that a resourceful Armenian from Greece is acknowledged for crucial early shipment of weapons. A small shipment of about 250 kalashnikovs, was also sent from Lebanon by the Dashnak Party in 1991.

Due to the blockade that was imposed on Armenia by both Azerbaijan and Turkey, those shipments of weapons occurred mostly in the early stages of the conflict and were rather an exception than a rule, however symbolically, and perhaps also practically, relevant. Along with Hovsepian, a French Armenian who has commanded a regiment during the Karabakh war, a handful of other combatants came to fight in Nagorno Karabakh. The number also included officers from the diaspora communities in Lebanon, Georgia and the United States.

Through its support, the diaspora have contributed to the escalation of the conflict

after it has erupted, but at the same time, it has contributed to its termination – the fear of "loosing international prestige" was mentioned as a factor which propelled the Karabakh army to sign the armistice with Azerbaijan. It is reasonable to say that the Karabakh army would have not enjoyed the same level of international prestige (and international support connected with it) without the efforts of the diaspora.

It is likely that also in the future the Armenian diaspora will resist a resolution of the conflict in a way which will be perceived as unjust by Armenians. As pointed by Shain (2008), this may turn the negotiations into a three-level game[12], in which it will be necessary to balance not only the preferences of the negotiating counterparts and their domestic political constituencies, but also consider preferences of the diaspora(s).

7.1 Diaspora Opposing the Homeland's Government?

Ever since Armenia has regained independence, its political leaders have become aware of the strength of the diaspora, and some of them have actually experienced it in a negative way. Shain and Barth (2003) describe that the Armenian diaspora contributed to the fall of Armenia's president Ter-Petrossian in 1998. Ter-Petrossian attempted to secure diaspora's economic support, while at the same time he tried to marginalized ideological influence, which prefered more radical standpoints regarding Nagorno Karabakh and the relationships with Turkey. This was after Raffi Hovannisian, the first foreign minister of Armenia, resigned from President Ter Petrossian's government over a dispute concerning the extent to which the question of genocide recognition could be tacitly put aside in order to make negotiations with Turkey more productive (Tölölyan 2007: 120).

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[12] This notion enlarges the idea of Robert Putnam, who in the 1980s suggested that international negotiations are a two-level game in which state leaders balance two competing spheres: They need to meet the minimum demands of their negotiating counterparts, but also satisfy their domestic political constituencies (Putnam 1988).

Although the diaspora members do not participate in national elections, Shain and Barth argue that the diaspora played a crucial role in replacing Ter-Petrossian with Robert Kocharian, who, being from Nagorno Karabakh by birth, was willing to bring Armenia's foreign policy in line with the preferences of the diaspora.

After being elected as a president, Kocharian organized the first Armenia Diaspora Conference, which took place in Yerevan in September 1999. The conference welcomed Armenian representatives of various backgrounds from 54 countries. One of the goals of the conference was to gather funds for renewing war destroyed villages in Nagorno Karabakh. Kocharian's effort to use the assets of the diaspora turned out to be successful, while in 2000, the inflow of aid from the US to Armenia was 42 USD per capita – a larger aid goes only to Israel (Zwettler 2002: 42). Other two diaspora conferences took place in May 2002 and September 2006.

Conclusions

High inflows of foreign direct investment to Armenia, France's legislation on Armenian genocide, some aspects of US policy towards Azerbaijan or the election of Armenia's president Robert Kocharyan in 1998 are very diverse phenomena, which would be difficult to explain without taking into account the activity of the Armenian diaspora.

The presented cases have proved the post-nationalist/transnationalist thesis as defined by Koopmans et al.: the case studies demonstrate that the Armenian diasporas in France and in the United States exhibit more similarities than differences. The both communities of Armenians have similar lobby-political objectives, such as recognition of the Armenian genocide and raising aid for Armenia, and similar institutions which facilitate these objectives.

The case studies also demonstrate that the political, economic, and philanthropic activities of the Armenian diaspora became increasingly transnational during the last two decades. These developments accomplish what Guarnizo and Smith referred to when they wrote “dispersed diasporas of old have become today’s ‘transnational communities’” (in Vertovec 1999: 449) or what Tölölyan – writing specifically on the Armenian diaspora – described as “accelerating transition from exilic nationalism to diasporic transnationalism” (Tölölyan 2001).

Examination of the Armenian case indicates that diasporas may pose a challenge to the state-centric views of world affairs that has traditionally been the orientation of most political scientists. However, do diasporas, as transnational actors, ever prevail in direct confrontation with governments?[13] The case studies demonstrate that the diasporas may have an impact on governmental policies although there are limits. In spite of the great pressure imposed by American Armenians on the US Congress to recognize the 1915 killings as genocide, they have not, as of now, succeeded in getting recognition by law. The reason is that the US government does not want to poison its relations with Turkey, which is a key ally of the US in the Middle East.

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[13] That is what the 'skeptical scholar' of Keohane and Nye asked at the first place, cf. p. 23)?

The Armenians in France seem to have been more successful in lobbying the parliament. Facing the diaspora political lobby efforts, the French National Assembly approved a law strictly condemning the killings of Armenians as genocide, in spite of warnings that doing so could harm the French economic relations with Turkey. However, the success of the Armenian lobby in France does not allow for a straightforward conclusion for at least two reasons. First, the law has not been (and is unlikely to be) approved by the Senate, and second, it is questionable whether the law really contrasted with the French national interests, because the French government under Sarkozy constantly opposes the Turkish accession to the EU.

A remarkable achievement of the Armenian lobby in the Unites States represents the text of the Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act, which prohibits direct military aid to Azerbaijan. Following September 11, 2001, the section has been waived by the administration every year, but it has not been removed, in spite of warnings that it hinders the US security interests in the region.

Another striking example of diasporic influence on the making of foreign policy may be found in Armenia itself, where, as it was argued, the diaspora played a role in replacement of Levon Ter-Petrossian with Robert Kocharian in the presidential office and thus entrained the subsequent revaluation of Armenia’s foreign policy which was marked by a more hard-line position towards Turkey.

The second point raised by Keohane and Nye's 'a skeptical scholar' is the fact that transnational relations have always existed. This is true. As the case of the Armenian diaspora indicates, the existence of transnational ties can be traced much earlier in history than what is usually assumed. The case studies has also shown that the activity of the Armenian diaspora has significantly grown after the collapse of the Soviet Union, moreover, the engagement of the diaspora in the ancestral land has been made possible thanks to modern means of transport and communication. The third objection of the 'skeptical scholar' pertains to the fact that transnational relations do not significantly affect the 'high politics' of security, status, or war. This objection remains valid to a certain degree. Although lobbying efforts of diasporas include vital interests of states, it is a matter of individual judgement to say whether these have been significantly affected.

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