

THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

True Justice Requires The End of Geopolitics

by Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

Was there an Armenian genocide?

On April 24, this became again a burning political question, as Armenians worldwide commemorated the 90th anniversary of the tragic events.¹ Wherever there are large Armenian communities, such as in the United States and France, as well as, of course, in Armenia, calls were raised for governments to officially recognize the genocide. For its part, Turkey will continue to deny that genocide occurred, and will exert political pressure on governments to prevent any official recognition.

Such a state of affairs is a tragic testimony to the pitiful moral level to which political discourse has descended. How can the world accept, that the question of the fate of well over 1.5 half million persons, as well as relations among important states in a geostrategically critical region of the world—Turkey, Armenia, and Azerbaijan—be kicked back and forth like a political football? Is it not time for the truth to be told, and justice, finally, done?

This year, the 90th anniversary, is the most appropriate moment for all sides to acknowledge the historical record. For that to occur, it is imperative that competent historians, on both sides, work together to sort through the primary source material, to ascertain the truth. Recent reports indicate that precisely such a collaborative effort between Armenian and Turkish historians is under way. This is not only a matter of settling “who did what to whom”; but, who pulled the strings on the higher level of policymaking. As is the case in virtually

every atrocity marking the catastrophic 20th Century, so with the Armenian-Turkish conflict, it was geopolitical interests, centered in Great Britain, which manipulated both sides.

Grasping the fact that both sides were manipulated by such evil geopolitical forces, is the first step towards coming to terms with the historical record. The next step entails overcoming the past conflict, by redefining relations between the formerly hostile peoples, from a higher standpoint.

The 1648 Peace of Westphalia is the proper reference point for such reconciliation. That historical breakthrough, which put an end (at least temporarily) to a century of senseless religious warfare, was based on the commitment of all sides, to forgive and forget, all atrocities and wrongdoings; most important, all sides pledged to pursue the “advantage of the other,” that is, to define their foreign policy orientation in terms of enhancing the development of the other, as the means to achieve one’s own informed self-interest. Such a conceptual breakthrough is the most effective means to defeat the geopolitical mind and its stratagems.

A Personal Record

Was there an Armenian genocide? I can answer, without hesitation, yes. The authority I have are the personal recollections and writings of my mother and father, both Armenians, who were orphans of the genocide.

Artemis Yeramian Mirak’s Story

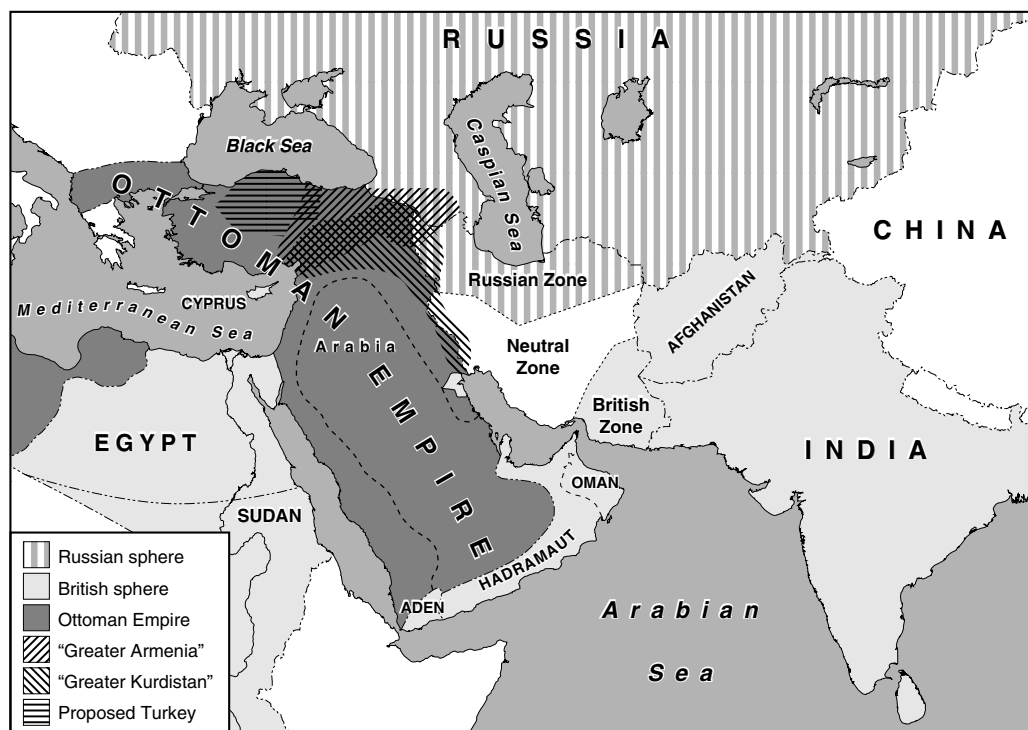
In an autobiographical account, my mother, Artemis Yeramian Mirak, wrote the following:

“I was born on November 15, 1915, in the small village

1. The date April 24 was selected as the anniversary, to commemorate the arrest, on that date in 1915, of hundreds of prominent Armenian leaders in Constantinople. They were jailed in the interior of Anatolia, and killed. The date is seen as the beginning of the genocide.

FIGURE 1

Self-Contradictory British Schemes for Breaking Up the Ottoman Empire



Like a two-bit real estate huckster, Britain offered overlapping chunks of territory to different rival ethnic groups within the rotting Ottoman Empire, guaranteeing decades of inter-ethnic strife. Turkey was to be reduced to a small area along the Black Sea coast.

called Tsack, near the town of Arabkir. My father, who had been away to the United States for 15 years, had returned to his native land in 1910, to be with his family, and perhaps persuade his father and mother to leave Turkey and go to America. He was married to Mariam Dedekian, one of the prettiest girls in the village. They both came from middle class families. They were landowners, and my grandfather, Krikor Yeramian, was the town treasurer, who would lend money to young men to go to America, to work and make money, and help their families at home. He was very secure and comfortable in his native land, so why should he go off to a foreign land? So he persuaded my father, Garabed, the only son, to stay in Turkey, and raise a family and live together.

"My mother, Mariam, . . . had children, but none of them lived. When I was born, my grandmother Maigir made a novena, *Ooquth* in Armenian. She went and collected forty different pieces of silver from the silversmith or neighbors, and had a bracelet made to be worn by the infant. Of course, it was blessed by the church priest and my mother inscribed 'Artemis' on it, and when I was christened, the word, *Abrisse*—"May you live," was added. They also had a pinafore made with forty different kinds of fabrics. The baby wore the dress over and over again. My family was very happy to have a living child, even though I was not a boy. Boys were always more desirable, because they carry the family name.

Anyway, I lived.

"In 1913, the Turkish government closed all its doors. No one could leave the [Armenian] country, no communication with the outside world. No letters came in or went out of the country. This was the beginning of the plan, the 'genocide.'

"I was just an infant when the mass killings started, 1915-1916. Our village people were gathered in the church hall; all the men, women and children were kept there for days. Then the gendarmes, the Turkish soldiers, took groups at a time, to a distance of five or ten miles and shot them to death. My mother, my grandmother, and other women, and children, were grouped, and shot to death. My mother held me, her infant baby Artemis, to her breast, so that the baby would die with her, but the bullet missed me.

"Digin [Mrs.] Bakerian survived the massacre. She saw me, knew I was alive, but where could she go with a little baby? If it cried, she would be caught, so she left me there with the dead bodies. She made her escape to the nearest village and was saved by Turkish neighbors.

"A few days later, a Turkish shepherd grazing his sheep, heard an infant crying among the dead bodies. He picked up the little infant and carried her, and left her on the steps of a Turkish mosque. I don't know for how many days this infant was left outdoors. Then, one day came a gendarme of this town, called Omar. He took pity, seeing this infant, and carried her home, and asked his wife, Gulnaz, to take her in. They

had no children. She refused to take her in; she was not going to take care of a *giavour* child, a Christian, and she said she was too old to take care of an infant. Finally, she consented to keep her overnight.

"The next morning, she took the child and left her at the doorstep. While talking with her neighbors, sitting there, what happened was, the little one crawled over to her and held onto her skirt. Right then and there, tears came to Gulnaz's eyes, and she vowed that Allah had sent this child to her, and that she would love me and care for me as long as she lived. They named me Noveria, and I was known by that name.

"She loved me dearly, and I grew up and called her 'Anna,' which means 'Mother' in Turkish. I had the best of everything: beautiful clothes—I was the only baby who wore red buckled shoes—and the best of food. I spoke only Turkish. I remember at dinnertime, that is, the evening meal, the *Kazah*, would sing the evening prayer from the minaret, and then we would start to eat our meal. This was a ritual.

"I didn't know I was an Armenian child; they kept it secret from me. Then, about 1917, or so, the Armenians who had survived returned to their homes. There was nothing left but bare walls. In order to live, some of these women went out to the Turkish homes, to do housework, and got food in return. It happened that one of my aunts, Margret Dedekian, came to our house. She recognized me immediately, but Gulnaz Hanim denied that I was an Armenian child. Then, after a fashion, she told the ladies how she had found me. She showed them the little pinafore dress, all stained with blood, and my silver bracelet. There was a warm friendship between these ladies. My relatives did their housework, and went home happy, knowing that I, too, was alive, and well taken care of.

"They went back to their village and told my cousin, Joovar Millian, that Artemis was alive, and living with a Turkish family.

"Shortly after 1917, the Armenians who had survived the Genocide were allowed to travel freely. My cousin Joovar came to visit me, but I did not know who she was. . . .

[Following the death of her adoptive father, Omar, her adoptive mother Gulnaz remarried.]

"Perhaps a year or two passed. My cousin still visited me, and they were all on friendly terms. When Omar was alive, he had warned my cousin Joovar, she should never, never think of taking me away from him; he would have killed her instantly. His warning didn't scare her, she kept coming as often as possible. When he died, things changed: the new husband of Gulnaz didn't care about me, as he had children of his own. They talked it over with my cousin Joovar. If she wanted me, she could have me.

"Also, at that time, the Turkish government passed a new law, saying, if there were any Armenian children living with Turkish families, they should be returned to their Armenian relatives—mothers, sisters, brothers, or cousins—who could claim them rightfully by law. This was in good faith; out of all evil, some good comes.

"So my Anna dressed me in pretty clothes, a beautiful silk dress and red shoes. She and her husband took me to Tsack village. We rode on horseback. I rode in the front of the saddle with my mother, and her new husband led us. I don't remember how long a journey it was. We reached the village at dusk, and it happened to be the day before Easter. All the people in the village came to welcome us, with home-made goodies, *cheoreg*, cheese, eggs, and *Kharma*, cooked lamb. We had a great dinner. What a celebration! Everyone here was Armenian, and I could not understand one word of Armenian. . . ."

Her distant relatives later took her with them to America.

John Mirak's Story

In 1988, my father reacted to a new book issued by a historian who denied the existence of the genocide, by drafting this letter to him:

"My name is John Mirak. I was born in Arabkir, Turkey in 1907. My family residence was a village near Arabkir. As there are many villages in the surrounding area, in 1914 a large plaque was hung in the center of the town, which meant that the Turkish government was at war approximately six months after. All the Armenians were told to surrender their weapons so there would be peace in our area, and the Armenians obeyed this order. Some time had passed; approximately 1915 a group of Turkish soldiers on horses entered the village and rounded up all the able-bodied men, including my father, the priests, the teachers, bound their hands and marched them out of the village, about ten miles, next to the Euphrates River. They killed some and drowned the rest. This was called the First Barkna (in Turkish) meaning, First Massacre.

"The Second Massacre took place about six months later. They took all boys, girls, and women 12 years or older, about four miles out of town and killed them. My family and my cousins were included.

"The Third Massacre took place approximately the middle of 1916. It included all the old people, men and women, and children. They gathered them and locked them in the church for four days and on the fifth day they brought them to the center of the town. I then ran to my house which was about 100 yards away. As you enter the house, my grandmother was there lying on a couch, she was very ill. I ran in the back stable to hide. I then heard Topal Nury come and ask my grandmother where I was. She told him she did not see me, he then left. Topal Nury was the Chief Executioner of the whole region of that part of the Turkish Province.

"Topal (in Turkish) means 'lame,' so it must have been a nickname.

"The . . . final massacre took place less than a mile outside of town. Because of their inability to walk any further, they were all killed there. Approximately a month later I was near the village square with our neighbor Turkish woman. Topal Nury arrived on a horse and he grabbed me and shouted, 'You were the one that escaped.' Then the Turkish woman looked at him and shouted back and said, 'Haven't you killed

enough? Why don't you leave the boy alone to care for his grandmother who is dying and his young infant brother.' So he left me alone. Within a week my grandmother died. I asked the lady's husband if he would help me to bury her, and he was kind enough to dig a grave in our land and bury her. A week later I went to him again to bury my brother who was less than a year old, and who died from starvation. I was the only Armenian in the village left. Another kind Turkish woman who felt sorry for me gave me shelter and food, and I worked for her for a few months.

"Then it was 1917; by that time a law was passed that no Turkish individual could keep an Armenian child against their will. Then one day my aunt appeared from the blue sky looking for her three children, which were killed in the Third Massacre. She heard that I was alive and came to take me. I was afraid to leave the Turkish woman, but she said for me to go with my aunt and not to be afraid. We then walked all day and night to reach Arabkir. After we arrived there we found two other Armenian women. The only means of food we had was American-sponsored Near East Relief every week. I used to go and get an allowance of wheat for two, and that was enough for the week. The man in charge of Near East Relief was Mr. Knapp. We all thought he was God. We were in Arabkir for almost a year. I had distant relatives in Aleppo, Syria. We wrote to them and they helped us to get there by caravan. We lived with them for about a year, then I had to go to an orphanage, and my aunt stayed with them, but her husband, my uncle, was in America, in Boston. He came in 1912, she finally wrote to him about us and he was able to bring us to America. We landed in Ellis Island in New York on Jan. 20, 1921. . . ."

The Historical Context

These autobiographical sketches document two facts: first, that genocide against the Armenians occurred. No child could invent such stories. Second, that the tragic events were not the expression of anti-Armenian racism on the part of "the Turkish people." I would not be alive and writing this today, had not that Turkish shepherd heeded the cries of that Armenian infant among the field of dead bodies, and taken her to the mosque; or if the Turkish woman Gulnaz had not interpreted the child's longing for protection as a sign from Allah. I would not be here if that other Turkish woman had not told the gendarme to leave my father alone, or if yet another Turkish woman had not given him food and shelter.

Thus, the tragic events cannot be explained in terms of a sociological process driven by ethnic/religious animosity between Turks and Armenians. To understand what generated those events, we have to widen the focus and look at the broader historical context.

Armenian historians distinguish three periods in the genocide: under Sultan Hamid, under the Young Turks (Committee of Union and Progress, CUP), and under the nationalists.



A group of Armenian children in front of their primary school, in the village of Mashgerd, in eastern Turkey, before World War I. Four of them, marked with an X, survived. The boy in the back row, the eighth from the left, is John Mirak.

Under Sultan Abdul-Hamid II, the first recorded massacres occurred, in 1894-96 (the worst in 1895), during which tens of hundreds of thousands of Armenians died. The victims were able-bodied men, who were killed in an effort to suppress Armenian nationalist ambitions and political groups promoting them.

The second phase, known as the Genocide, was launched by the Young Turks who had seized power in 1908. They ordered and organized the deportations of Armenians—all Armenians: men, women, children, after having executed men who were in the Ottoman Army. The modus operandi of these killings is that described by my parents: Groups were taken to remote areas, especially far from the eyes and ears of the press (journalists were not allowed outside Istanbul), and, on order of the Young Turks, gendarmes organized the deportations.

It was Mehmed Talaat, Minister of the Interior, who ran the operation. Trains, cattle cars, packed to the gills with Armenians, transported them to ferries, to cross the Sea of Marmora, and thence to the Syrian desert, where whoever had thus far survived, perished from thirst and hunger.

Between 1915 and 1917, it is estimated that 1.5 to 1.8 million Armenians, out of a population of 3 million, had died, their churches, homes, libraries, and other earthly belongings, destroyed. There were few documented cases of active resistance, the most famous of which occurred at Musa Dagh in 1915; there Armenians fled to the mountains and resisted for 53 days, until a French ship was able to take 4,000 of them to safety.

At the end of World War I, when Germany (ally of the Ottoman Empire) had been defeated, the Ottomans signed an armistice. The CUP left government; many Young Turk leaders, including Talaat, fled. Many were tried in absentia and condemned.

The third phase identified by Armenian historians, is that of the nationalist government after 1922, whose expansion-

ism pressured Armenians to flee, though not through organized massacres or deportations.

Geopolitical Manipulation

Why did “the Turks” do these terrible things? As the accounts by my mother and father attest (which could be augmented by the reports of hundreds of thousands of other survivors), it was not “the Turks.” If not the Turks, then who?

The attempted elimination of the Armenian population and nation occurred in the transition from the collapse of the decadent Ottoman Empire to the birth of the modern Turkish nation-state. The name of that transition process was World War I, the first of a series of catastrophic geopolitical adventures of the 20th Century.

The Ottoman Empire, at least by the time it was in its death throes at the end of the 19th Century, was manipulated by the Great Powers. Its finances, its military, its communications were all in the hands of European powers. When in the 1880s, the British liberals condemned the Sublime Porte (the government of the Ottoman Empire) for reported suppression of Christian minorities, Britain withdrew its protection and influence, and the German Empire became the new protector.

Under the regime of the Young Turks, foreign manipulations continued, albeit in a different form.

Who were the Young Turks?² The Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), the official name of the party, had grown up in Salonika, which served as the headquarters for many secret societies seeking to elude control by the Turkish authorities. Mehmed Talaat, the most important figure in the CUP, had his headquarters there, along with Djemel Bey, an army recruit, and army officer Ismail Enver. The CUP organized a revolt in Salonika, taking over administrative offices there and elsewhere, and established power in 1908-09. The Sultan abdicated in favor of his brother, and the Young Turks assumed important government posts.

The key figure in the Salonika operation was Emmanuel Carasso, who was not a Turk, but an Italian official of the B’nai B’rith and founder of the Italian freemasonic lodge known as “Macedonia Resurrected.” It was Carasso who provided the premises for Talaat’s group to meet. All the Young Turks were members of the secret masonic lodge, which had been set up by Giuseppe Mazzini and Emanuele Veneziano. Talaat became Grand Master of the Scottish Rite Masons in the Ottoman Empire, in 1907. The man who ran their newspaper, *The Young Turk*, was Vladimir Jabotinsky, a Zionist movement leader who would later found the infamous Irgun terrorist gang in Palestine. An associate of Carasso was multi-agent Alexander Helphand (Parvus), financier of the 1905 and 1917 Russian revolutions. After 1905, Parvus became the economics editor of the Young Turk newspaper *The Turkish Homeland*.

2. See, “Lord Palmerston’s Multicultural Human Zoo,” *EIR* April 15, 1994; *EIR*, April 12, 1996, and Sept. 10, 1999.

The Palmerston ‘Zoo’

The Young Turks were the outgrowth of a British project launched in the 19th Century by Lord Palmerston, to establish national liberation movements (Mazzini’s Young Italy, Young Germany, Young Turkey, etc.) as battering rams against rival empires. British involvement in the 20th-Century Young Turks was direct and massive. The British Sir Wyndham Deedes volunteered to serve in the Ottoman gendarmes, which were commanded by European officers. In 1910, he became a leading figure in the Young Turk government, working in the Interior Ministry, which later came under the control of Talaat, who organized the massacres. In 1913, the Young Turks pulled a coup d’état: Enver Pasha occupied the War Ministry, Djemel Pasha became Military Governor of Constantinople, and Talaat held the real power at the Interior Ministry.

The CUP promoted the ideologies of pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism. The former was the idea that all nations and regions of Turkic populations, in Asia and Russia, should be united. The idea was developed by a Hungarian Zionist, Arminius Vambery, who was an advisor to the Sultan, while at the same time, serving as a secret agent of Palmerston, and the British Foreign Office. Pan-Islamism, which implied conflict with Russia, was the brainchild of British agent Wilfred Blunt, in the 1870s. Blunt, a forerunner of today’s Zbigniew Brzezinski, viewed Islam as a means to destroy Russia.

While the British were posturing in favor of Turkic nationalism and pan-Islamism, they were at the same time supporting anti-Turkish movements: For example, the Arab nationalist revolt led by British agent Lawrence of Arabia, or the Serb, Albanian, Bulgarian, and other nationalist movements against the Ottoman Empire. The British also supported some Armenian nationalist movements and had cooked up the notion of a Greater Armenia, including historical Armenian lands from Turkey, Iran, and Russia. At the same time, the British encouraged Kurdish nationalists, and promised Kurdish leaders much of the same territory. Some Armenian nationalists enjoyed support from Russia as well.

When, in World War I, Russian armies prepared to invade Turkey through the Caucasus, crossing Armenia, the Turkish government declared that the Armenians were pro-Russian, a kind of fifth column, and deployed units of Kurds to the area. The order for deportations followed.

Despite the control over the press, news of the massacres leaked out, and European embassies in Turkey had to act. German Ambassador van Wangenheim wrote in June 1915 to Berlin, that Talaat had acknowledged that the mass deportations were not “for military considerations alone.” In July, the same diplomat reported that no doubt the Sublime Porte was trying to “exterminate the Armenian race in the Turkish Empire.” German Pastor Johannus Lepsius tried to intervene, in vain; Germany remained an ally of the Ottoman Empire.

The perfidy of the European powers is most aptly summed up in their reported response to a secret proposal by Djemel Pasha, who was trying to distance himself from the massacres.

Operating out of Damascus since 1915, Djemel proposed to the Allies that they back him in a bid to march on Constantinople and take power. Djemel used a representative of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, the Dashnaksutium, as his liaison. This liaison, Dr. Zavriev, informed the Russians of Djemel's plan to overthrow the Ottoman government. The plan, according to Russian Foreign Minister Sazanov, foresaw "a free and independent Asiatic Turkey (consisting of Syria, Mesopotamia, a Christian Armenia, Cilicia, and Kurdistan as autonomous provinces), whose supreme ruler would be Djemel as Sultan." Russia would be given Constantinople and the Dardanelles. Reportedly, Russia favored the plan and expected the Allies to comply. However, France rejected the idea in March 1916, because it wanted Cilicia and Greater Syria under its control. The British also declined. David Fromkin, who reported on the proposal in his *A Peace to End All Peace*, writes: "Djemel's offer afforded the Allies the one great opportunity to subvert the Ottoman Empire from within; and they let it go."³

Breaking the Turkish-Armenian Clinch

Now, 90 years later, the ghost of the genocide continues to haunt Armenian-Turkish relations. Armenians continue to demand acknowledgement of the genocide, and Turks continue to deny that it occurred. The official Turkish version is that the deaths were a by-product of dislocations during the war, and that Armenians had been involved in subversion.

In addition to the genocide issue, there are other bones of contention between Turkey and Armenia, especially the status of Nagorno-Karabakh, now under Armenian control. Armenia refuses to return to Azerbaijan the areas surrounding it, which Armenia occupied, until the status of Karabakh is determined, perhaps through a referendum on independence. Turkey has supported the Azeri position. Recently, the foreign ministers of Azerbaijan and Armenia met in London, seeking to prepare a summit meeting between Azeri President Ilham Aliyev and Armenian President Robert Kocharian, in May.

In solidarity with Azerbaijan, Turkey closed its eastern border in 1993, thus erecting an economic blockade against Armenia. This blockade continued despite the cessation of hostilities on May 12, 1994, and continues to the present day. In 2003, there were signs that the border might be opened, after the United States put pressure on Ankara to do so. Reportedly, the Bush Administration used the threat of promoting Congressional action to recognize the genocide, as blackmail. However, by September 2003, Washington needed

Turkey's support as the Iraq situation deteriorated, and the threats of action on the genocide issue disappeared. Azerbaijan also continued to reject lifting the embargo. The Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaksutyun), a party in Kocharian's government, held the position that normalization of relations could occur only after Turkish recognition of the genocide.⁴

If there is to be a way out of this tragic clinch, it must be sought from the standpoint of a higher political-moral concept. We must reach back to the great historical precedent of the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, to overcome the paradox of Turkish-Armenian relations today.

At that time in 1648, the peace treaty came into being thanks to the brilliant diplomatic initiatives of France's Cardinal Mazarin. It signalled a milestone in the history of human affairs, as it redefined the religious conflict, which had ravaged Europe for over 100 years, from the higher standpoint of the common good of all mankind. The main principles of the treaty were two: that each must act to promote the interest, or advantage of the other; and that all atrocities must be consigned to the past, under the motto of forgive and forget (see box).

Why should this not be the framework within which the issue of Armenian-Turkish hostilities can be resolved? There was no declaration of war between Armenia and Turkey 90 years ago. Yet, the events of those years cannot be understood except in the context of World War I, which was an exercise in savage geopolitical competition among great powers, first and foremost Great Britain, which share in the responsibility for the genocide.

Is it thinkable that Turkey and Armenia (as well as Armenians in the diaspora) could agree to a Peace of Westphalia? No doubt it is possible and necessary. At a Schiller Institute conference in Germany, in September 2004, Armenian Parliamentarian Hrant Khachatryan shared the podium with Turkish intellectual Altay Unaltay, in a panel dedicated to the strategy of tension in the region. On the sidelines of the conference, we engaged in deep discussions of the genocide issue, and came to the conclusion that the historical reality must be acknowledged: that it happened, yes, but not in a vacuum. If responsibility is to be attributed, not as a matter of retribution or revenge, but as a matter of setting the historical record straight, then the entire process, including the role of the Great Powers in the war, must be examined. A joint effort by Armenian and Turkish scholars, working on primary source records, should struggle to come to an assessment, not only of what happened, but how and why. Above all, it must be established that there was no collective guilt of "the Turks."⁵

3. David Fromkin, *A Peace To End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Avon Books, 1989).

4. David Phillips, chairman of the short-lived Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Committee, gave this account, as reported by Eurasianet.org, April 2, 2005.

5. Progress is being made on such joint research projects. The Turkish Historical Society, which recently completed a research project aimed at refuting

The Treaty of Westphalia

The Treaty, dated Oct. 24, 1648, brought an end to Europe's Thirty Years' War. Here are excerpts.

Peace Treaty between the Holy Roman Emperor and the King of France and their respective Allies.

In the name of the most holy and individual Trinity:
Be it known to all. . . .

I. That there shall be a Christian and Universal Peace, and a perpetual, true, and sincere Amity, between his Sacred Imperial Majesty, and his most Christian Majesty; as also, between all and each of the Allies, and Adherents of his said Imperial Majesty, the House of Austria, and its Heirs, and Successors; but chiefly between the Electors, Princes, and States of the Empire on the one side; and all and each of the Allies of his said Christian Majesty, and all their Heirs and Successors, chiefly between the most Serene Queen and Kingdom of Swedeland, the Electors respectively, the Princes and States of the Empire, on the

other part. That this Peace and Amity be observ'd and cultivated with such a Sincerity and Zeal, that each Party shall endeavour to procure the Benefit, Honour and Advantage of the other; that thus on all sides they may see this Peace and Friendship in the Roman Empire, and the Kingdom of France flourish, by entertaining a good and faithful Neighbourhood.

II. That there shall be on the one side and the other a perpetual Oblivion, Amnesty, or Pardon of all that has been committed since the beginning of these Troubles, in what place, or what manner soever the Hostilities have been practis'd, in such a manner, that no body, under any pretext whatsoever, shall practice any Acts of Hostility, entertain any Enmity, or cause any Trouble to each other. . . . That they shall not act, or permit to be acted, any wrong or injury to any whatsoever; but that all that has pass'd on the one side, and the other, as well before as during the War, in Words, Writings, and Outrageous Actions, in Violences, Hostilities, Damages and Expences, without any respect to Persons or Things, shall be entirely abolish'd in such a manner that all that might be demanded of, or pretended to, by each other on that behalf, shall be bury'd in eternal Oblivion. . . .

Peace Through Joint Economic Development

How can a Peace of Westphalia approach be applied to the current situation in the region?

As the historical record is being set straight by competent historians on both sides, direct negotiations should seek to establish normal relations, through lifting the embargo, and settling remaining border disputes. Trade between Turkey and Armenia is vital for both, and for the region. As Armenian Social Security Minister Aghvan Vartanian put it in July 2003: "We must normalize our relations with Turkey, Azerbaijan, and all our neighbors. This is a necessity because no country in the region can develop itself isolated from [its neighbors]. We are convinced that there is no alternative to regional cooperation."

Armenia, as a landlocked country, needs trade routes through Turkey. The Turkish-Armenian Business Development Council (TABDC), a non-governmental organization, has reckoned that, if only the Gyumri (formerly Leninakan) border is opened, trade between the two could double. Turkey would benefit from trade through Armenia, by gaining access

to markets in the former Soviet Union. If the border to Azerbaijan were also opened, Armenia's GDP would increase by one-fourth, according to Nicolas Tavitian, of the TABDC in Brussels. Tavitian noted: "The reason why Armenia is so important for Turkey is that all [main] existing [export] infrastructures are going through that country. All that existed under the Soviet Union—be it roads or railways—was going through Armenia."⁶

The solution to the problem, is to revive and expand these road and railway routes. As part of the Eurasian Land-Bridge (Figure 2) which links Asia to Europe, there are several routes to be developed.

Iran Has an Important Role To Play

Work on these grand railway projects is under way, and the most important regional role is being played by Iran. Since the independence of the former Soviet republics in 1991, Iran has based its foreign policy on rapid rail infrastructure, forging cooperative agreements with all its neighbors. Iran has become the gateway for the Central Asian republics to the Persian Gulf, and has consciously promoted this role, including in relations with Armenia. Relations between the two countries have been improving over recent years, reaching a peak in September 2004, when Iranian President Mohammad Khatami visited the Armenian capital of Yerevan. In addition

Armenian claims of genocide, has endorsed the idea of an international effort. Prof. Yusuf Halacoglu, of the Society, stated in January 2005 that a commission should be set up including scholars from Turkey, Armenia, the United States, Britain, and France. In 2004, scholars from the Society met with the Armenian Academy of Sciences and the Genocide Museum in Yerevan, to found that Vienna Armenian-Turkish Historians' Platform (VAT). They started exchanging documentary material, but further meetings were for some reason cancelled.

6. Eurasianet.org, July 26, 2003.

FIGURE 2

Eurasia: Main Routes and Selected Secondary Routes of the Eurasian Land-Bridge

to a new highway being launched to expand bilateral trade, there are discussions about a railway program, as well as contracts for an Armenian-Iranian pipeline. The 142 kilometer gas pipeline, to be completed in 2006, will provide Armenia with 36 billion cubic meters of gas over 20 years, as well as gas from Turkmenistan. In exchange for the gas, Armenia will deliver 1,000 megawatts of electricity to Iran, with the construction of two high-voltage power lines. Another pipeline, for oil, should be built from Julfa in Iran to Armenian Megri. In this year or next year, Armenia hopes to build two hydropower plants on the banks of the Arax River, between the two countries.

Iran is not only geographically and economically an important factor in the Armenian/Turkish/Azeri conflict; it is potentially the political key to resolution. The Iranians, who have excellent relations with Armenia, as well as with Turkey and Azerbaijan, have offered to mediate in solving the Karabakh conflict, as well as in easing tensions related to other issues. Given that it is not a party to any of the conflicts, Iran could play an important role as a neutral mediator.

Lyndon LaRouche, in his proposal for a solution to the Iraq crisis, defined the need for a security arrangement in Southwest Asia as primary: especially Turkey, Syria, Iran, and Egypt (as leader of the Arab world), should be the corner-

stones of such a regional security arrangement. In addition, he specified, security of this region depends on ensuring non-interference from outside interests, in the ongoing process of cooperative agreements among Armenia, Iran, and Azerbaijan.

These are the parameters for a true Peace of Westphalia in the region, bolstered by a nested series of bilateral and multilateral agreements for regional infrastructure development. Only thus can the heritage of imperialist, geopolitical manipulation of nations and peoples be overthrown, and true sovereignty gained by all.

The question is: Are there political leaders on both sides capable of rising above the propaganda, lies, prejudices, and blackmail associated with the genocide issue—all serving geopolitical interests—to seek the historical and moral truth? Are there political leaders today capable of saying: We have no guilt today for what was perpetrated by historically specific forces 90 years ago? Can they say: We have no collective guilt, but we do have the moral responsibility to honor the sacrifice of those victims, not by exacting revenge on the current leadership or future governments in Turkey, but by honoring the culture they represented, and striving to revive the spirit of cohabitation that existed between the two peoples, before the British geopoliticians entered the scene?