

THE ELIMINATION OF ARMENIANS AND GREEKS AS PART OF TURKISH
NATION BUILDING

by

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submitted to the Graduate School of Turkish Studies in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Turkish Studies

Sabanci University
October 2011

[APPROVAL/SUBMISSIONS PAGE]

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ABSTRACT

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Turkish Studies, M.A. Thesis, 2011

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Keywords : Armenians, minorities, national economy, nation building, Turkification

Like many other instances of nation building, Turkish nation building was a violent process. However, accounts of it usually focus on its constructive side or deal only with aspects of its destructive side.

This thesis analyzes secondary texts concerned with anti-minority policies and acts implemented and carried out with a view to nation building in Turkey in the period from the 1890s to the 1960s. It concentrates on how two minority populations, Armenians and Greeks, were affected by the two main goals of Turkish nation building: the homogenization of the population and the ‘nationalization’ of the economy.

It shows that the expropriation, expulsion, killing and assimilation of Armenians and Greeks in Ottoman and Republican times were important factors in making the Turkish nation. It also shows how i) the removal of Armenians and Greeks from Turkish territory and ii) the disappearance of most of the former Armenian-Greek bourgeoisie, the appropriation of its property by the Turkish state and its Muslim citizens and the cooptation

of the know-how of the remaining minority businessmen contributed to the formation of the so-called national bourgeoisie. This process can also be related to the accumulation of Muslim-Turkish capital and to the homogenization of the population in Turkey in the early Republican era. Though the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) and Kemalist nation builders largely succeeded in homogenizing the population and in 'Turkifying' the economy, their actions seem to have had unintended consequences that negatively impacted the development of Turkish civil society, class formation, education and academia, living standards, industrialization, and the project of getting on a par with Europe.

ÖZET

TÜRK ULUS DEVLET OLUŞUMU SÜRECİNDE ERMENİ VE RUM AZINLIKLARIN TASVİYESİ

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Türkiye Çalışmaları Yüksek Lisans Programı, 2011

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Anahtar Kelimeleri: azınlıklar, Ermeniler, milli iktisat, Türkleştirme, ulus devlet oluşumu

Türk ulus devletinin oluşumu başka bir çok ulus devlet inşası örneğinde de görülmüş olduğu gibi şiddet içeren bir süreçtir. Buna rağmen, bu sürecin tetkikinde bu prosenin olumlu taraflarına odaklanılmış ve menfi neticeleri incelememiştir.

Bu tez 1890 ile 1960 yılları arasındaki dönemdeki azınlıklara karşı politikaları ve yasaları inceleyen kaynakları inceleyen çalışmadır. Özellikle Ermeni ve Rum azınlıkların Türk ulus devlet oluşumunun iki ana hedefinden olan nüfusun homojenleştirilmesi ve ekonominin ‘ulusallaştırılması’ndan ne şekilde etkilendikleri odak alınacaktır.

Bu tez Ermeniler ve Rumların istamlak, ihraç, katl ve asimilasyonunun Osmanlı ve Cumhuriyet dönemlerindeki Türkleştirme politikası çerçevesinde oynadığı önemli rolü gösterecektir.

Ele alınacak iki ana mesele i) Ermeni ve Rumların Türk topraklarından ihracı, ve ii) Ermeni-Rum burjuvasının büyük oranda yokedilişi, daha evvel bu gruba ait olan mal ve varlığın Türk Devleti ve Müslüman vatandaşları tarafından tahsisi ve Ermeni-Rum burjuvasından geri kalanların bilgi ve tecrübesinden yararlanılışının sözde ulusal

burjuvasının oluřununundaki oynadıđı roldur. Bu anlatım aynı zamanda erken Cumhuriyet d6nemindeki M6sl6man-T6rk sermayasının oluřum ve birikimi ve n6fusun homojenleřtirilmesi bađlamında da uygulanabilir. J6n T6rk ve Kemalist ulus devlet kurucuları nuf6s6n homojenleřtirilmesi ve ekonominin T6rkleřtirilmesinde bařarılı olmuř olsalar dahi, bu politikanın sonucu olarak T6rk sivil toplumunun teřkili, sosyal sınıf oluřumu ve eđitim alanlarında olduđu gibi "muasır medeniyetlere ulařma" projesinde de menfi geliřmeler meydana gelmiřtir.

To my parents, my sister and Rabeea'

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply indebted to Prof. Banu Karaca who, based on her profound knowledge of minority matters in Turkey, guided and supported my thesis project with dedication from the first week. She read through drafts at all stages of completion, gave nuanced feedback and showed enduring patience.

I would also like to thank Prof. Halil Berktaş for sharing his enormous library and knowledge with me and for sitting through long question-answer sessions. I am indebted to Prof. Fikret Adanır for clarifying details and pointing out perspectives I had previously overlooked. I would also like to express my gratitude to Prof. Ronald G. Suny for his spontaneous and most valuable help with the theoretical chapter. Prof. Cengiz Şişman provided me with much-needed information on the Dönme. I would like to thank them all.

As for help with finding books and accessing articles, I would like to thank the library staff of Sabancı University and especially Mr. Mehmet Manyas and Ms. Züleyha Koçgar for their support in finding the books I needed and for providing me with articles I would otherwise not have been able to access.

I owe my friends Alex Balistreri and Tanya Lawrence great thanks for helping me with material in Turkish, for translating the abstract and for reading and commenting on parts of this thesis. My friend Cat Bobbitt has been invaluable in taking care of the printing and binding of this thesis.

I would also like to thank my parents, Angelika and Malte Moehr, who proofread parts of this thesis and helped me format it. Together with my sister Laura, they cheered me up countless times.

I am extremely grateful to my friends in Istanbul who raised my spirits when I felt low and who supported me in so many ways.

Last but not least, I would like to thank Sabancı University for having awarded me a teaching assistantship that allowed me to study here. I also greatly appreciate Sabancı's friendly environment and its Statement of Academic Freedom which permitted me to write on a controversial topic.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CUP: Committee of Union and Progress

DP: Democratic Party

RPP: Republican People's Party

1.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis analyzes the expropriation, expulsion, killing and assimilation of Armenian and Greek Ottomans (and then Armenian and Greek citizens of Turkey) in the territory of Anatolia from the 1890s to the 1960s as part of Turkish nation building and as an important source of primitive capital accumulation in Turkey. It will show how i) the removal of Armenians and Greeks from Turkish territory and ii) the disappearance of most of the former Armenian-Greek bourgeoisie, the appropriation of its property by the Turkish state and its Muslim citizens and the cooptation of the know-how of the remaining minority businessmen contributed to the formation of the so-called national bourgeoisie, to the accumulation of capital and to the homogenization of the population in Turkey.

The expropriation, killing and expulsion of several million Greek and Armenian Ottoman subjects and the repression and forced assimilation of those survivors that were permitted to stay within the state's borders and to become Turkish citizens was thus an important component of Young Turk and Kemalist nation building. This knowledge is essential for understanding how Turkish nationalism and the Turkish nation took shape in the second half of the 20th century.

Though the CUP and Kemalist nation builders largely succeeded in homogenizing the population and in 'Turkifying' the economy, their actions seem to have had unintended consequences that negatively impacted the development of Turkish civil society, class

formation, education and academia, living standards, industrialization, and the project of getting on a par with Europe. “The Turkish nation” that came into being was to a large degree the result of its leaders’ choices, planning and actions, though they acted under constraints. Had the Armenians and Greeks not been eliminated, the Turkish nation would look different today and would have different problems but also different assets.

The Integrative Approach

Many of the events and policies discussed here (for instance the Armenian genocide, the language reform of 1928 and the ‘6./7. Eylül 1955 olayları’), have been studied carefully and in great detail during the last decades. But what seems to be lacking in many of these studies is a sense that each of these events is only one piece in a big puzzle or one tragedy in a series of simultaneous, earlier and later tragedies that, among other reasons, took place because of a certain overarching ideology, Turkish nationalism.¹ Studies of the Armenian genocide, for example, usually provide earlier massacres of *Armenians* as historical context (1895, 1909, and many smaller ones) but mention the simultaneous Assyrian genocide at best in passing and never the deportation and settlement of Muslim minorities.² Yet both were aspects of the CUP’s interconnected, violent Turkification, motivated partly by nationalism and geared towards building a uniform nation.³ And the links extend beyond simultaneous policies and events, they reach far into Republican times: “In a sense the campaign of deportations and massacres exterminating hundreds of

¹ An example of the integrative approach is the following: “The fate of the Armenians in the context of total war does not appear as an isolated monolith: it is shown as a part of a puzzle – marking the tip of the iceberg – of state violence and coercion aiming at the construction of a Turkish ethno-nation in Anatolia, in opposition to other political projects. Thus the experiences of expelled or ‘exchanged’ Orthodox Ottomans (Rum) and massacred Assyrians/Syriac (Süryani and Asuri) as well as of resettled Muslims and muhacir (refugees of the Balkan and Caucasus as they were assimilated into the Turkish nation in Anatolia) are taken as parts of the broad picture.” Kieser and Plozza (2006: 48).

² One reason for the lack of historical context in many studies of the Armenian genocide, especially those written by Armenians, is the fear that any contextualization and historical comparison will diminish and relativize the Armenian genocide’s significance.

³ Bjørnlund (2008: 41).

thousands of Ottoman Armenians in 1915, although predating the republic, constituted a precedent inspired by the same homogenizing logic.”⁴ This homogenizing logic would last at least into the 1960s (expulsion of most of the remaining Greeks), if not further.

Üngör argues persuasively for studying all Turkification policies in context, since this gives us a better understanding of every one of them. He illustrates his point by giving the example of deportations:

The relevance of studying CUP social engineering in its mutual interdependence lies in the notion that the deportations can function as control groups for each other. Ultimately, the separate policies were too interconnected to be understood in total isolation. Understanding the treatment of Armenians during the forced relocations requires contrasting it with the treatment of Kurds and Balkan Muslims during similar experiences. It then clearly appears that whereas Armenians were not given proper nutrition and rest during the endless marches, the Muslims were. Mass death was nothing to be fatalistic about, it was a consequence of deliberate choices and orders for rationing issued from Istanbul, and popular conduct only exacerbated the suffering. For a large part this can explain why hundreds of thousands of Armenians died of exhaustion and starvation in 1915, but hundreds of thousands of Muslims survived the same distances and heat in the same year, or later years, when, nota bene, the Empire had even less resources at its disposal. Also, colligating the Armenian genocide with the deportation of the Kurds and settlement of Turks strongly suggests that without the former, the latter could not have been financed and carried out to the extent it was.⁵

About five, ten years ago researchers of the CUP and early Kemalist periods such as Dündar, Güven, Ülker, Üngör and Zürcher have begun to “emphasize the role of ‘ethnic reconfiguration’ or ‘demographic engineering’, the planned, interconnected, and proactive (as opposed to ‘accidental,’ isolated, or reactive) elements of these policies.”⁶ But a history of Turkey that gives the deserved emphasis to the destructive side of Turkish nation building remains yet to be written. Since the integrative approach is quite new, working on it is both exciting (lots of interesting questions, hypotheses to be confirmed or proven wrong) and challenging. There are relatively few studies that are available at the moment and a couple of very promising works are still in preparation as I am working on this piece, such as Üngör’s book *The making of Modern Turkey: State and Nation in Eastern Anatolia*,

⁴ Özkırmı and Sofos (2008:132).

⁵ Üngör (2008: paragraph 34).

⁶ Bjørnlund (2008:42)

1913-50.⁷ The study of Turkish nation building through its treatment of minorities is also challenging because of its interdisciplinarity. It requires a good knowledge of Ottoman general history and economic history, of genocide and migration literature, of Jewish, Armenian, Greek and Kurdish history, of the histories of regions adjoining the Ottoman Empire, and could easily involve sociology, psychology, literary criticism and other disciplines (see *Counting the Cost* in chapter seven). Finally, a broad knowledge of languages (Ottoman, Turkish, and Armenian in addition to Greek, Ladino, European languages and possibly others) would also be required for archival work. This thesis brings together and analyzes secondary literature rather than sources. But this should not be seen as a shortcoming, since the format and scope are new. So far, almost all studies deal with single events, only few take the integrative approach and none explains what happened within the framework I have chosen.

Organization of This Thesis

This thesis takes one aspect of Turkish history, ‘the Turkish nation’, and shows how its construction depended upon the almost total elimination of the Christian minorities. Ideally, one would include all minorities to demonstrate how they were affected by Turkish nation building. But for reasons of space and time, I will concentrate in the second chapter on how minorities, most of them Muslim, were affected by demographic and economic changes. The main part of this thesis (chapters four to seven) focuses on demographic and economic changes through the elimination of only two minorities, the Armenians and Greeks, over a period of roughly 70 years, from the late 19th to the mid-20th century.

Rather than tell chronologically what happened to these two communities, I will distinguish between homogenization of the population and nationalization of the economy in the period up to 1923 and in the period starting in 1923, respectively, and analyze the events that took place or measures the government took (or aspects of them) under these headings. Many of the measures the state took to react to events and to realize its vision of

⁷ Üngör, Uğur Ümit 2011. *The making of Modern Turkey: State and Nation in Eastern Anatolia, 1913-50*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

the nation had a double effect: they contributed to the homogenization of the nation and to the Turkification of the economy. I will therefore deal with a few of these measures twice, once to illustrate their demographic effect and the second time to explain how they furthered the Turkification of the economy.

I chose these two aspects of nation building because they had the biggest impact on the nation in the making, because they were the CUP's declared goals and because they resurfaced again and again in the treatment of Armenians and Greeks in Republican times. Another reason why I distinguish between population policies and economic policies is that the latter is too often subsumed under the former, even though it is a crucial aspect of nation building and modernization (capital accumulation).

However, this distinction should not obscure the fact that the policies described and analyzed under 'homogenization of the population' and 'nationalization of the economy' are intimately connected. For instance, someone was de facto expropriated after he was killed; and the withholding of Armenian property in the 1920s made Armenian returnees leave once again and forever which at the same time meant that the project of building a national economy had been advanced. These two dimensions of nation building also often stood in a causal relationship (some Armenians were deported to make room for the settlement of Muslim refugees in their homes). In order not to give the impression that the same outcome was the result of the same motivation or that the elimination of Armenians and Greeks happened in timeless space, the motivations and some historical or political context will be given with each instance of expulsion or appropriation.

So the broad structure of this thesis is thematic, but on the micro level events are dealt with chronologically. The downside of this approach is that it requires the reader to know the order of events and that it breaks up the overall sequence of events and thereby obscures the interconnectedness of different measures and their dynamics. The advantage of my approach, though, is that it highlights the outcomes of acts and the continuity and changes within acts of the same kind.

Chapter Contents

Chapter two outlines theories of nationalism and capital accumulation and relates them to the Ottoman-Turkish case. Chapter three is historical and divided into six periods of Ottoman-Turkish nation building from the late 19th to the mid-20th century. It includes many different minorities with the exception of the Armenians and Greeks who will be dealt with in detail in chapters four to seven.

Chapters four and five cover two aspects of nation building, the homogenization of the population and the ‘nationalization’ of the economy. Chapter four deals with the former in the period between the 1890s and 1923, and specifically expulsion (Aegean Greeks 1914, Greek-Armenian population exchange 1922/23), denaturalization, killing (Hamidiyan massacres 1894-6, Armenian genocide 1915-17) and institutional and non-institutional assimilation of Armenians and Greeks. As a result of these catastrophic events, around four million Armenians and Greeks disappeared from Turkey and largely lost their property. For Armenians, this constituted a severe attack on their very existence and it almost destroyed the non-Muslim bourgeoisie. For Turkey, it contributed to the homogenization of Anatolia (drop of the minority population from 20 per cent to two per cent) and to an increase in the percentage of Muslims working in the economy.

Chapter five deals with the same period but a different aspect of nation building: the ‘nationalization’ of the economy (ending minority privileges, discrimination against Armenians and Greeks, their expropriation, the state’s and individuals’ appropriation of their property, destruction and theft). It also asks in how far these acts were legal, what happened to their property, how it was meant to be assigned and how it was actually assigned, who benefited the most from its appropriation and what impact the elimination of Armenians and Greeks and the redistribution of their property had on economic life in Turkey. The chapter closes with a critique of the CUP’s nationalization policies and with what I call the Istanbul-Izmir paradox.

Chapters six and seven cover the first five decades of the Turkish nation state. Chapter six focuses on the removal and assimilation of Armenians and Greeks up to the 1960s. Constant steady pressure and discrimination (to only speak Turkish in public,

exclusion from state employment) and periodic harsh measures (killing and expulsion from the South

east in the 1920s, denaturalization in the 1930s and 40s, the wealth tax in 1942-43, the pogrom of 6.-7. September 1955, expulsion and expropriation in 1964) led to waves of emigration until the number of the surviving Armenians and Greeks had dropped to less than 0.8 per cent.

Chapter seven is about the Turkification of the economy in Republican times and deals with the economic effects of discrimination and expropriation, the wealth tax, and the events of 1955 and 1964. It argues that until mid-century, two parallel bourgeoisies were in existence and that the 'national' bourgeoisie only became successful after the last remnants of minority competition had been removed and minority business expertise had been co-opted. This chapter also asks how the continuity from the 1910s to the 1960s can be explained, how successful Turkish nation building was and at what cost it came with regard to the development of civil society, class formation, education and academia, living standards, industrialization, and the project of getting on a par with Europe. Chapter eight concludes this thesis.

Nation Building

Nation building offers the most persuasive explanation for the (mis)treatment of minorities in Turkey or the Turkish part of the Ottoman Empire from the late 19th century to the mid-20th century. For certain events or with a different focus, though, other explanations are equally good or even better. Thus Levene's thesis that Eastern Anatolia became a zone of genocide because its traditional, multi-ethnic societies were subjected to the West's political, economic and ideological pressures (secularism, liberalism, nationalism) which first impeded and then cancelled out pluralist accommodation and which led to several genocides in an area where there had not been major intercommunal massacres in centuries⁸ is entirely valid. So is the case for greed in the expropriation of the

⁸ Levene (1998: 398 and 419).

rich Arabic-speaking Greek-Orthodox of Cilicia in 1922/23 or Dadrian's argument for the crucial role physicians played in planning and carrying out the Armenian genocide, and for misled loyalty to Social Darwinism as opposed to the Hippocratic Oath in their medical procedures and experiments.⁹ But within the frame chosen (the territory of today's Turkey, the period from the 1890s to the 1960s, Armenians and Greeks), nation building offers the best explanation for the discrimination, expropriation, expulsion and killing by a religious as well as a secular regime, in times of war and peace, during single-party and democratic periods, seemingly in and against the majority's economic interests and in imperial and post-imperial times.

Time Period

Of course, studying these developments and events with a view to nation building also imposes certain limits, especially regarding the start date since anti-minority acts had taken place for a long time before the idea of nations came into existence. And even after the new ideology spread, anti-minority action could take place that was not necessarily inspired by it (Hamidiyan massacres). Similarly, there were events that contributed to Turkish nation building that were not intended as such, for example the waves of Muslim war and genocide victims from the Balkans and the Caucasus that sought refuge in the Ottoman Empire. Their presence increased the percentage of the population that was Muslim which agreed with Ottoman-Turkish nation building goals but was not part of a plan, it just happened and contributed to it.

I set the late 19th century as the start date since this is when we see the first signs of the Ottoman government identifying (Turkish) Muslims as the core of the Empire's population, being concerned with its welfare and trying to increase the growth of this part of the population. It is also during this period that Christians start to be viewed with growing distrust. Both of these concerns should become key features of CUP and Kemalist nation building. The fears apparent during the reign of Abdülhamid II would become

⁹ Dadrian (1986: 169-192).

formulated, systematized and translated into action during the following decades which today is called nation building. Nevertheless, there is some fluidity here both in terms of dates and events to be included. I will consider events that contributed to Ottoman-Turkish nation building after the idea first came up and indicate in how far they were part of a policy or merely happened but were recognized as advancing the nation building project.

The difficulty in settling on a start date for nation building is equally present in setting an end date since the process of nation building is ongoing. It may change direction, temporarily lose momentum or gradually become less rigorous, but it does not stop since the imaginary nation continually needs to be reconstructed. I end my analysis in the 1960s since this is the last time that a drastic act took place against one of the two minorities under consideration for which the government took responsibility. This was the expropriation of and expulsion of 11,000 Greeks that had stayed on in Istanbul in spite of the decades-long discrimination against their community, their expropriation and partial expulsion. After that time, Turkish nation building both significantly decreased in intensity (with regard to Armenians and Greeks) and changed direction. It is true that everyday discrimination against and selective attacks on the few remaining Greeks and the more numerous Armenians and their property are continuing until today but they are no longer on the same scale as during the previous periods, there have not been large-scale attacks on their property or lives since the 1960s.

As for the change in direction, Turkish nation building has been severely and increasingly openly criticized and questioned and alternative definitions of Turkishness have been proposed. This is a result of both external (EU) and internal (Turkish civil society) pressures and happened in the context of a reexamination of the state's and the military's role in society and their relation to each other. Another aspect of this public debate was calls for the respect of human dignity and women's rights in Turkey. At the same time that Turkish nationalism is gaining strength, the advocates of diversity, multiculturalism and tolerance in politics and civil society are making themselves more heard than ever before. Many individuals working in small organizations, publishing

houses,¹⁰ foundations,¹¹ and some public and private universities¹² are openly acknowledging the existence of minorities in Turkey, highlighting their contribution to Ottoman and Turkish society and fighting for their rights. They write columns in dailies, organize exhibitions,¹³ publish books,¹⁴ organize conferences,¹⁵ hold vigils,¹⁶ stage demonstrations¹⁷ and fight in court to ultimately “raise a critical and open-minded new generation.”¹⁸ A recent incident from Diyarbakır illustrates how an almost century-old policy and conviction (‘the more homogenous the population, the better’) can be counteracted. The mayor of that city offered a reward of 25 TL to anyone speaking Kurdish, Assyrian or Armenian.¹⁹ Most of these attempts at undermining and replacing the

¹⁰ “Institutions such as the History Foundation (Tarih Vakfı), the Turkish Foundation of Social and Economic Studies (TESEV), publishing houses like İletişim, Aras, Belge or the newly founded Birzamanlar, private universities such as Sabancı University [...]” Goltz (2006: 181).

¹¹ Such as the Hrant Dink Foundation, established in 2007.

¹² See the many courses in Turkish Studies, Ottoman History and Cultural Studies at Sabancı University that deal with minority experiences in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey. Another example is Kadir Has University which is planning to offer an Armenian language course; ‘Turkish University to Offer Armenian Language Course’, The International Herald Tribune, May 16, 2011.

¹³ For instance the photo exhibition “Tümamiral Fahri Çoker’in Arşivinden: Ellinci Yılında 67 Eylül Olayları” at the Karşı Sanat Çalışmaları in Istanbul in 2005 or the project “EBRU: Reflections on Cultural Diversity in Turkey” (URL: <http://www.ebruproject.com/EN/index.asp>) or the exhibition Horovel at Depo in Istanbul in 2011 (URL: http://www.depoistanbul.net/en/activites_detail.asp?ac=47).

¹⁴ Both academic books and ‘memory literature’ written by members of the minorities who recall their childhood or tell their parents’ story.

¹⁵ See the conference ‘Ottoman Armenians During the Decline of the Empire: Issues of Scientific Responsibility and Democracy’ which was held at Bilgi University in 2005.

¹⁶ In commemoration of 24 April 1915.

¹⁷ See the tens of thousands of mourners at Hrant Dink’s funeral in 2007.

¹⁸ Goltz (2006:181).

¹⁹ “Belediye Kürtçe bilen personeline 25 lira daha fazla verecek – Diyarbakır”.

Diyarbakır Sur Belediye Başkanlığı, Kürtçe'nin Kurmanci ve Zazaki lehçeleri ile Süryanice ve Ermenice bilen personeline 25 lira daha fazla ödeme yapılacağını açıkladı”, 11 Mayıs 2011. URL: [13:08http://www.medya73.com/belediye-kurtce-bilen-personeline-25-lira-daha-fazla-verecek-haberi-638313.html](http://www.medya73.com/belediye-kurtce-bilen-personeline-25-lira-daha-fazla-verecek-haberi-638313.html)

unitarian concept of society were unthinkable only twenty years ago and would have landed one in prison. Today, they no longer do so automatically.

Some of those approving these developments do so wishing to tie back to the supposedly harmonious coexistence of all millets in Ottoman times while others seek to i) make the often unjust treatment of minorities in Turkish history known and, with thereby sharpened senses, ii) end their discrimination, the suspicion against them and the attacks on them still taking place today. Even though numerically still weak, the move to acknowledge and appreciate diversity has had a big impact on the interested public and, together with the EU's conditionality, changed the Turkish state's dealings with some of the minorities. Parts of society started to see multiculturalism as an asset rather than a shortcoming and the state had to improve its treatment of minorities.²⁰ Consequently, the nation in the making today is different from the one in the making fifty years ago. In this sense, the Turkish nation building project has changed direction which is why the period under consideration here ends in the 1960s.

Armenians and Greeks

Among the many ethnic and religious groups in the Ottoman Empire, those recognized as separate millets by the Ottomans (Armenians, Greeks and Jews), as minorities in the Treaty of Lausanne (Armenians, Greeks, Jews) or unacknowledged as minorities (Kurds, Circassians, Arabs, Chaldeans, Laz, Bosnians, Albanians), why did I choose Armenians and Greeks? Like them, Jews were victims of expropriation, Kurds were killed, expelled and deported, Circassians forced to give up their languages and Chaldeans to convert to Islam. The Ottoman commercial bourgeoisie, too, consisted not only of Armenians and Greeks, but also of Jews, Levantines and Dönmes. The reason I chose Armenians and Greeks is that they best show how Turkish nation building through the homogenization of the population and the 'nationalization' of the economy worked.

²⁰ İçduygu, Toktaş and Soner (2008: 361).

First of all, the Armenian and Greek communities were bigger than the Jewish and Assyrian ones (about four million as opposed to less than two million) so that whatever happened to them had a bigger impact on society as a whole than actions against a numerically smaller group.

Secondly, Armenians and Greeks were present both in the cities and in the countryside²¹ and, taken together, were found almost everywhere in Anatolia. Jews, on the other hand, inhabited mostly cities and primarily those in the West of Turkey. Assyrians, for their part, inhabited only rural areas and were concentrated in the Southeast of Turkey. Therefore, any action against Armenians or Greeks as a group would affect life both in the cities and in the countryside whereas action against Jews or Assyrians would mostly affect either urban centers or the rural parts and only a limited geographic area. More specifically, those urban Greeks and Armenians that made up the bourgeoisie also dominated it. Therefore, policies targeting Armenians or Greeks affected both the make-up of the bourgeoisie *and* the make-up of Anatolia's population at large whereas policies against Jews only affected the bourgeoisie and city dwellers to a limited extent and those against Kurds or Assyrians mostly the rural population but not the bourgeoisie. Since Turkish nation building first destroyed and then remodeled the bourgeoisie and the ethnic make-up of Turkey, Armenians and Greeks are the only two groups that demonstrate the effects of both policies thanks to their numbers and membership in the bourgeoisie.

But the Armenian and Greek communities also differed from each other which explains the different treatment they received by the Turkifying state, namely why Greeks were mainly expelled whereas Armenians were also killed in the hundreds of thousands. The two communities were concentrated in different geographies, Greeks mainly on the Aegean, in the world's eye, as opposed to Armenians whose main settlements were in the east of Anatolia. The Armenian challenge (consisting in revolutionary parties, namely the Daşnaktsutium and Hınçaktsutium in Ottoman cities and in Europe, *fedayeen* in the eastern border areas, an Armenian population living on the other side of the border on Russian territory, and the existence of the Armenian Question in European diplomatic circles) was

²¹ 25 per cent of Armenians were urban, 75 per cent peasants and fewer than 10 per cent of all Armenians lived in Constantinople, over 90 per cent in the provinces. Göçek (2002: 28).

much greater than the Greek one: Ottoman Greeks were separated from Greece by the Aegean, the Greek kingdom did not serve as a base for guerilla activities and there was no comparable Greek question. In addition, the Ottoman Greeks were backed by a Greek state with an army that the Ottomans feared whereas there was neither an Armenian state nor an Armenian army to take action in case the Ottoman Armenians were attacked. An Ottoman attack on the Armenian community therefore bore a much smaller risk and higher rewards than one on the Greek community which posed a smaller risk and an attack on which would be more costly.

Significance

The study of the Ottoman-Turkish case of nation building after the end of Empire is important because of its similarities with and differences from other cases of nation building and because it is crucial to understanding much of what is happening in Turkey still today. The ideology underlying the CUP's and Kemalists' destructive nation building policies (one religion: (secular) Islam, one language: Turkish, one past, one future, belief that non-Muslims cannot be Turks) did not end with the Republic's establishment, the vision of the nation to be built remained basically the same, only the means of achieving it were less excessive with regard to Armenians and Greeks (expulsion, destruction of property, expropriation but no more large-scale killing). Kurds, though, suffered the most under Turkish nation building measures during Republican times which illustrates the ideological continuity from the CUP's to the Kemalist regime. And this ideological continuity is no coincidence since many Young Turks who were guilty of having planned and carried out the violent elimination of the Armenians and Greeks turned into Kemalists and were awarded high posts in Republican Turkey. The best example of this is Celal Bayar, later Turkey's president (1950-1960), who in late Ottoman times was involved in the expulsion of the Aegean Greeks in 1914 and in the Armenian genocide in 1915-17, as well as in Republican times in the 1955 pogrom.²²

²² Göçek (2011: 20).

The events of the 1910s and 1920s were so momentous that, a century later, they are still crucial to understanding important aspects of Turkish reality. Without having an understanding of the events and ideologies of the time, one cannot make sense of the material realities and discourses in Turkey in the 21st century. For example why there are so few Armenians and Greeks left even though they had supposedly lived in harmony with their Muslim neighbors in the Ottoman Empire. Why the Jewish community is dwindling even though there is said to be no anti-Semitism in Turkey. Why it is an insult to be called a *Dönme*. Why calling for the right to teaching Kurdish in schools exposes one to the accusation of supporting separatism. Why Alevi *cems* are not regarded as houses of worship. Why it was necessary to set up a new bourgeoisie even though there had been a prosperous one in place, and many more such questions. The path Turkey followed had and still has all kinds of implications for its treatment of minorities, state-society relations, civil society, democracy and its relations with various neighboring states and other countries which is why it is important to study the beginnings of Turkish nation building.

Material, Omissions, Limits and Opportunities

I used most of the material on the topic available in English and some in French and German. Due to lack of time and my limited knowledge of Turkish, I was not able to use important secondary literature in Turkish except occasionally, nor did I use works in Armenian. I am also leaving out any discussion of the origins of the idea of a national economy and the origins of the non-Muslim bourgeoisie. Furthermore, the amount of material available does not always correspond to the significance of the event. The deportation of the Pontus Greeks, for example, clearly merits inclusion, but only Turkish studies were available on the topic.

Beyond personal constraints, there are others that exist for any scholar working on the topic, namely the dearth of oral and written testimony, the inaccessibility of certain archives and the fact that little research has been done so far. The passage of time, around a hundred years, means that all eyewitnesses are deceased by now so that we have to rely on the accounts of their descendants, friends and neighbors, whose accounts get less concrete

and reliable with every transmission. Nevertheless, Leyla Neyzi calls oral history the “only significant approach”²³ for learning anything about the 1910s and 1920s.

As for written testimony, there is the problem of illiteracy, certain information never having been put to paper and other information having gotten lost or being inaccessible. Certain statistics or figures that scholars wish they had were simply never drawn up, such as a precise census or a socioeconomic survey at a certain point in time or an early oral history project. These undertakings were either not possible with the instruments of the time or there was no interest in collecting such information. One reason for the lack of personal written history is that only 10 per cent of the population knew how to read and write when the republic was founded and still only 40 per cent in 1960.²⁴ Only a small minority of the population was therefore able to write letters, keep a diary or write their memoirs, if they wanted to. And even when such written testimony existed, it could easily get lost, be destroyed or kept locked away, inaccessible to researchers. The inner circle of the CUP, for instance, burnt “suitcases full of documents”²⁵ before fleeing on a German submarine to Odessa. And certain Turkish and Armenian archives (for instance the Daşnaktsutian’s in Boston) are partly or fully closed to researchers.²⁶ Thus there are questions that we will probably never be able to answer, especially those involving psychology, such as how the remaining minority businessmen felt about working for Muslim companies in the 1950s and 1960s, how people who had committed crimes dealt with their feeling of guilt and how Armenian and Assyrian orphans experienced growing up in Turkish state orphanages.

But there remains a lot to discover and a lot that can be found out. Much of the material evidence and many of the surviving documents have not been used to full potential or the findings are still awaiting publication (see Edhem Eldem’s research in the Ottoman Bank archives).²⁷ Also, the extensive literature on other cases of nation building or state-directed violence could be used to improve our understanding of the Turkish-Ottoman case

²³ Öztürkmen (2003: 181).

²⁴ Karpat (1973: 23).

²⁵ Üngör (2008 b: paragraph 33).

²⁶ Pers. com. Berktaş.

²⁷ Pers. com. Berktaş.

by giving researchers ideas for questions to address to Ottoman-Turkish sources. That literature covers the side of the victims and of the perpetrators, the short- and long-term consequences as well as material and psychological effects. The experiences of aboriginal and Polish orphans and foster children, the effects of forced labor on Nazi concentration camp and GULAG camp survivors, the redistribution of plundered Jewish property in Nazi Germany are only a few of hundreds of examples that could inspire the study of nation building in Turkey.²⁸

One could for instance try to find out how many and which firms were established in 1916. Or investigate the foundation history of the big industrial firms in Turkey. Or uncover the ownership history of all kinds of grand buildings in Istanbul and provincial cities and uncover regional and social differences. One could find out in how far Jews, Christian Arabs and Levantines profited from the elimination of Armenians and Greeks. And how the representation of minorities in academia and certain professions changed. Or how exactly Muslim or Turkish industrialists became rich and in how far they profited from the acquisition of minority property, the elimination of competition and the cooptation of minority know-how. Other questions worth investigating are what kind of resistance there was to the deportation of Armenians. Who the ‘righteous’ were that saved Armenians by disobeying orders or hiding them, and what their motives were. Göçek gives the example of Hüseyin Nesimi who opposed the deportation of the Armenians because CUP policies contradicted the *sharia*. She notes that religious opposition to the CUP has been downplayed throughout Republican times.²⁹ Casting light on minority- and nation building related issues would therefore contribute to our overall understanding of Republican history. Some of these questions will come up again in the course of this thesis and I will attempt to give preliminary answers to them.

²⁸ Pers. com. Berktay.

²⁹ Göçek (2011: 236).

Terminology

Finally, a note on terminology which is particularly necessary considering that literature on this issue is, sometimes unconsciously, colored by a nationalistic and apologetic mindset which produces misnomers and euphemisms.³⁰ For a start, I call what happened in Thrace in 1934 and in Istanbul and Izmir on 6.-7. September 1955 not an ‘incident’ which belittles terror tactics, violent robbery, rape and murder, but ‘pogrom’ since it was an attack on the life and property of a minority group and in part carried out by a mob.

The terms ‘national bourgeoisie’ and ‘nationalization of the economy’ stem from a nationalist mindset which declares non-Muslims or non-Turks to be outsiders and refuses to accord them the same rights as other Turkish citizens. I therefore only use them with quotation marks. In the context of Turkey’s ‘national’ economy, ‘national bourgeoisie’ and ‘Muslim bourgeoisie’ are often used interchangeably. But it is only correct to call the bourgeoisie that came into existence during the war years ‘Muslim’ in the sense that they were not ‘Christian’. It was not ‘Muslim’, though, in two other senses. Firstly, its members were not pious Muslims. Rather, the bourgeoisie the CUP and Kemalists created consisted of men who resembled them, whom they promoted for sharing their views and for being politically loyal to them. Consequently, they did not set much store by Islam, they were skeptical of religion or even antireligious. It would therefore be more accurate to call the bourgeoisie that came into existence from the 1910s and twenties onwards an anti-minority non-religious bourgeoisie of Muslim origin. There was no truly Muslim bourgeoisie until the emergence of the ‘Anatolian Tigers’ in the 1980s. Secondly, it was not ‘Muslim’ since possibly an important part of it consisted of the Salonicans who were for a large part Dönme. ‘National’ and ‘Muslim’ are thus equally inaccurate for describing the new economy or bourgeoisie, but since ‘national’ conveys the nationalist and secular outlook better, I will use that term.

‘Homogenization of the population’ and ‘nationalization of the economy’ in the Ottoman-Turkish case refers to efforts at making the population and economy more

³⁰ Kaiser (1997).

Muslim and then more Turkish Muslim. From CUP times onwards, one can therefore speak of the Turkification of the population and economy. My understanding of Turkification, though, is substantially different from that of Bali and some other Turkish authors. For them, Turkification means the conversion of non-Muslims into Turks of Christian or Jewish faith in the 1920s and 30s.

It was a social contract. It could even be seen, from the non-Muslim perspective, as an upgrading of their social status, from the dhimmi status they held until 1923, to a citizenship status that they might obtain after the foundation of the Republic, so long as they became ‘Turks’.³¹

I share Aktar’s view who defines Turkification as “[...] a set of policies aimed at establishing the unconditional supremacy of (sic!) Turkish ethnic identity in nearly all aspects of social and economic life.”³² This supremacy could only be achieved through pressure and use of force and is thus a negative, harmful policy that, far from ‘upgrading’ minorities, denied them full citizen rights no matter how much they turkified.

The terms ‘Turkish’ and ‘Armenian’ I use fully well knowing that there is no such thing as Armenian blood or Turkish genes. It does not refer to citizenship but to the *ethnic and communal* adherence a person claims for himself or is claimed to have by others on the basis of his mother tongue, his religion, his descent or his way of life. Thus I refer to a Turkish citizen who thinks of himself as a member of the Armenian community or who is thought of as such by non-Armenian Turkish citizens as ‘Armenian’. The term ‘minority’ I use in the sense in which it was used in the Treaty of Lausanne, namely only for Jews, Armenians and Greeks, except in chapter three where it refers to any ethnic group that was not in the majority.

³¹ Bali (2008: paragraph 41).

³² Aktar (2004: 9).

2.

THEORIES OF CAPITAL ACCUMULATION AND NATIONALISM

This chapter outlines several theories and concepts that are useful for better understanding the expropriation and elimination of Armenians and Greeks as well as other minorities in the Ottoman Empire and in the Turkish Republic. In this chapter, though, only brief references will be made to the case at hand while chapters four to seven will deal with the expropriation and elimination of Armenians and Greeks in great deal. Marx's theory of capital accumulation, constructivist theories of nationalism and Weber's concept of the ideal type serve to explain some of the many changes that took place in the Ottoman Empire within a couple of decades: the growing intolerance towards non-Muslims and non-Turks, the expropriation and almost total disappearance of non-Muslims, the redistribution of their property, Turkey's economic development, and the contradictions and unexpected consequences of these changes.

Marx's theory of capital accumulation states that the onset of industrialization in Europe depended, among many other factors, on huge funds that owed their existence to the extensive use of violence. One may ask where the funds for the industrialization of Turkey came from and whether the plundering of the non-Muslim minorities had anything to do with it. Constructivist theories of nationalism recognize that there is nothing natural about nations and that the characteristics its members supposedly or actually share are to a large degree the outcome of the sustained and violent suppression of other traits. Turkish nationalists suppressed and eliminated anything they deemed non-Turkish which accounts for some of the dramatic changes the Ottoman-Turkish population and its society witnessed. Weber's concept of the ideal type highlights the substantial difference in basic

social organization between Empire and nation which is highly relevant to the Ottoman-Turkish case since it deals with the transition from Empire to nation state.

Capital Accumulation

Marx distinguishes between primitive (meaning original) capital accumulation and capitalist accumulation in the modern era.³³ The latter came about as industrialists invested capital, produced commodities, sold them, and channeled the profits back into the capital fund and reinvested. This was a strictly economic process that operated through market forces. But in order to be able to produce goods on an industrial scale, industrialists needed lots of capital. So the question is how they acquired this capital in the first place, how primitive capital was accumulated.³⁴

Since the beginning of the modern era, wealth was accumulated rapidly in Western and Southern Europe (primitive accumulation) through plunder, exploitation, dislocation and mass murder. Examples of it are the Spanish conquest of much of the Americas, English piracy, the slave trade, the colonial exploitation of the Irish and the exploitation of a given country's own rural population. In all of these, the early modern European state played a central role in that it financed, planned and advocated these undertakings and condoned their frightful human cost. Thus this first accumulation of capital did not obey market forces but came about through violence. The primitive capital thereby accumulated started to be converted into industrial capital in the late 18th and early 19th century.

The enclosures in England and Scotland are one example of the primitive accumulation of wealth. The act for the enclosures of commons (16th century) was a parliamentary form of robbery that deprived peasants of their commonly held land, assigned it to large landowners and thereby concentrated extensive estates in few hands. The second stage in the robbery of the rural population was the so-called clearing of estates which drove peasants out of their huts and destroyed the basis of their lives. To give an example from the estate of the Duchess of Sutherland:

³³ Marx (1974: 531-724).

³⁴ Pers. com. Berktaç.

From 1814 to 1820 these 15,000 inhabitants, about 3,000 families [who had remained after an earlier clearing], were systematically hunted and rooted out. All their villages were destroyed and burnt, all their fields turned into pasturage. British soldiers enforced this eviction, and came to blows with the inhabitants. One old woman was burnt to death in the flames of the hut, which she refused to leave.³⁵

As a result, masses of former peasants migrated to the cities and would later provide the workforce for the emerging industries:

The spoliation of the church's property, the fraudulent alienation of the State domains, the robbery of the common lands, the usurpation of feudal and clan property, and its transformation into modern private property under circumstances of reckless terrorism, were just so many idyllic methods of primitive accumulation. They conquered the field for capitalistic agriculture, made the soil part and parcel of capital, and created for the town industries the necessary supply of a 'free' and outlawed proletariat.³⁶

Marx rightly concludes that "capital comes dripping from head to foot, from every pore with blood and dirt."³⁷ To return to the topic of this thesis, one may wonder where Turkish primitive capital accumulation came from. Referring to Akçam,³⁸ Öktem states that

[c]apital accumulation through dispossession is not alien to the logic of capitalist development, yet a closer examination of how this has been done in Turkey might reveal how significant this dispossession was for the country's future development. While the transfer of capital took place on several occasions, the infamous law of deportation and the subsequent Armenian massacres of 1915 was probably the most significant turning point in this respect.³⁹

Chapters five and seven argue that the expropriation of Armenians and Greeks contributed substantially to capital accumulation in the hands of nominally Muslim Turks.⁴⁰

³⁵ Marx (1974: 682).

³⁶ Marx (1974: 685).

³⁷ Marx (1974: 712).

³⁸ Akçam (1996).

³⁹ Öktem (2004: 566-67).

⁴⁰ It was not the only source of primitive capital accumulation nor did the overall amount of capital in Turkey increase. Rather, it decreased due to war-time destruction and losses which, along with other reasons, probably delayed Turkey's industrialization. However, it could be that capital in Turkey, though overall reduced, became more concentrated with its redistribution in the 1910s and 1920s which would make the Ottoman-Turkish case a good example of Marx's theory of primitive capital accumulation.

Theories of Nationalism and the Relationship of Nationalism and Capitalism

According to the 'objective' approach to nationalism, a nation is a large group of people that have a common descent, a common language and a common religion and whose members live in the same locality.⁴¹ Variations of this definition add "material interest [...] and military necessity"⁴² or include the economic element, such as Stalin's definition of the nation from 1913: "A nation is a historically constituted and stable community of people formed on the basis of common language, territory, economic life, and psychological makeup revealed in a common culture"⁴³

Knowing that the common characteristics of nations that nationalists see before them or seek to bring out (common language, religion, etc.) are the result of state interference, one may ask how exactly they come into being. The answer is that they are very often the result of displacement, killing, expropriation, forced assimilation, a national school curriculum, indoctrination, the use of loaded symbols such as the national flag and anthem and many more. The process of bringing these common characteristics into being is called nation building. In this thesis I will show how gravely minorities, and especially non-Muslim minorities, were affected by Turkish nation building.

The next question is how capital accumulation and capitalism on the one side and nationalism and nation building on the other are related. They are both historical phenomena of the last few centuries. Significant capital accumulation started with the reconnaissance and Europe's gradual conquest and subjugation of most parts of the world. The amounts amassed became critical around the 18th century and, in conjunction with complicated other factors, made possible industrialization, first in England and then other

⁴¹ Pers. com. Berkay.

⁴² These were two characteristics of what was commonly held to be a nation. Renan refutes this view in his famous essay 'What is a Nation' in 1882. Renan (1996).

⁴³ J. Stalin, Marxism and the National Question, *Prosveshcheniye*, Nos. 3-5, March-May 1913, Marxists Internet Archive, URL: <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1913/03a.htm#s1>

countries. It also brought a bourgeoisie into being many of whose members were receptive to the idea of the existence of nations.

The ideology of nationalism depended on developments that started in Central Europe in the 16th century, at the same time as primitive capital accumulation.⁴⁴ Nationalism spread first in Europe and then beyond it in the 19th century and nations started to be built both top down (by states or governments) and bottom up (by intellectuals, enthusiastic activists unrelated to the government, and the pressure of nationalist masses). The same was the case with primitive capital accumulation (the monarchy funded imperial enterprises and settlers collaborated in the exploitation of the colonized). Both nation building and capital accumulation often went hand in hand with violence. Lastly, both nationalism and capitalism were in complicated ways related to the emergence of a bourgeoisie.

Thus both primitive capital accumulation and nation building are outgrowths of modernity and depend on the same method (violence) and are closely related in that capital accumulation is often part of nation building and in that nation building can be one of the results of capital accumulation. This is not to say that the driving motive for the elimination of people is the desire to accumulate capital but that acquiring the victims' property could be one motive among several and that even when it was not, nation builders appropriated what was left behind as a result of their actions.

What we can say is firstly that there seems to be an *affinity* between nationalism and capitalism though no causal connection and secondly that capitalism and nationalism can contradict each other because capitalism strives for rationality and economism whereas nationalism often demands uneconomical and irrational policies because of its emotional and appeal.⁴⁵ The elimination of Armenians and Greeks, for instance, was in total agreement with Turkish nationalism, but contradicted capitalist rationality which would have left these two communities, or at least their bourgeoisies, in place. I will return to this point in chapter seven under Counting the Cost.

⁴⁴ Anderson (1991).

⁴⁵ Pers. com. Suny.

Ideal Types of Empire and Nation

Weber's concept of the ideal type is useful in highlighting the characteristics of, for instance, empire, better than a definition could. The ideal type is neither a description of reality nor a hypothesis but a concept, "a utopia which has been arrived at by the analytical accentuation of certain elements of reality,"⁴⁶ which helps one arrive at them.

An ideal type is formed by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified analytical construct.⁴⁷

According to Suny, the ideal type of 'empire' is marked by i) institutionalized difference, meaning that people are grouped into dominant and subordinate groups (in the Ottoman Empire Muslims over Christians or Turks over other ethnicities) and ii) institutionalized inequity or distinction that gives the right to subordinate (in the Ottoman Empire the concept of dhimmitude).⁴⁸ This nicely contrasts ideal social and institutional characteristics of empire with those of nation since a nation is thought of as a "fraternity of equals"⁴⁹ But since these are imaginary models, no real-life empire or nation agrees with them completely. All empires have national characteristics and all nations have imperial qualities.⁵⁰

This is highly relevant to the Ottoman-Turkish case at hand since, broadly speaking, it deals with the transition from empire to nation, from subjecthood to citizenship and from a religiously defined population to an ethnically defined nation. This transition period started before the Tanzimat and explains the existence of national characteristics in the late Ottoman Empire such as the state's increasing attention to Muslims and then Turks and the Republic's continuing equation of non-Muslims with second-class citizens. The Empire had been tolerant of difference and had institutionalized inequity in the concept of dhimmitude.

⁴⁶ Weber (1949: 90).

⁴⁷ Weber (1949: 90).

⁴⁸ Pers. com. Suny.

⁴⁹ Anderson (1991: 7).

⁵⁰ Pers. com. Suny.

The Turkish nation state in principle treated all citizens equally, but not before eliminating those that could not be equals. And even then, certain groups of citizens were factually treated as lesser citizens.

The National Idea and Nation Building

The question why the nation came to be equated with the people and why the nation as the people came to be the ‘winning’ unit of political organization in the 19th and 20th centuries is very complicated.⁵¹ I will therefore confine myself to the Ottoman-Turkish case in saying that there were strategic and ideological reasons for the espousal of the national idea by certain Ottoman leaders and intellectuals. The strategic one was the recognition that the powerful, imperial states of Europe were all nation states or nation-empires. Educated Ottomans increasingly concluded that in order to withstand their encroachments and pressure, the Ottoman Empire had to take on more national characteristics. At a later point, possibly as late as 1918, the CUP realized that its only realistic chance of preventing at least Anatolia from falling under occupation was to concentrate on that area. Thus in order to defend their turf, the Young Turks turned national.

Equally important, but probably coming second in chronology, were ideological reasons for the espousal of the national idea.⁵² First intellectuals and then the masses came to believe that nations are facts of nature, that they have always existed and that it was their duty to reconstitute them, that ‘lost’ or alienated members of the community had a right to know their affiliation and to be included. They also believed that anybody potentially harmful to the nation needed to be identified and removed from it. The interplay between security and ideological reasons is complicated but what can be said is that the two factors reinforce each other.

As mentioned earlier, nation building is the process by which the ‘objective’ characteristics of nations such as language and religion are brought into being. It affects the whole population to different degrees because some parts of it resemble the nation already

⁵¹ Pers. com. Suny. See also Hall and Gieben (2003: 90-98).

⁵² Pers. com. Suny.

more than others. Nation Building has intellectual, political, cultural and economic dimensions that each have a different weight at different stages of the nation building process and in different countries. In the Ottoman-Turkish case, it encompasses anything from the replacement of the fez by the Western hat to the de-ethnicization of folk dances,⁵³ the abolishment of the caliphate, the expulsion of Greeks, the types of architecture promoted,⁵⁴ the kind of compulsory military training young males receive, the boycott of Armenian shops to the history that is taught at school, and countless other measures that change the physical, mental and psychological makeup of the population.

Hroch distinguishes three stages in the nation building process in Europe: Firstly, there need to be certain objective preconditions for the formation of a nation such as some common past, linguistic or cultural ties and a conception of the equality of all members of the group.⁵⁵ Only then can intellectuals of this non-dominant group develop their national ideas and get a response to them. As yet, they do not make political demands, it is merely an intellectual pursuit. In the second phase, a new activism seeks to win over people to the political project of creating a future nation. The third phase is reached when it becomes a mass movement and a full social structure comes into being.⁵⁶

This can be applied to the Ottoman Empire with certain modifications: Turkish Muslims, if not the majority, were the dominant group, Turkish nationalism developed not out of intellectual curiosity but with the aim to counter subject populations' nationalisms and it was able to affect and change the social structure without or before having become a mass movement.

What is totally absent from Hroch's periodization, though, is the practical side. He gives the impression that nation building is a benevolent, democratic process when it is actually very often an egoistic and authoritarian undertaking. I will deal with the violence necessary for the 'full social structure' to come into being in the next chapter. However, Hroch is right in stating that three processes are decisive for the transition from one stage to

⁵³ Öztürkmen (2002).

⁵⁴ Bozdoğan (2001)

⁵⁵ Hroch (1996: 61).

⁵⁶ Hroch (1996: 63).

the next: i) “a social and/or political crisis of the old order, accompanied by new tensions and horizons,”⁵⁷ ii) “the emergence of discontent among significant elements of the population”⁵⁸ and iii) “loss of faith in traditional moral systems, above all a decline in religious legitimacy.”⁵⁹ All of this was true for the late Ottoman Empire: the crisis of the Sultanate consisted in its inability to maintain the Empire, to reject Great Powers’ encroachments and to remain solvent (bankruptcy), among others. Discontent emerged among Muslims who had become victims of Christian states and nation builders and sought refuge in the remaining Ottoman Empire; among artisans who were unable to compete with European imports, among Kurds who were unwilling to give up their unofficial autonomy with the state’s increasing centralization, among secular and constitutionally-minded men who found Sultan Abdülhamid II’s religious absolutism distasteful and among Muslims who felt resentment against Christian nouveau-riches who enjoyed all the advantages of association with Europe. As for the loss of faith in traditional moral systems, it was probably directed against the Caliphate and *sharia*.

Yet this is not enough to pass from the second to the third phase. Karl Deutsch suggested that in addition it takes an intensive growth of communication and a high rate of mobility. Hroch adds to this “a nationally relevant conflict of interests – in other words a social tension or collision that could be mapped onto linguistic (and sometimes also religious) divisions.”⁶⁰ In the Ottoman case, this was the complex field of the capitulations, the minority bourgeoisie’s affluence, the demands for reform in the Armenian provinces and the nationalism of Christian populations in the Balkans. All of these issues threatened the viability of the Ottoman Empire and concern for them crystallized into Muslim Ottoman opposition to Christian Ottomans and the question of how to hold the latter in check. In other words, the nationally relevant conflict of interests was a struggle over who would ultimately wield more economic or political power in the Empire, Ottoman Christians or Ottoman Muslims.

⁵⁷ Hroch (1996: 66).

⁵⁸ Hroch (1996: 66).

⁵⁹ Hroch (1996: 66).

⁶⁰ Hroch (1996: 67).

How Nation Building Proceeds and Why it is Often Violent

The next two questions, how nations are built, how its ‘objective’ characteristics are brought into being, and why nation building is often violent, are interlinked. Nation building is often a violent process because there is no other way of bringing about the demographic changes that nation builders deem necessary within a couple of decades and often within a few years. Nationalists believe that the more uniform the population or nation is, the better it withstands inside and outside threats (separatism, dissolution, aggression, occupation, etc.). Depending on how heterogeneous the population, how narrowly defined the nation, as how threatening the international environment or the internal enemy is perceived, nation building is a more or less violent process. Öktem notes that

[a] growing body of literature highlights the role of ethnic cleansing in the making of modern Europe, in particular during the transition from empire to nation-state. The authors of this new school have shown convincingly that the modern nation-state is established on the blood of others, be it based on the territories of colonized indigenous people as in the United States, fuelled by stages of ethnic cleansing and forcible assimilation as in Spain and France (Mann 2004; Marx 2003), or by large-scale expulsions and massacres as in the Balkans and Turkey (Mazower 2004) yet also during and in post-world War II central Europe (Liebermann 2006).⁶¹

Nation building and demographic engineering overlap in that nation builders often employ demographic engineering (the ways in which the state changes the relative weight of the ethnic or social groups in its territory in order to enhance its own power) but the latter can also occur outside that national frame. A modified version of Zarkovic Bookman’s overview over measures employed in demographic engineering may therefore be useful in summarizing some of the ways in which states build nations, namely by:

- population measurements/census, manipulation by changing how populations are defined and measured ⁶²
- pronatalist policies to increase the size of one population relative to others, includes financial stimuli, prohibition of birth control⁶³

⁶¹ Öktem (2008: paragraph 8).

⁶² Zarkovic Bookman (1997: 32).

- assimilation: for increasing one group's size quickly, the smaller or weaker group has to conform to the bigger/stronger one in religion and language⁶⁴
- population transfers: to alter relative sizes of groups; variants are a: to dilute a preexisting population, b: to consolidate the presence of the desired group and c: to force a group out of a region
- boundary changes: secessionist or irredentist⁶⁵
- economic pressures: "These pressures include selective tax policy, discrimination in hiring, employment restrictions, migration laws, laws pertaining to land ownership and property rights, etc. While these pressures may force people to relocate or induce a decrease in fertility, they also may simply be tools of harassment in order to induce assimilation."⁶⁶
- killing (clearing a certain area, genocide, killing the intellectual elite or a certain social class)

By the early 20th century, the Ottoman Empire had employed all of the above tools of demographic engineering, many of which will be illustrated in the following chapters. Zürcher who termed the period from 1850 to 1950 Europe's age of demographic engineering therefore called the Ottoman Empire its laboratory.⁶⁷

Every state and society pursues a different road to nation building but within a single state, the goal and the way to achieve it are also constantly modified. This is because the answers to questions such as who is to be a member of the nation, how those that cannot be members are to be dealt with, how potential members of the nation are to be made into members and the like are answered differently depending on circumstances and the person in question. There are inevitably disagreements between different groups of nation builders; there are inconsistencies, contradictions and different priorities. Nation building also happens in stages because it depends on responses, outside events and is affected by

⁶³ Zarkovic Bookman (1997: 32).

⁶⁴ Zarkovic Bookman (1997: 32).

⁶⁵ Zarkovic Bookman (1997: 32).

⁶⁶ Zarkovic Bookman (1997: 33-34).

⁶⁷ Zürcher (2008: 1).

unexpected consequences. So there is no clear-cut plan, but every government, regime or era has a general idea of the direction its nation building should take.

Extreme Violence in Advanced Stages of Nation Building

The Nazi's plundering and killing of Europe's Jews is a good example of the fact that violence does not only occur during early nation building. German nation building was already a century old⁶⁸ when the Nazis started realizing their vision of the German nation which, among many other characteristics, excluded Jews. This case also illustrates that the physical removal of people and the appropriation of their property can go hand in hand, as was the case with Ottoman Armenians and their property.

Aly's studies of Nazi rule were novel in that they turned attention away from the elites to the masses and the ways in how they profited under Nazi rule. He also showed convincingly that there were strong material incentives for loyalty to the Nazis besides ideological ones or Hitler's personal charisma. In his book *Hitler's Beneficiaries: Plunder, Racial War, and the Nazi Welfare State*,⁶⁹ he shows in detail that the Nazis financed their wars by plundering the Jews of Germany and of the occupied countries. German Jews were eliminated and plundered at the same time since alongside legislation that curtailed their citizen rights more and more, they were forced to pay extra taxes. When they were deported and their property was sold, they were forced to invest the meager revenues into government bonds. In any case their capital ended up with the state treasury and the army. The same model was followed everywhere in occupied Europe, from the Netherlands to Bulgaria and Norway.

The lower and middle class in Germany benefited from this large-scale plunder in so far as its members never had to pay a direct war tax but instead saw tax exemptions and certain health insurance benefits. Besides many other 'treats' this was a conscious effort on the part of Hitler to secure the German population's loyalty month by month and year by

⁶⁸ German principalities and kingdoms were united to form the German Reich in 1871 but German nation building goes at least as far back as the revolution of 1848.

⁶⁹ Götz Aly (2008).

year. This alone also meant that millions of Germans, virtually everyone, became guilty of the expropriation and murder of Europe's Jews. This can be compared to the Ottoman-Turkish case in that the Ottoman state and wide strata of its population benefited from the plundering of the Armenians during the genocide, though redistribution was less orderly and on a much smaller scale than in Nazi-occupied Europe. Non-Jewish German businessmen, too, profited from the expropriation of Jewish-owned companies because this gave them the opportunity to acquire them cheaply which is exactly what happened under CUP rule, too, as chapter five will show.

Upon being awarded the Heinrich-Mann Prize in 2002, Aly pointed out the following in his speech "Hitler's Volksstaat: Anmerkungen zum Klassencharakter des Nationalsozialismus" (Hitler's People's State: Remarks about the Class Character of National Socialism): National Socialism was one of the great egalitarian movements and utopias of the 20th century because it sought to level out class differences by promoting upward social mobility. It thus went beyond national homogenization and included social homogenization. This is an interesting parallel to the Ottoman-Turkish case because the Young Turks were the result of new opportunities for upward mobility. During the war years, they allowed unlikely people to make a career and to rise to prominence along with them which led to significant shifts in social structure. The Young Turks originated from a lower-middle class background but thanks to the recently established military and medical schools gained a standing in society that they would previously have been denied. As we will see in chapter four, the CUP's elimination of the Ottoman Armenians allowed Muslims from all walks of life, but especially those close to the CUP, to take over their property and to improve their fortunes. World War I in Turkey and World War II in Germany thus both went along with the vast redistribution of property and unprecedented opportunities for social mobility.

Actors Engaged in the Destructive Aspects of Nation Building

Mann's categorization of perpetrators of so-called ethnic cleansing can be adapted to our example of nation building since the violent clearing of a population from a territory

was part of Ottoman-Turkish nation building. First, he names radical elites running party-states which in our case was the CUP. Second come bands of militants forming violent paramilitaries such as the Ottoman Special Organizations and less organized gangs of released convicts and thirdly “core constituencies providing mass though not majority popular support.”⁷⁰ These can be

ethnic refugees and people from threatened border districts; those more dependent on the state for their subsistence and values; [...] those socialized into acceptance of physical violence as a way of solving social problems or achieving personal advancement – like soldiers, policemen, criminals, hooligans, and athletes; and those attracted to machismo ideology – young males striving to assert themselves in the world, often led by older males who were socialized as youths in an earlier phase of violence.⁷¹

In our case, again, these could be Muslim refugees from the Balkans and the Caucasus, Kurds and the gendarmerie. During Republican times, these actors are joined by two more, the bureaucracy and deep state in addition to nationalist activists in the population. The former played a role during the pogrom of 1955 and the latter during the Citizen Speak Turkish campaign, the renaming of places and again in 1955. Mann rightly notes that thus

[p]ower is exercised in three distinct ways: top-down by elites, bottom-up by popular pressures, and coercively sideways by paramilitaries. These pressures interact and so generate mundane relations like those found in all social movements – especially of hierarchy, comradeship, and career.⁷²

In the Ottoman-Turkish case, the state exercised most power, whether under the Sultan or in Republican times. But for the success of its nationalization project it depended on the cooperation of a large part of its citizens whose contribution to the ‘national’ project cannot be measured but must have been considerable. This is confirmed by İçduygu, Toktaş and Soner who write

While the ‘top-down’ character fo the nation-building process in Turkey has been noticeable, it appears that here has also been a considerable degree of ‘bottom-up’

⁷⁰ Mann (2005: 8).

⁷¹ Mann (2005: 8-9).

⁷² Mann (2005: 8).

societal participation [...] It was this ‘populist’ feature that also contributed to the gradual demise of non-Muslim populations at many levels of society.⁷³

This point will be taken up again in relation to the Citizen Speak Turkish campaign and the migration of Turkish Christians to cities from the 1950s onwards. Paramilitaries played an important role at certain times, notably during the decade of wars from 1912-1923 (Special Organizations and armed gangs) and in the 1990s during the state’s war against the PKK in the Southeast of Turkey.

Alternatives to Turkish Nation Building and Alternative Paths of Turkish Nation Building

Turkish nation building was no more violent than nation building elsewhere nor is Turkish nation building intrinsically more ruthless than Armenian, Greek, Kurdish or any other nation building. But for various reasons Turkish nation builders got the upper hand and were the ones to decide that a Turkish nation was to be built in Anatolia and who carried out their plans. Rival nation builders did not get the chance to carry out their visions because the degree of their ideologization, urgency, Great-Power support,⁷⁴ mass support, the type of leadership,⁷⁵ military capability and relative numbers were different or lacking. To analyze Turkish nation building, one can analyze actions in addition to statements whereas for nation building that did not take place one has to rely on pronouncements and plans. According to Hovannisian, the Armenian revolutionary parties’ various manifestoes remained vague and conflicting and “largely circumvent[ed] the issue of what future relationships would be with the other non-Armenian peoples and communities of Eastern Anatolia”⁷⁶ if an autonomous Armenian region or an independent Armenia were to be established. The following two plans and statements, however, are fairly clear on this point:

⁷³ İçduygu, Toktaş, Soner (2008: 360).

⁷⁴ Levene (1998: 415).

⁷⁵ Levene (1998: 416).

⁷⁶ Levene (1998: 403).

Russia's 1913 reform plan for the Armenian provinces foresaw the unification of the six Armenian *vilayets* into a single province that would be headed by an Ottoman or European Christian. Among other things, it sought to extend the franchise only to sedentary elements (which would have excluded many Kurds and Turks from obtaining citizenship rights and excluded "Moslem refugee-immigrants"⁷⁷) from the new province. It is unknown which percentage of the population of the six *vilayets* would have fallen into either category, but these are clearly vague enough to justify far-ranging expulsions. This nation building could still have been less violent than what happened in the following two years to the Ottoman Armenians, but it is clear that the potential for at least violent mass expulsions was there. The other example of Armenian exclusivism comes from the Paris Peace Conference in 1919.

At the Paris peace conference, the Armenian delegation was uncompromising in its demand that a large national state encompassing most of Eastern Anatolia and Cilicia be repopulated with Armenians at the expense of Turkish and Kurdish 'incomers' who would be expelled, and also in offering any remaining 'indigenous' Kurds only the opportunity of domicile 'protected by its laws.'⁷⁸

Again, the terminology is vague since an 'incomer' could be someone who had been settled in the area only the same year that the Armenians were evicted or someone who had come much earlier. It is likely that the Armenian nation state to be would have interpreted the term as widely as possible.

Of course, the potential and actual exclusivism of Armenian and Turkish nation building derived from different sources, Armenian nationalism resented Turks or Muslims as oppressors and murderers (de facto more rights, plundering and killing without being held accountable) whereas Turkish nationalism resented Armenians as traitors and exploiters (because there were national parties, Armenian presence in Russia, guerrilla activities, a well-off bourgeoisie, foreign passport holders). Chronology is also important (Armenian exclusivism at the Paris Peace Conference *followed* the Armenian genocide), but the tendency was the same: removing the distrusted population from the national territory by whatever means. The plans for a detached or autonomous Armenia thus show

⁷⁷ Hovannisian (1967: 33).

⁷⁸ Levene (1998: 418).

that it followed the same exclusivist logic as Turkish nation building and that, had it had the chance, it could have used the same means for achieving its goals.

Even Turkish nation building could have taken a different course, but with every defeat or new threat, the exclusivists among Turkish nation builders seemed to be given right that their path was the only one to salvation. Levene outlines two alternatives to CUP nation building that could have been peaceful and accommodating but may not have saved independence. One was Sabaheddin's İtilaf, a reformist group and the main parliamentary opposition to the CUP's growing Turkism. But it lost power with the Ottoman defeat in the Balkan Wars and even if it had not, says Levene,

there is little evidence that the İtilaf program could have thwarted Ottoman disintegration. The grouping has been described as one of Europeanizers, not modernizers. [...] The result would likely still have been a Western carve-up, if not through Sykes-Picot, then something similar.⁷⁹

The other alternative was

an Eastern Anatolian autonomy based on cooperation and confederation between its Armenian, Kurdish, Assyrian and other peoples. [...] Whether under different conditions these indigenous forces could have cooperated to create some type of political entity remains speculative. Whether they could have done so without Western support and, by implication, interference, seems wholly doubtful.⁸⁰

All the above shows that Turkish nation building was no more violent than many other cases of nation building nor more exclusivist than for instance Armenian nation building could have been, had it had a chance to realize its vision of the nation in Anatolia. As it happened, it was a Turkish national project that was realized and in the course of which Armenians and Greeks were removed from Anatolia and expropriated.

⁷⁹ Levene (1998: 416).

⁸⁰ Levene (1998: 417).

3.

THE TREATMENT OF MINORITIES DURING OTTOMAN-TURKISH TIMES AS PART OF NATION BUILDING

The following overview of Turkish nation building deals with how it affected linguistic, ethnic and religious minorities. From among the range of policies, it will focus on demographic, economic and linguistic policies and give examples of the erasure of the minorities' material and immaterial heritage. This part is divided into six periods which are marked by changes in government and more or less different views on the nation and ways of shaping it: proto nation building under Abdülhamid II (1880s to 1908), CUP nation building - phase I (1908-1913), CUP nation building - phase II (1913-1918), interim nation building by the Istanbul government and the nationalists in Ankara (1918-1923), Kemalist nation building (1923-1950) and multi-party nation building in the 1950s and 1960s. This is not a complete account, but an analysis of instances of nation building which treats economic and demographic changes together. It will deal both with policies that were meant to contribute to Turkish nation building and with events or trends that contributed to it without having been intended.⁸¹ This chapter will also leave out those events that concern Armenians and Greeks since the main part of this thesis (chapters four to seven) will deal with them at length.

⁸¹ Öktem also takes this into account as in the following example: The construction of GAP in Southeastern Turkey was not carried out in order to destroy non-Turkish material culture, but this was one of the consequences of the “inundation of villages, cemeteries and churches.” Öktem (2004: 566).

Hamidiyan Phase

It is a misconception that nation building starts only once a nation state exists.⁸² In the Ottoman case, nation building started at least two decades before the Turkish nation state was proclaimed and was its precondition. Indications of a proto-national consciousness are even older and go back to the late 19th century. In the course of the 19th and early 20th century, the definition of who had a right to live in the Ottoman Empire changed fundamentally. At the beginning of the 19th century, it was not an issue at all as long as there was peace within the Empire's borders. The population's heterogeneity was taken for granted and non-Muslims were unquestioned subjects as long as they accepted *dhimmi* status. The terms Muslim and Turk were often used interchangeably, they rarely had an ethnic and even less a racial meaning.

A gradual change in the categorization of the Ottoman population occurred during the second half of the 19th century with the spread of the ideology of nationalism, the increased threat of an imperialist takeover, the growth of Christians' and Jews' economic power, the defeat of the Empire's Muslim armies, various subject populations' fight for their independence, minorities' demands of equal rights with the 'ruling millet', and Muslims' expulsion from neighboring states and empires. The Ottoman state came to see Muslims as the wronged party, as loyal but oppressed, whereas Christians were associated with the imperialist great powers, with treachery and the exploitation of Muslims. Muslim Ottomans therefore became more 'worthy' of state protection than Christian Ottomans.

In response, the Sultan started to devise plans for increasing population growth overall and especially the growth of the Muslim population in the hope that this would even out the high fatalities its soldiers suffered in battle as well as strengthen Muslims' economic power.⁸³ He also started to emphasize the Muslim character of the subject population and to consider how the Muslim hold on land could be strengthened.⁸⁴ Non-

⁸² For Aymet İçduygu et al., nation building starts only in 1923.

⁸³ Demirci and Somel (2008: 378).

⁸⁴ The Ottoman government was concerned about the sale of Muslim-owned land to Christians which, it feared, would endanger the Muslims' status of 'ruling millet'. It

Muslims and non-Turks were still seen as an integral part of the subject population and state administration (almost one third of civil servants were non-Muslim)⁸⁵, but they were required to recognize Muslim-Turkish dominance and if they did not, they were punished (see the Hamidiyan massacres). Thus the first step in the narrowing-down process of who were the most legitimate occupants of the land occurred under Sultan Abdülhamid II. The next step would be limiting the right to live in Turkey to Turkish Muslims which, starting in 1913, was a goal pursued during CUP and Republican times. It was never achieved, but the tendency was clear in the Turkification of Muslims and the pressure on non-Muslims to leave the country.

One field in which this narrowing down, this identification of the core subject group and the focusing on the Muslim population, is clear is in the field of public health. The earliest attempts at limiting abortion in the Ottoman Empire date from the late 18th century.⁸⁶ In the course of time, more systematic and effective measures were taken at saving the lives of unborns, babies and mothers in particular, and irrespective of their religion. Midwives were given professional training, the sale of abortion-inducing pharmaceuticals was forbidden and families that raised twins, orphans, or were poor received monthly benefits. Other measures were the compulsory medical inspection of prostitutes (1880s) and state control over physicians and pharmacists. This was more than a humanitarian gesture to improve people's welfare. These initiatives were also an indication of the state's increasing centralization, control over and interference with its subjects' lives. Welfare measures were therefore also disciplining mechanisms. "The authoritarian and regulatory attitude of the Ottoman state toward abortion became an integral part of the social engineering projects of the reformist bureaucrats and intellectuals during the Tanzimat period [...]"⁸⁷ An important shift occurred under Abdülhamid II:

After 1878, [...] the official procreationist and pronatalist approach acquired a specifically ethnic and religious character. Unlike the universalist attitude of the edict of 1838, state policy during the regime of Abdülhamid II clearly aimed mostly at

recommended that "loans with low interest [...] be extended to Muslims for the purchase of land." Terzibaşoğlu (2004: 172).

⁸⁵ Findley (1982: 343).

⁸⁶ Demirci and Somel (2008: 382).

⁸⁷ Demirci and Somel (2008: 380).

protecting the progeny of the Muslim and Turkish population by openly stating the military reasons for this policy and its fears about ethnic and religious minorities within the Ottoman Empire.⁸⁸

This is a significant turning point that justifies calling Abdülhamid II's demographic measures proto-nationalist. He identified the Turkish Muslim population as the core of the subject population, was concerned about minorities imperiling it and employed modern methods to keep track of and promote its development. Only a few decades later, the CUP would formulate its nation building goal that centered around Turkish Muslims at the expense of all other ethnicities in Turkey and which would take radical steps to reach its goal.

CUP Nation Building - Phase I, 1908-1913

During the first phase of CUP nation building, which started with the reinstatement of the constitution, all Ottoman subjects were considered equal citizens, irrespective of their religion or ethnicity. It was thus an unprecedented improvement for Christians and Jews, but a relegation for Muslims. The CUP and the Armenian revolutionary Daşnaktsutiun were allies and for a while it looked as if a modern, yet heterogeneous, state and society were in the making. According to Göçek,

the CUP was very secular in orientation and did not adhere to any religious principles in any of its actions. It had actually substituted belief in the divine with belief in the sacredness of the Ottoman state and did not heed what Islam dictated.⁸⁹

But catastrophic political events brought about an upsurge of Turkism, Islamism and anti-Christian feelings so that the CUP changed course (see the Balkan Wars and boycotts of Christian shops in chapter five).

⁸⁸ Demirci and Somel (2008: 419).

⁸⁹ Göçek (2011: 236).

CUP Nation Building - Phase II, 1913-1918

Levene rightly points out the constraints under which the CUP acted during the second phase of nation building, namely after the Balkan Wars, which explains its radicalization:

Responsibility for the Empire's 1914 descent into war and genocide can undoubtedly be leveled against them, the CUP central committee, and its acolytes within the administrative and military apparatus. But their conscious radicalization in this direction may have been less the result of ideology than of pragmatic, if increasingly desperate attempts to combat, outmaneuver, and ultimately transcend the outside – and to their mind entirely malevolent – forces which seemed intent on finally liquidating their imperial trust.⁹⁰

This phase was characterized by the belief that only the reliance on Muslims with no separatist aspirations could save the Empire or part of it, and that the population had to be homogenized into Turkishness through the resettlement of assimilable populations and the killing and expulsion of non-assimilable, 'dangerous', populations. The CUP also believed that an economy in Turkish hands with as few ties abroad as possible would be the best way out of their serious predicament. The main victims of this phase of nation building were Armenians, Greeks and Assyrians who were not coincidentally all Christians.

During much of the CUP's time in power, there was war and defeat (Libya 1911, Balkans 1912-13, World War I, Arab revolt 1916, Sevres, Lausanne, occupation, former provinces become French and British mandates). The defeat in the Balkan Wars was the turning point in the CUP's relations with Christians and minorities in general. The loss of almost all European territory was catastrophic for its members personally since most of them had been born there and their families became refugees as a result of the lost wars. To Ottomans in general and the state, the Balkans had been the heart of the Ottoman Empire and its richest and most developed parts. Their loss meant a significant decrease in

⁹⁰ Levene (1998: 404-5).

revenues.⁹¹ The sense of humiliation was compounded with the threat of impoverishment and disease. 250,000 refugees were crowding in Istanbul and the Bulgarian army was a mere 40 miles from the capital in which cholera spread. The CUP panicked and came to decide not to trust any Christians and to rely only on what was in their eyes the most trustworthy part of the population: Turkish Muslims.

The two main features of the CUP's nation building during those ten years was its focus on security⁹² and its anti-Christian, anti-minority character. Most Young Turks were professional soldiers, which alone accounts for their security centeredness, but having witnessed defeat and the fear of being colonized added to it. They sought to rebuild the nation in their own image namely that of soldiers (von der Goltz).⁹³ European ideologies such as Social Darwinism and methods such as detailed record keeping and planning took a strong hold of them. They pursued an "isolationist, inward-looking modernization and nation-building based on uniformity in all aspects: unitary political establishment based on one-religion, one-language, one-nation, one-legal structure, and one-geography."⁹⁴

The population within the Empire's borders could no longer be a mix of different ethnicities and religions, and central sectors of the economy could no longer be in supposedly untrustworthy, exploitative hands. The Empire's subject population would have to transform into a nation, the Turkish nation, and whoever was not Turkish was to be either excluded or made Turkish.

The borders within which nation building would take place were not yet fixed and different CUP leaders had different views on the matter. Enver Pasha was particularly drawn to pan-Turkism and expansion into the Caucasus and Central Asia whereas Talat was oriented towards creating a smaller Turkish nation within Anatolia and his deportation and relocation scheme was executed within these boundaries.⁹⁵ The defeat in war, the alliance with Soviet Russia, its financial support of the nationalists, and possibly practical

⁹¹ Aktar (1996: 268).

⁹² Toprak and Acar (2010: 184).

⁹³ Pers. com. Berktaç.

⁹⁴ Toprak and Acar (2010: 184).

⁹⁵ Gaunt (2006: 51).

considerations (How was such a far-flung country to be administered with Anatolia looking towards Europe, Central Asia elsewhere? How could Turkish nationalism in Central Asia take foot if its dominant other, the Armenians and Greeks, were unknown there?) all put an end to pan-Turkism.⁹⁶

Settlement Policy

The Law for the Settlement of Immigrants came into force on 13 May 1913. “Under this Law (sic!) a Directorate was established which would be reorganized as the General Directorate for (sic!) Settlement of Tribes and Refugees on 14 March 1916.”⁹⁷ The IAMM organized the deportation and settlement of people and for this purpose collected economic and geographic data on the emptied villages as well as information on educational facilities to gauge their ability to absorb immigrants.⁹⁸ It also conducted anthropological research into the minorities of Turkey. There were sections for the study of Kizilbashs, Bektashis, Ahis, Armenians, tribes, sects, Alevis, Kurds and Turcomans.⁹⁹ The motivation behind this was probably in part scholarly (interest in races during the period) and in part political (the wish to control them and ‘elevate’ certain groups, especially Kurds and nomads, to a ‘higher civilizational level’. Like the health provisions under Abdülhamid II, they both improved the population’s welfare and made it easier to control and regulate.

The directions of displacement and resettlement were as follows: Kurds were moved from East to West across Anatolia; Bosnians and Albanians were moved in the opposite direction and Arabs, Assyrians¹⁰⁰ and Circassians were moved from South to North across Syria and Anatolia.

Certain zones were forbidden to certain ethnic groups. Strategic areas, islands, coastlines, the area along the railway lines and rivers were reserved for [‘]loyal[‘] elements. Moreover the Committee wanted to destroy the traditional structure of all

⁹⁶ Pers. com. Berktaş.

⁹⁷ Dündar (2006: 38).

⁹⁸ Üngör (2008 b: paragraphs 31-32.)

⁹⁹ Dündar (2006: 38).

¹⁰⁰ Gaunt (2006: 128).

non-Turkish Muslim populations, and for this reason it separated them from their traditional chiefs, settling them among the Turkish population at such a rate as to constitute less than 10% of the total population.¹⁰¹

Talat personally oversaw their Turkification and over a period of time inquired for example how many Kurds there were in a certain locality, whether they spoke Turkish or Kurdish and what kind of relations they had with Turks. He demanded that Kurds not make up more than five per cent of the population anywhere.¹⁰² Many of the deportees to the east were housed in empty Armenian and Syriac villages where they found the agricultural instruments they needed¹⁰³ and the government provided them with seeds.¹⁰⁴ This mass deportation went along with enormous suffering. Among the tens of thousands of Kurds who were deported in 1916, many died of the cold and hunger.¹⁰⁵

Within five years a third of the Muslim population to live in Anatolia after WWI was moved: about two million Kurdish and Turcoman nomads, 5,000 Arab families from Syria, almost 1,5 million refugees from eastern Anatolia, nearly 400,000 Balkan refugees and several smaller groups.¹⁰⁶ If we add to this two million Armenians and two million Greeks who were uprooted, we arrive at the staggering figure of eight million people who lost their homes and who had to make a new beginning elsewhere. This is almost two thirds of the 13.6 million people living in Turkey in 1927.¹⁰⁷ This far-flung resettlement program was part of Turkish nation building in that the uprooting and dispersion of millions of people deprived them of the strength their home territory and community had given them. With weakened communal and personal spirits, their assimilation into Turkishness was facilitated.

¹⁰¹ Dündar (2006: 42).

¹⁰² Üngör (2008 b: paragraph 27).

¹⁰³ Üngör (2008 b: para. 28).

¹⁰⁴ Üngör (2008: paragraph 29).

¹⁰⁵ Kieser (1997: 113-150).

¹⁰⁶ Dündar (2006: 42).

¹⁰⁷ Toprak and Acar (2010: p. 184).

Assyrian Genocide¹⁰⁸

The Assyrian genocide extended geographically from the Southeast of Turkey (Diyarbakır, Hakkari, Van and Siirt) into northern Iran (Azerbaijan). The Ottoman army killed the primarily rural population of these regions both in its attempt to prevent communications between Ottoman Assyrians and the Russian forces in Iran and in order to clear the area of Assyrians forever.¹⁰⁹ At least 250,000 Assyrians were killed, but probably more which equates to two thirds of the Assyrian population.¹¹⁰ The survivors were dispersed and either fled the region or settled again. Russia estimated that 8,000 Assyrians sought refuge in its empire.¹¹¹

Assyrians started to be removed from villages on the Iranian border long before the Ottoman Empire entered the war and. With the beginning deportation of the Armenians, Assyrians were often killed in place by Kurdish tribes and local militias after the Armenians had formed columns and been marched out of town.¹¹² This often gave Armenians the false impression that Assyrians were spared from death.¹¹³

Assyrians in some localities were indeed in contact with the Russians and received a small amount of arms and ammunition from them.¹¹⁴ The Assyrian tribes of the Hakkari mountains refused to be conscripted and in turn the Ottoman army attacked and killed its members and burnt down their villages to prevent them from ever returning. By May 1915,

¹⁰⁸ Our knowledge of the Assyrian genocide is far less complete than that on the Armenian genocide since the region was more remote and since in certain locations, there were no foreigners and therefore no reports published in Western newspapers or sent to Western consulates. In addition, it was a less literate society than the Armenian one so fewer people published memoirs and, as a result of having fewer members and of being less literate, fewer survivors or descendants of survivors became historians or otherwise publicized the events so that it became overshadowed by and subsumed in the Armenian genocide. For all of these reasons, this summary of events may be incomplete.

¹⁰⁹ Gaunt (2011: 259).

¹¹⁰ Gaunt (2011: 245).

¹¹¹ Gaunt (2011:252).

¹¹² Gaunt (2011: 246).

¹¹³ Gaunt (2011: 246).

¹¹⁴ Gaunt (2006: 123).

massacres had become so frequent that an Assyrian tribal council declared war on the Ottoman Empire.¹¹⁵ As the fighting prolonged, the Assyrians withdrew higher and higher into the mountains in the summer of 1915 where many starved.¹¹⁶ Others fled to Iran where they died from exposure in the following winter. In the countryside, a higher percentage of Assyrians was killed than in the cities which leads Gaunt to suggest that “an important material objective was to seize land.”¹¹⁷ Thus, “[...] the annihilation of the Assyrians did not occur through deportations, but rather through an enormous military invasion that pushed them out of their ancestral homes.”¹¹⁸ Their houses, churches and relics were destroyed immediately to erase all signs of Assyrian culture.¹¹⁹

As for the number of Assyrians killed and those surviving in place, in Diyarbekir *vilayet* 140,000 disappeared or were killed and 30,000 remained after 1916. In the *sanjak* of Mardin 50,000 disappeared or were killed and 30,000 remained after their persecution.¹²⁰ Surviving women and girls were married to Muslims as were Armenians during the same period. Interestingly, officials who refused to carry out orders were removed from office or even killed¹²¹ which had not happened in 1895-96, when many Muslim officials had prevented the killing of Armenians under their jurisdiction. This points to the determination and ruthlessness of the CUP in reaching its goal once World War I had broken out.

Gaunt concludes his analysis of the Assyrian genocide with a comparison to the Armenian experience:

They were targeted for eradication and ethnic cleansing for some of the same reasons – suspected disloyalty and collaboration with the enemy. Even the weakest sign of self-defense met with disproportionate violence. Both groups were pushed out of their home territories at the same time in 1914 and 1915. they were subjected to indiscriminate mass violence orchestrated by high Ottoman officials, backed up by neighboring tribesmen.¹²²

¹¹⁵ Gaunt (2006: 123).

¹¹⁶ Gaunt (2006: 121).

¹¹⁷ Gaunt (2011: 245).

¹¹⁸ Gaunt (2006: 123).

¹¹⁹ Gaunt (2006: 121).

¹²⁰ Rhétoré (2005: 135-39).

¹²¹ Ternon (2002: 112, 139-140).

¹²² Gaunt (2011: 259).

Elimination of Armenian, Greek and Assyrian Heritage

Nation builders require a slate as clean as possible for their building activities. The mere removal of unwanted populations is not enough since proof of their former existence in the country still exists, especially in the form of place names, buildings, monuments and graveyards. Between 1915 and 1990, Ottoman and Republican authorities undertook four campaigns to replace non-Turkish place names by Turkish ones, from 1915-22, 1922-50, 1950-80 and in the 1980s. As for the first wave, the CUP changed the names of Armenian villages that had been evacuated within weeks of declaring the deportation law on 27 May 1915.¹²³ Military commanders fighting Greek troops in Western Anatolia often renamed places on the spot and against the wishes of the government that feared it would impede military communications.¹²⁴ According to Öktem, this was not yet a systematic effort at erasing all non-Turkish place names but rather “a spontaneous initiative by military commanders, local administrators and [p]arliamentarians, competing to outdo each other in proving their nationalist credentials.”¹²⁵ The fact that they were more eager Turkifiers than the government is an interesting observation that will recur in later waves of renaming and that also has a parallel in the Citizen Speak Turkish campaign in which activists likewise outdid the government.

As for Assyrian, Armenian and Greek material heritage, it was deliberately destroyed, ruined through neglect or ‘reinterpreted’, i.e. given a Muslim ancestry. This started almost right after the act of expulsion or killing or assimilation and continues, somehow modified, until today. To give a few examples of Assyrian monuments, in Mardin, the Syriac Catholic Patriarchate was turned into a gendarmerie in the early years of the republic and the monastery flattened in 1930 and first turned into a park, then into the Square of the Republic.¹²⁶ In Sis, the Armenian monastery was destroyed. But in spite of the nationalists’ efforts, this erasure was not complete because locals did not always cooperate with them. As Öktem notes, “many hints and traces of the city’s [Urfa’s] once multicultural heritage

¹²³ Dündar (2001: 65).

¹²⁴ Öktem (2008: paragraph 21).

¹²⁵ Öktem (2008: paragraph 26).

¹²⁶ Biner (2010 b: 81-82).

remain. Pockets of semi-conscious resistance seem to exist at the local level, defying ethno-religious readings of history, and therefore allowing for a reconstruction of the city's bygone heterogeneity."¹²⁷

Interim Period: Istanbul Government (1918-1923) and Provisional Government (1920-1923)

In the five-year period between the end of CUP rule and the establishment of the Turkish Republic, there were two opposed nation building projects under way, that of the last Ottoman government in Istanbul and that of the nationalists in central Anatolia and Ankara. For most of the interim period, the party in government in Istanbul was the Freedom and Coalition Party (a.k.a. Liberal Entente), which was the CUP's sworn enemy. "The very day after their rise to power, they immediately began reversing CUP policies: Armenians and Kurds were encouraged to return, orphans were allowed to go back to their families"¹²⁸ and commissions for the restitution of property were set up that consisted of local Greeks, Armenians and Muslims. The rates of return, though, varied widely.¹²⁹ Most importantly, "the Ottoman press broadly exposed and discussed CUP war crimes."¹³⁰ Under British pressure, four major trials were set up as part of the courts martial in the period 1919-1920 with the aim of prosecuting those guilty of having killed Ottoman Armenians. The trials dealt with the massacres in Trebizond and Yozgat, lower-level CUP leaders who were involved in the Special Organizations and wartime Turkish cabinet members.¹³¹ Many more trials were planned but never held. Nevertheless, at least some of the accused were sentenced to hard labor or death and hanged.¹³² The Liberal Entente's vision of the nation was heterogeneous; it meant Christians to be equal citizens and sought their redress in the

¹²⁷ Öktem (2004: 573).

¹²⁸ Üngör (2008 b: paragraph 33).

¹²⁹ Gingeras (2009: 53).

¹³⁰ Üngör (2008 b: paragraph 33).

¹³¹ Balakian (2003: 334).

¹³² Balakian (2003: 337).

trials. However, it only lasted for as long as the nationalists in Anatolia took to organize themselves and to defeat the occupiers and therefore had little effect in the long run. The nationalists in inner Anatolia perpetuated the radicalized CUP vision of the nation:

When these verdicts were announced, there were angry protests, especially among the new nationalists of Mustafa Kemal's movement. [...] Kemal Bey was hanged on April 10th, and the funeral that followed created mayhem as hundreds of CUP members with wreaths reading 'to the innocent victim of the nation,' and the *softas* rallied vowing to destroy the English.¹³³

By the end of 1919, the Ottoman and British commitment to the prosecution of those guilty of crimes against the Armenians waned. "More and more, the British looked on as the Ottoman officials who were running the trials appeased the Kemalists by freeing prisoners or handing out light sentences."¹³⁴ By 1921, the British had abandoned the idea of war crime trials in Turkey and agreed on exchanging their Turkish prisoners held in Malta against British prisoners held in Turkey. The majority of perpetrators thus escaped punishment. With the nationalists' victory in the war of liberation and the establishment of the republic, they were in a position to determine nation building in the whole country and for decades to come.

Kemalists Nation Building 1923 - 1950

The nation the Kemalists had in mind was to be limited to Turkey (with the exception of Mosul and Hatay, they had given up irredentist plans) but to grow fast which is why they invited the immigration of, preferably Turkish, Muslims from the Balkans. Their nation building was pseudo-scientific and marked by scrupulous planning and recordkeeping. Every citizen was to become 'modern' by deemphasizing his religiosity, becoming exclusively Turkish speaking, being proud of his Turkishness and aware of Turks' civilizational achievements in history. The main victim of Kemalist nation building were the Kurds, Jews and remaining Armenians.

¹³³ Balakian (2003: 337).

¹³⁴ Balakian (2003: 344).

When the CUP dissolved itself in 1918, it continued functioning under other names and succeeded in launching Mustafa Kemal to organize the Anatolian resistance it had planned since 1914. After a transition process many of the CUP's diligent social engineers ended up working for Mustafa Kemal's Republican People's Party (RPP). [...] The ultimate totalitarian aim of this cohort of men was to continue recreating the population in their own image and to extinguish the plurality and differentiation of it [...] As such, the Greco-Turkish and Armeno-Turkish wars (1919-1923) were in essence processes of state formation that represented a continuation of ethnic unmixing and exclusion of Ottoman Christians from Anatolia.¹³⁵

“[Early] republican nationalism was premised on an ethnically-defined Turkishness, and remained hostile to alternative constructions of identity.”¹³⁶ It targeted not only the remaining members of the Christian minorities, but also Muslims and speakers of languages other than Turkish (e.g. Albanians and Arabs). By far the largest group, probably the vast majority of the population, were Muslims, Turkish, Bosniak, Albanian and others. Most Muslim communities were seen as “assimilable raw ethnic material”. As for non-Muslims, there was disagreement over the degree to which they were turkifiable and whether this was desirable as seen in the Citizen Speak Turkish campaign and in the context of Jewish schools.¹³⁷

‘Secularization’ meant that Muslim religiosity was brought under state control and discouraged, because the state was no longer pro-Islamic as under the Sultan, but anti-religious. Pious Muslims were excluded from state offices and could not become big in business.¹³⁸ For Turkish nationalists, the golden age of Turkism was pre-Islamic times, not the early Ottoman Empire. As Aslan rightly marks, one of the paradoxes of the definition of Turkishness was that it was marked by an individual's faith, or more precisely by whether he was Muslim or not, even though secularism was one of the main pillars of Kemalism.¹³⁹ This is an example of imperial heritage in a nation state.

¹³⁵ Üngör (2008 b: paragraph 35).

¹³⁶ Özkirimli and Sofos (2008: 73).

¹³⁷ Üngör (2008b: paragraph 36).

¹³⁸ Pious Muslims have only been sponsored and recognized since the 1950s under DP government and the ‘Anatolian Tigers’ only emerged in the 1980s. See also chapter seven.

¹³⁹ Aslan (2007: 258).

[The] founders of the republic differed from early Turkists in one important respect: whereas Gökalp and his predecessors saw Ottoman history as part and parcel of Turkish history, they strove to cut off the new republic from its immediate past, which they depicted as a period of decay and self-denial. Instead, they romanticized the Turks' pre-Islamic past, presenting it as a quasi-mythical 'golden age'. The main tool used to inculcate this new historical vision was education.¹⁴⁰

For the purpose of increasing the percentage of Muslims in the population and for increasing its size overall, Turkey concluded treaties with Greece, Bulgaria and Romania to settle the Muslims of these countries in Turkey. Within ten years, between 1923 and 1933, around 600,000 Muslims arrived in Turkey. They were primarily settled in Thrace (which had been devastated by the wars and where the conditions of settlement were still desolate and chaotic in the mid-thirties) as well as in the East. The government therefore proclaimed a stop to further settlement in 1934.¹⁴¹ It is probably no coincidence that the Thrakia pogroms took place just then because the immigrants' living circumstances were very difficult.

Law on the Unification of Education 1924

This law brought all schools under the control of the government, imposed a state curriculum and stipulated a year later that at least five hours of Turkish had to be taught at minority schools. Subsequently all teachers at minority schools had to speak Turkish as their mother tongue and in 1931 all Turkish children had to get their primary education at Turkish schools.¹⁴²

The Jewish case is curious and contradictory. According to Pekesen, the Jewish community was forced to renounce its minority status which ended its communal self-management and brought Jewish institutions, schools and social foundations under the control of the state.¹⁴³ It also implied that Jewish minority schools become Turkish state schools. Bali, however, suggests that a Jewish community leader decided that the Jewish

¹⁴⁰ Özkirimli and Sofos (2008: 91).

¹⁴¹ Pekesen (2010: 12).

¹⁴² Aslan (2007: 251).

¹⁴³ Pekesen (2010: 7).

community had no option but to get turkified. He therefore went to Ankara to suggest that the Jewish minority private schools were turned into state schools, with the expenses covered by the community. However, this was refused.

[The] only explanation given by the anonymous Jewish leader about why Ankara refused is that according to him the Turks wanted the Jews to remain Jews and not assimilate into Turkishness so that they could be identified. The idea was, ‘We don’t need them to be turkified, we need to be able to identify them so that, eventually, we can squeeze them financially.’¹⁴⁴

According to Bali, there were two factions among the nation builders in the 1920s, the one that thought that non-Muslims could be turkified and that this was desirable and another that maintained that non-Muslims could never become real Turks and that they were better marked as outsiders.

Suppression of the Şeyh Sait Revolt 1925

With the deportation and killing of the Armenians, Kurds became the biggest minority in Turkey. In the country as a whole they represented 20 per cent of the population and their territories made up 30 per cent of the total land mass.¹⁴⁵ In Eastern Anatolia, these figures were of course much higher. Van Bruinessen is right in noting that as “cynical as it may sound, it was the [Armenian] massacres that made a Kurdish state feasible”¹⁴⁶ because Armenians had been about as numerable as Kurds there and made claims to the same territory. The Armenians’ removal meant that the percentage of Kurds in the eastern provinces shot up and made the realization of a Kurdish national project less unlikely, though it never became a mass project.

The Şeyh Sait revolt was one of many Kurdish revolts in late Ottoman and early Republican times. What sets it apart from the earlier ones like the Koçgiri rebellion (1921) is that the new Turkish state departed from the established pattern of dealing with rebellions by using massive violence and crushing the revolt rather than negotiating a

¹⁴⁴ Bali (2008: paragraph 42).

¹⁴⁵ Natali (2005: 71).

¹⁴⁶ Bruinessen (1992: 269).

compromise. The revolt had Islamic religious and Kurdish nationalist motives and was supported by Zaza-speaking Sunni Kurds under the leadership of Şeyh Sait and other traditional dignitaries. “It was as much a revolt against the secularist and anti-Islamic tendencies of the new regime as it was the first stirrings, albeit regionally circumscribed, of Kurdish nationalism.”¹⁴⁷ The abolition of the Sultanate, the dissolution of the First National Assembly and the proclamation of the Republic without popular consultation¹⁴⁸ for them all meant an end to the Ottoman legacy and to Muslim fraternity. For as long as Kurdishness had been identified with Islam, Turks and Kurds had been in alliance.¹⁴⁹ But as soon as Islam as the unifying factor was largely replaced by ethnicity as the touchstone for inclusion into the nation, Kurds feared that they would suffer the same fate as the Armenians in 1915. They, too, would be regarded as obstacles on the way to demographic homogeneity.

Earlier Kurdish rebellions and the state’s response had followed certain unwritten laws, their interaction was understood as a negotiation, a give and take, between the rebellious tribe and the Ottoman state. “The rebellion was an instrument for the renewal of the unwritten contract of rights versus obedience and legitimization.”¹⁵⁰ However, the Turkish republic departed from the established pattern by crushing the rebellion.

The massive coercion used to crush the rebellion (the imposition of special military rule, installation of a General Inspectorate, massacres, the prohibition of symbolic resources such as the Kurdish language and culture, cartoons humiliating not only the chiefs of the rebellion, but the Kurds as a whole) showed clearly that henceforth the relations of domination between the state and the Kurds would involve *systematic* persecution, marginalization and humiliation of Kurdishness.¹⁵¹

Its leaders were hanged, more than two hundred villages pillaged, over eight thousand houses destroyed and 15,000 Kurds killed. Bozarslan interprets the rebellion as a serious challenge to Kemalist power as evidenced by the fact that its repression cost one third of

¹⁴⁷ Barkey and Fuller (1998: 11).

¹⁴⁸ Bozarslan (2003: 178-180).

¹⁴⁹ Bozarslan (2003: 180).

¹⁵⁰ Bozarslan (2003: 186).

¹⁵¹ Bozarslan (2003: 187).

the annual budget.¹⁵² Van Bruinessen disagrees with this assessment but states that it was significant in that it “accelerated the trend towards authoritarian government and ushered in policies which deliberately aimed at destroying Kurdish ethnicity.”¹⁵³ This led to a chain of other rebellions that only ended in 1938.

‘Reform Council of the East’ 1925

Mustafa Kemal authorized a special council (‘Reform Council of the East’) chaired by İnönü to devise a report that would serve as a blueprint for the pursuit of Young Turk social engineering in Eastern Turkey.

On the one hand, these exhortations constituted a *carte blanche* to the various Young Turks descending on the East that the restraints under which they had operated thus far, if any, were now lifted. No one was going to be called to account for being too energetic or ruthless. On the contrary, ambitious Young Turks now had to prove themselves capable of living up to their rhetoric.¹⁵⁴

The final report, signed 24 September 1925, suggested that the Eastern provinces be indefinitely ruled by martial law, that the Kurdish intelligentsia and chieftain class be prevented from reviving as a ruling class once and for all, that undesirables be resettled and that no language other than Turkish be spoken east of the Euphrates.¹⁵⁵ A detailed, top-secret inventory of Kurdish tribes, their relationships and ‘loyalty’ to the state was also produced¹⁵⁶ which may be the precursor to the one that is in use among the upper bureaucracy until today.¹⁵⁷ In Üngör’s words, this

was nothing short of a radical expansion of existing Young Turk fantasies and methods of social engineering. It reflected a staunch belief in the feasibility of creating a society through large-scale, top-down authoritarian politics, coupled with an ethno-nationalist vision of ‘landscaping the human garden’ at distance. In previous explorations this approach had been characterized by Cemil Uybadın as a ‘colonial

¹⁵² Bozarslan (2003: 164).

¹⁵³ Bruinessen (2000 a: 79).

¹⁵⁴ Üngör (2008 b: paragraphs 38).

¹⁵⁵ Üngör (2008 b: paragraph 40).

¹⁵⁶ Üngör (2008 b: para. 41).

¹⁵⁷ Pers. com. Berktaş.

administrative method', thus explicating the plan as a form of internal colonization (Bayrak 1993: 467-480).¹⁵⁸

Law on Settlement 1926

This law shows clearly that it was not only in the 1930s that Turkish nationalism assumed an ethnic slant but that this had already happened ten years earlier in the law on settlement which discriminated heavily against certain ethnicities.¹⁵⁹ The law was security-centered in that it grouped prospective immigrants according to the threat they posed to Turkey in the state's eyes. Those it thought of as harmless and easily assimilable were declared to be 'of Turkish culture' while those suspected of resisting Turkification were declared not to be of Turkish culture. Among the former were Pomaks, Bosnians and Tatars¹⁶⁰ and among the latter Albanians. The latter's immigration was restricted and the reason for this was probably that they had risen against the Ottoman Empire in 1912 and set up their own nation state.¹⁶¹

The settlement provisions also reflect the law's concern with security. The settling of Albanians or Bosnians in Thrace and Eastern and Western Anatolia was forbidden and the settlement of Georgians and Azeris regarded with suspicion. The immigration of White Russians was not permitted.¹⁶² People 'lacking Turkish culture' were not allowed to make up more than 20 per cent of the population of any town or village.¹⁶³ Others not allowed into the country were people

who are infected with syphilis, who are subject to leprosy and their families, who are imprisoned because of committing murder except [for] political and military reasons, anarchists, spies, gypsies, and [those] who are exiled outside of the country cannot be admitted.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁸ Üngör (2008 b: paragraph 39).

¹⁵⁹ Ülker (2007: paragraph 10).

¹⁶⁰ Ülker (2007: paragraph 20).

¹⁶¹ Ülker (2007: footnote 16).

¹⁶² Ülker (2007: paragraph 32).

¹⁶³ Ülker (2007: paragraph 27).

¹⁶⁴ Ülker (2007: paragraph 19).

The Ministry of the Interior compiled extremely detailed lists that informed about the ethnic and linguistic makeup of a region not on village or hamlet level, but on a street-by-street level. It would say, for instance, that 48 Bosnians inhabited İhsaniye Street which made them 100 per cent of the population there whereas in another street 422 Turks constituted 99.2 per cent of the population.¹⁶⁵ Many immigrants left their designated place of settlement because the climate or soil did not suit them or because they were separated from family members. This flight was a problem for the Ministry of Exchange, Reconstruction and Settlement since it thwarted its assimilation efforts.¹⁶⁶ After a parliamentary debate attacking the ministry's failures, it was closed in December 1924.¹⁶⁷

Citizen Speak Turkish Campaign 1928

This campaign put pressure on non-Turkish speakers to speak Turkish in public and was initiated by university students in 1928. It gained momentum in the early thirties and lasted into the 1940s, supported by the rise of fascism in Europe.¹⁶⁸ Though there were many communities in Turkey that spoke languages other than Turkish (Kurds, Cretans, Arabs, Armenians, Albanians and Assyrians among others)¹⁶⁹ and that were threatened, fined and arrested¹⁷⁰ for not speaking Turkish in public, Jews were the campaigners' prime target.

In 1927, 85 percent of the Jews in European Turkey spoke Ladino as their mother tongue¹⁷¹ and Jews made up more than 10% of Izmir's population.¹⁷² There were mainly

¹⁶⁵ Ülker (2007: paragraph 44).

¹⁶⁶ Ülker (2007: paragraph 39).

¹⁶⁷ Ülker (2007: paragraph 41).

¹⁶⁸ Aslan (2007: 264).

¹⁶⁹ In 1927, Turkey's population was 13.6 million. For around 2 million, Turkish was not the mother tongue. Dündar (1999: 157). In Istanbul, the percentage of the population that spoke a language other than Turkish as its mother tongue was 28 percent. Out of almost 800,000 people, roughly 90,000 spoke Greek, 50,000 Armenian and 40,000 Ladino. Aslan, (2007: 250).

¹⁷⁰ Çağaptay (2004: 95).

¹⁷¹ Aslan (2007: 257).

two reasons for the targeting of Jews who spoke Ladino and/or French. One was to curb their economic power and the other possibly to force Turkish Jews to take a clear stand and to either become indistinguishably Turkish or to choose ‘otherness’ and leave.

Aslan states that the campaign was “first and foremost an attempt to mobilize for the creation of a Muslim-Turkish bourgeoisie by curbing the power of non-Muslims in the economy.”¹⁷³ Jews had stepped into the void left in the economy with the Armenian-Greek absence.¹⁷⁴ The idea behind the campaign was probably that the time it took Jewish businessmen to learn Turkish would give Turkish-speaking aspiring businessmen a chance to catch up or to take over their businesses. Additionally, the campaign may have served as a vent for the nationalists’ frustration at their continued lagging behind minority businessmen. Jews were an easy target since they could not expect support from any outside power.¹⁷⁵

As for the second reason, the Jewish community was the only one from among the minorities that had a chance of becoming Turkish in the eyes of at least one group of nationalists. While Armenians and Greeks were already beyond redeem (they had completely discredited themselves as candidates for Turkification during the war years), Jews stood a chance of being modeled into Turks in the eyes of the state. After all they had no record of ‘siding with the enemy’, harbored no aspirations for Turkish territory and seemed willing to assimilate as evidenced by their setting up Turkish language societies, classes and circles. For the state it was enough if Jews only spoke Turkish to become fully Turkish. But according to Aslan, the ‘missionaries’ (nationalist activists) who initiated the campaign were not content with Jews only speaking Turkish, they wanted them to become Muslim, too. According to her, the reasoning behind this was that Jews would never accept this which would give the state the right to exclude them from citizenship.¹⁷⁶ So according to this interpretation, the missionaries made demands on Jews that were impossible to

¹⁷² Çağaptay (2004: 93-94).

¹⁷³ Aslan (2007: 259).

¹⁷⁴ Aslan (2007: 255).

¹⁷⁵ Aslan (2007: 260).

¹⁷⁶ Aslan (2007: 261).

fulfill because they did not want them to become part of ‘Turkish culture’.¹⁷⁷ The idea is an interesting one but not particularly well supported. It agrees, though, with Bali’s hypothesis with regard to Jewish schools.

The state’s attitude towards the campaign was ambivalent, at times it supported the campaign and at times quelled it by ordering the campaigners to be moderate. What is more striking is that on the whole, the state was less radical than the campaigners. The state-sponsored Türk Ocakları, for example, opposed the use of violence to impose Turkish on everyone and bills that aimed at making Turkish compulsory in public did not pass in parliament.¹⁷⁸ The longevity and ardor of the campaign was due to the ‘missionaries’ who saw it as their civic duty to exhort their fellow citizens to be deserving citizens of Turkey by giving up any language other than Turkish. They were an important factor in nation building.

Law on Family Names 1934

Everybody had to have a family name but it was forbidden to take the name of a tribe, foreign race or nation as family name. “The Greeks of Turkey would Turkify their names by dropping the ‘-dis’ and ‘pulos’ suffixes. Most of the Jews would Turkify their names and surnames by finding a Turkish equivalent for each Jewish name.”¹⁷⁹ Though in no way violent, it was part of Turkification in that it robbed the minorities of part of their distinctness and their own culture and forced them to fit in more. Many members of the minorities chose to give their children names that did not mark them as members of a minority and expose them to discrimination, for example names that were used by both Armenians and Turks. One could call this a form of self-censorship, the state did not require it, there was no law against using Christian names, but the disadvantages of bearing

¹⁷⁷ Aslan (2007: 256).

¹⁷⁸ Aslan (2007: 266).

¹⁷⁹ Bali (2006: 45).

one were so great that many decided against it and assimilated themselves further than was demanded.¹⁸⁰

Thrakia Pogrom Against Jews 1934

The Thrakia pogrom against Jews took place in the summer of 1934 first in Çanakkale and then Edirne, Kırklareli, Uzunköprü, Kırklareli and Babaeski. Non-Jewish residents attacked their Jewish neighbors, plundered their stores and homes, boycotted their shops, prevented them from doing business, abused them and raped women. In some cases the police intervened, in others they were bystanders. The authorities made empty promises for the victims' safety and then deported them to Istanbul.¹⁸¹ Between 3,000 and 10,000 people fled to Istanbul, the Balkan states or Palestine, often at night to avoid being robbed.¹⁸² About half of those who had fled to Istanbul returned to Edirne and Çanakkale but as their discrimination continued during the following years (boycotts, humiliation, press attacks, the factual expropriation through the wealth tax and the recruitment into the army during WWII), the returnees left for good so that virtually no Jews were left in that part of Turkey.¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ Göçek (2011: 90).

¹⁸¹ Pekesen (2010: 1).

¹⁸² Pekesen (2010: 2).

¹⁸³ Pekesen (2010: 2). See also: "The community diminished through migration to Israel and other countries and also to Istanbul. In 1948, 2,750 Jews remained in Edirne, while by 1960 their number dwindled to 438, and in 1977 there were only 72 Jewish inhabitants in the city. In 1948 the community was still well organized and levied dues from its members. Its council maintained charitable institutions, a Bikkur Holim society (which then provided medical care for 730 patients), a Mahazikei Torah association (which provided Hebrew and religious education), the 'Ozer Dallim association (which cared for the needy), and several synagogues. By 1969 most of the institutions had closed and the community was left with only one synagogue. In 1971 the municipality prohibited the community from using its cemetery and in 1975 it confiscated it altogether. Subsequently the cemetery was destroyed. The shrinking community used the synagogue until 1983. In 1998 there were only three Jews living in Edirne." Hayyim J. Cohen and Eyal Ginio, eds., URL: http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0006_0_05559.html

Bali gives three reasons for this attack on Jews in that part of Turkey and at that particular time: The militarization of the Thrace region, economic nationalism and the continuing drive to homogenize the population. I would add as a further motive the government's wish to divert the anger and frustration many of the destitute Muslim refugees felt against the Turkish government. By channeling these sentiments against the Jews of the district, the government avoided its own blame and for the refugees it was an opportunity for improving their material condition by moving into Jewish houses and using their household goods.

To return to the economic motive, Jews were concentrated in the upper economic class of Thrace's main cities.¹⁸⁴ In contrast to the other two official minorities, they had not suffered through expropriation and expulsion until then but stayed in possession of their goods and their possession. This changed with the pogrom of 1934 during which people fled in such haste that they could take only few or no belongings with them, or had to sell them for a pittance. When İnönü officially visited Thrace, he did not visit the Jewish community leadership nor did the state compensate the Jews for their losses.¹⁸⁵ It was local CHP bodies and nationalist groups that took the initiative in expelling Thrace's Jews when they heard that within the next weeks the 1934 settlement law would be applied.¹⁸⁶ There is also evidence that at least parts of the government knew what was going to happen. The general inspector for Thrace Ibrahim Tali, for instance, recommended the removal of Jews from the economy of Thrace.¹⁸⁷ Thus the government and administration were at least willing to expel the Jews, even if they did not (fully) plan it.

¹⁸⁴ Bali (2008: paragraph 2).

¹⁸⁵ Bali (2008: paragraph 10).

¹⁸⁶ Pekesen (2010: 12).

¹⁸⁷ Pekesen (2010: 14).

Law on Settlement 1934

This law divided the country into three zones of settlement and the population into three groups according to their degree of 'being of Turkish culture'. According to this law, any Muslim who spoke Turkish and no language besides it was considered as being 'of Turkish culture'. Non-Turkish speaking Muslims such as Pomaks, Bosnians, Tatars and Karapapaks, Muslim Georgian, Lezgi, Chechen, Circassian and Abkhazians¹⁸⁸ were regarded as being 'close to Turkish culture'. They were allowed to immigrate and given papers but had to become assimilated to Turkishness as quickly as possible by learning Turkish and not passing on their mother tongue. Whoever was neither Muslim nor exclusively Turkish-speaking such as Jews, Armenians, Greeks, Assyrians was 'not of Turkish culture' and to be treated as a foreigner.

According to one's degree of 'having Turkish culture', one was then assigned a place where one could settle, had to settle, or was under no circumstances allowed to settle. Immigrants 'of Turkish culture' were settled in Kurdish areas,¹⁸⁹ 'sensitive' areas by railways, highways, natural resources, borders and bridges¹⁹⁰ and probably also in the border region Thrace¹⁹¹ because they were regarded as loyal and able to dilute the population 'of non-Turkish culture'. These immigrants 'of Turkish culture' were given land from the public treasury as an incentive for settlement.¹⁹² Individuals 'close to Turkish culture' were forbidden from establishing villages and districts or to concentrate away from 'Turks'. People 'not of Turkish culture' were forbidden from settling in the security zone. It is probably for this reason that some Armenians were forced to abandon their homes in the East for urban centers in the West during this period.¹⁹³ The settlement law only legalized practices that had been happening all along, since the 20s or actually the Balkan wars,¹⁹⁴

¹⁸⁸ Ülker (2008: paragraphs 14-15).

¹⁸⁹ Ülker (2008: paragraph 26).

¹⁹⁰ Ülker (2008: paragraph 2).

¹⁹¹ Ülker (2008: paragraph 34).

¹⁹² Ülker (2008: paragraph 31).

¹⁹³ Pekesen (2006: 65).

¹⁹⁴ Ülker (2007: paragraph 1).

namely the assimilation of ‘non-Turkish’ Muslim immigrants by settling them among ‘Turks’ and the assimilation of Kurds by settling ‘Turkish’ Muslim immigrants among them. Van Bruinessen writes that “[t]his is clearly more than just legal discrimination; the Law on Resettlement provides the legal framework for a policy of ethnocide.”¹⁹⁵

In the 1920s and 1930s, the Turkish state actively promoted the immigration of Muslims from the Balkans. The rationale was that Turkey was depopulated after the wars and therefore needed repopulation and that Muslim immigrants would strengthen the cohesion of the nation in the making. In the years from 1923 to 1939, 800,000 people entered Turkey from Greece, Bulgaria, Romania and Yugoslavia.¹⁹⁶ The idea that there were millions of Turks in the Balkans, some of whom were unaware of their Turkishness and who had to be brought to Turkey, had been formulated as early as 1923.¹⁹⁷

The provinces with the highest percentage of people who were considered not to be ‘of Turkish culture’ were of course the Kurdish ones. “While the rebellious Kurds were deported to the western parts of the country, the government intended to colonize the Eastern Provinces with the Turkish immigrants of [...] Caucasian and, especially, Balkan origins.”¹⁹⁸ In the course of this forced resettlement, they were also expropriated. “Their [the Cemilpaşazade family’s] businesses and property, including a huge mansion in Diyarbakir city, were transferred to the state and to Turkish owners.”¹⁹⁹ Also included was the settlement of nomads, such as the Armenian-speaking Hemşinli from Artvin province, whose lifestyle was regarded as contradicting that of civilized, modern people.²⁰⁰

The settlement and assimilation policies were nation-building policies more than anything else. Sure, the country and population were devastated, and needed rebuilding, but the government could have done this by improving infrastructure, housing, agriculture and industry. Instead, it increased the housing problem by bringing hundreds of thousands of people into the country who were poor, had no special skills and who were often unfamiliar

¹⁹⁵ Bruinessen (2000 a: 81).

¹⁹⁶ Ülker (2007: paragraph 13).

¹⁹⁷ Ülker (2007: paragraph 13).

¹⁹⁸ Ülker (2007: paragraph 47).

¹⁹⁹ Üngör (2008 b: 43).

²⁰⁰ Ülker (2007: paragraph 45).

with the climate and crops of their new place of settlement. This created social tensions and exacerbated the existing problems. Ülker writes that “[i]ncreasing the population was regarded as an urgent necessity for both economic and social reasons. Thus bringing the Muslims residing outside of the country was seen as a solution to the demographic problems.” The government must have thought that in the long run the gain of a bigger, more homogenous population would be worth the short-term difficulties.

Suppression of the Dersim Revolt 1936-1938

Dersim was a mountainous and extremely poor area inhabited by mostly Zaza-speaking Alevis that had never been under government control.²⁰¹ In 1936, the Turkish state established a military government in the area and started building roads, bridges and setting up police posts to bring it under state control. What the state perceived as a rebellion against centralization may have been merely an instance of intertribal violence that it misinterpreted or took as a convenient excuse for starting the confrontation.²⁰² If it was a rebellion, its main motive was probably resistance to the state’s ‘civilizing mission’ and to government interference with tribal affair.²⁰³ The government presented its war on the Kurds of Dersim as a fight against ‘feudalism’ and backwardness, when actually, it was a fight against “Kurdish ethnic identity. The brutal Dersim campaign was but the culmination of a series of measures taken in order to forcibly assimilate the Kurds [...].”²⁰⁴ Ironically, it was already taboo to speak of Kurds by that time, so that the attacks were carried out against ‘Turks’ who were not Turkish enough.

In the course of two campaigns in 1937 and 1938, the Kurds of Dersim were attacked from the air and on the ground and thousands, including children, were massacred, burnt alive, suffocated in caves, tortured and possibly attacked with poisonous gas. The members

²⁰¹ Bruinessen, (2000 a: 71).

²⁰² Bruinessen (2000 a: 72).

²⁰³ Bruinessen (2000 a: 76).

²⁰⁴ Bruinessen (2000 a: 77).

of tribes that had always been loyal to the government were targeted as well.²⁰⁵ Girls and women committed suicide en masse and even the young men from Dersim who were doing their military service were taken from their regiments and shot.²⁰⁶ “The British consul in Trabzon specifically likened the mass killings there to those of the Armenians in 1915-16.”²⁰⁷ Van Bruinessen estimates that up to ten per cent of the entire population of Dersim may have been killed.²⁰⁸ The survivors were robbed of their cattle, their fields and villages burned and they themselves deported to central Anatolia. No reliable survey has yet succeeded in accurately estimating the casualties of these three attacks against Kurds. Levene writes that the Turkish communist party calculates that between one and one and a half million were (sic!) Kurds deported *and* massacred between 1925 and 1938.”²⁰⁹

Denaturalization of Turkish Jews 1940-45

Laws and decrees to ensure the legality of denaturalization were passed in 1927, 1928, 1933, 1935 and 1938. They established a legal basis for the withdrawal of citizenship from citizens who had not taken part in the war of liberation, who had deserted the army, not done military service or fled abroad and not registered with a Turkish consulate within five years or who were regarded as not being ‘of Turkish culture’.²¹⁰ “[...] the laws were designed to deprive unwanted sections of the population of their Turkish citizenship.”²¹¹ As is clear from the fact that they were never used against Muslims and that they were used against people who had no way of satisfying the law (such as when women and babies were stripped of their citizenship for not having taken part in the war of liberation or when Jews

²⁰⁵ Bruinessen (2000 a: 74).

²⁰⁶ Bruinessen (2000 a: 74).

²⁰⁷ Levene (1998: 397).

²⁰⁸ Bruinessen (2000 a: 75).

²⁰⁹ Levene (1998: 397).

²¹⁰ Görgü Guttstadt (2006: 51).

²¹¹ Görgü Guttstadt (2006: 52).

living in the West were punished for not having taken part in the national struggle in central and southern Anatolia).

Before and during World War II and at the same time that Turkey invited dozens of German-speaking Jewish scholars and scientists to seek refuge from the Nazis in Turkey, Turkey also denaturalized more of its own Jews (Turkish Jews living in Europe) than at any earlier time. It was concerned that its Jewish citizens would otherwise return to Turkey en masse, play a role again in the economy and swart the homogenization project. At the beginning of WWII 20,000 Turkish Jews were living in Europe, about half of them in France.²¹² Most of them had emigrated to Europe in the period 1909 to 1923 because they wanted to avoid being drafted into the army, suffering in the wars and because of the Turkification of the economy.²¹³ The Nazis, who were interested in good relations with Turkey, gave Turkey several opportunities to repatriate the Jews it had denaturalized, and extended the deadline repeatedly between 1941 and 1944.²¹⁴ But far from protecting its former citizens, the Turkish state increased its rate of denaturalization, thereby exposing more Jews to the risk of being deported and killed by the Nazis. In 1943 and 1944, 2,000 Turkish citizens were deprived of their citizenship and between 80 and 90 per cent were Jewish.²¹⁵ Turkey even collaborated with the Nazis in that it asked them to interview Turkish Jews living in areas occupied by the Nazis and to deliver to them Turkey's decision to denaturalize them. This meant that the Nazis knew immediately who had become stateless and was therefore without protection so that they could deport him.²¹⁶ Görgü Guttstadt notes that “[c]ompared with the total number of Turkish Jews in Europe during the Holocaust, the number of rescue attempts appears minimal.”²¹⁷

Only in spring 1944, when the German defeat was obvious and Turkey started to bet on the winning horse in its foreign relations, did international pressure enable several hundred Jews to be transported from France to Turkey in six trains.²¹⁸

²¹² Görgü Guttstadt (2006: 54).

²¹³ Görgü Guttstadt (2006: 54).

²¹⁴ Görgü Guttstadt (2006: 54-55).

²¹⁵ Görgü Guttstadt (2006: 56).

²¹⁶ Görgü Guttstadt (2006: 55).

²¹⁷ Görgü Guttstadt (2006: 55).

²¹⁸ Görgü Guttstadt (2006: 56).

But even as late as spring 1945, Turkish authorities did everything to prevent the now stateless Jews from entering the country. The ship *Drottningholm* arrived in Istanbul on 11 March 1945 as part of an exchange of civilian prisoners of war between Turkey and Germany. It carried 137 Jews of Turkish origin who were survivors of concentration camps in Germany. Even though the horrors they had experienced were known to Ankara, it allowed only a minority of them to disembark and only after lengthy negotiations did it allow the rest to leave the ship and to be “interned in three hotels in Istanbul, with the Jewish Agency covering the costs.”²¹⁹

Labor Battalions 1941-1942

During World War II, non-Muslims had to work in labor battalions rather than serve as regular soldiers carrying weapons. This was either because the state felt it could not trust them enough or because it meant to humiliate them. In any case this must have brought back very bad memories of World War I during which virtually all Armenians working in labor battalions were shot. After a year, in 1942, the labor battalions were discharged from duty. But the next visitation followed on its heel, namely the wealth tax (see chapters five and seven).²²⁰ As a consequence of this humiliating and exploitative treatment of the minorities, 4,000 Turkish Jews emigrated and another 5,000 applied for emigration in 1943 and 1944.²²¹ From among the 77,000 Jews still living in Turkey in 1945, forty per cent emigrated between 1948-49 which shows that there were not only push factors at play but also a considerable pull factor, the establishment of the state of Israel. The exodus of Jews gathered pace again after the 1955 pogroms, with almost 10,000 more Jews leaving Turkey for various countries as of 1960.²²²

²¹⁹ Görgü Guttstadt (2006: 56).

²²⁰ İçduygu, Toktaş and Soner (2008: 367).

²²¹ Benbassa and Rodrigue (2001: 383).

²²² Güven (2006: 178).

The 1950s and 1960s

The year 1950 was the end of the Young Turk period according to Zürcher's definition of Young Turks, it was the beginning of the multi-party period and of the reestablishment of democracy in Turkey. Üngör states that

[o]nly when the Young Turks lost power in the elections of 1950 their high-modernist projects of social engineering were halted. By that time, the human map of Eastern Turkey had been radically altered.²²³

As we will see, this was not the case, nation building through social engineering continued of which the pogrom of 1955 is the best example.

Renaming in the 1950s

Öktem recognizes that the change of the party in government made no change at all as long as the bureaucracy remained unchanged. "In the wake of multi-party politics in 1950 and the ascent to power of the culturally conservative Democrat Party, the most systematic phase of the renaming of villages and topography began."²²⁴ The Democrat Party, though, was not too keen on change, it would have liked to revert the language reform and it was discontent with the secularization of toponyms (those with religious connotations such as *şeyh*, *molla*, *hacı*, *kilise*, *keşişlik* had been replaced).²²⁵ The state apparatus established a commission but, surprisingly, local resistance in the provincial councils slowed down name changes since these had to be confirmed by elected councils, not by the Ankara-appointed governors.²²⁶ In 1959, however, an amendment conferred the right to decide on name change to the provincial administration. From then on, name change was "a project of the bureaucratic elites that would be continued irrespective of the political party in governments."²²⁷ After the 1960 coup, the military-appointed government

²²³ Üngör (200 b.:, paragraph 47).

²²⁴ Öktem (2008: paragraph 34).

²²⁵ Öktem (2008: paragraph 16).

²²⁶ Öktem (2008: paragraph 38).

²²⁷ Öktem (2008: paragraph 38).

reinforced the principles of the language reform and renaming policy.²²⁸ The commission's directory introduced more than 12,000 toponyms, thereby replacing thirty percent of the 45,000 village names in Turkey.²²⁹

The migration from the countryside to the cities that assumed large proportions in the 1960s, though no nation-building design, probably contributed to the homogenization of the population even though unemployment affected Muslims and non-Muslims equally. But once in the city, Kurds or Assyrians who may only have spoken Kurdish or Syriac in their villages were in close contact with Turks all the time and had to learn Turkish or speak Turkish rather than their mother tongues so as not to be conspicuous. They probably also had to compromise some of their customs so that they assimilated to their Turkish surroundings.

Emigration from Turkey is another case in point: Among the tens of thousands of people who started emigrating from Turkey in the 1960s in search of work, for political reasons or because of war and persecution at home, there was a disproportionately high number of minorities. One reason is that, being minorities, they faced more social pressure and discrimination than mainstream Sunni Turks. Another reason is that in the 1980s the Southeast of Turkey which was still the most heterogeneous part of the country (Alevi, Yezidi, Assyrian, Armenian, Muslim, Kurd), turned into a war zone. Many never returned which was at least in part a result of Turkish nation building and certainly contributed to it.

Renaming in the 1970s

The 1970s saw the fourth wave of the country-wide renaming of places. By the end of the decade, about 36 per cent of all villages in Turkey had been renamed. In Western and central Anatolia the percentage of changed village names was below a third, but in the East and Southeast it was anywhere between 44 and 91 per cent because these had been the most

²²⁸ Öktem (2008: paragraph 39).

²²⁹ Öktem (2008: paragraph 40).

ethnically mixed parts of Turkey. At the same time, in 1978, the commission was again resolved, reportedly because the prime ministry objected to its zeal in changing historical place names which caused confusion in the tourism industry as ancient Roman and Greek sites could no longer be found on the new maps.²³⁰ This is another instance of disagreement over the extent and pace of Turkification.

Öktem concludes his observations of name change by stating that

the period between the 1950s and the 1980s hosts the most momentous changes to Turkey's toponymy, with the grip of the commission getting ever tighter and reaching out ever further, into hamlets, alms, pastures, mountains and rivers. A new pattern also emerges: Democratically elected governments even if they do not always stop the practice [of] renaming, are remarkably less inclined to support and facilitate the commission's work. Considered in this light, the turkification of Turkey's time and space emerges as a policy of bureaucratic elites that lingered on during democratic periods and was imbued with renewed vehemence during the interludes of military rule.²³¹

This is a very good point that was also made with regard to the Citizen Speak Turkish campaign. It would be worth investigating disagreement over Turkification during the war years, whether at that time the roles between the government and bureaucracy were reversed, the bureaucracy holding back and the government pressing for radical change.

Conclusion

Minorities in the sense of linguistically, religiously or ethnically distinct groups suffered heavily under Turkish nation building because the more the definition of who could legitimately live in Anatolia was narrowed, the more groups were either forcibly excluded from the nation or forcibly included into it. The first to be eyed suspiciously and then to be for the most part excluded were Christians of various denominations. In the 1930s, under the influence of European fascism, Turkish Jews, too, saw themselves denaturalized. All along, Muslims of various ethnic backgrounds were denied entry into the country if they were thought hard to assimilate into Turkishness or, if deemed assimilable,

²³⁰ Öktem (2008: paragraph 45).

²³¹ Öktem (2008: paragraph 49).

subjected to resettlement and assimilation. İçduygu, Toktaş and Soner are therefore right in concluding that the “demographic, linguistic, cultural and economic policies of nation-building have, therefore, advanced at the expense of [the] non-Muslim minorities’ ethno-cultural, demographic and economic presence in the country.”²³²

²³² İçduygu, Toktaş, Soner (2008: 381).

4.

HOMOGENIZING THE NATION IN PRE-REPUBLICAN TIMES

This chapter is concerned with the Turkification of the Anatolian population which was to a large degree brought about by the elimination of Armenians and Greeks. This elimination could take many forms. In the case of the population, it happened either by removing members of these two communities from Turkey (after expulsion they continued to live elsewhere), by killing them so that their existence ceased altogether (starvation, drowning, exhaustion, disease etc.) or by ending their existence in Turkey *as Armenians* or *Greeks* namely through (forced) assimilation. The latter could take the form of deracination, conversion to Islam, imposition of Turkish as the only language to be spoken and giving Turkish-Muslim names. This chapter will show in how far the motives for and outcomes of elimination were part of nation building. The events grouped under each of the three headings (expulsion, killing, assimilation) are to be seen as instances of nation building, not as a complete history, though they will be dealt with chronologically.

Denaturalization, Flight and Expulsion from Anatolia and Prevention from Returning There

This heading summarizes policies and actions that had the result that Armenians and Greeks left the Ottoman Empire or Turkey for good. They were either forced to by law or treaty (expulsion), or they feared for their lives (flight), or they were deprived of their citizenship (denaturalization) and forbidden from returning or made to leave because of a

combination of all three factors. Tens of thousands of Armenians emigrated after the Hamidiyan massacres of 1894-6 and the Cilician massacre of 1909 because their lives had been destroyed and they saw no future for themselves and their children in the Ottoman Empire.²³³ In the forty-year period between 1870 and 1910 some 100,000 Armenians emigrated as a result of dire living circumstances, lawless and frequent assaults on their lives and property.²³⁴ None of these people were formally expelled or deprived of their subjecthood, but the Ottoman authorities made no effort to keep them in the country which suggests that their departure was anticipated and approved. In the eyes of Ottoman officials, it decreased the troublesome presence of Christians whose mistreatment foreign powers kept taking as a pretext to meddle in Ottoman affairs.

In early 1914, after an economic boycott had not driven out the Aegean Greeks, Talat Pasha instructed Mahmut Celal (later to become Turkey's third president) to remove them with the help of the Special Organizations which were eight to ten thousand strong.²³⁵ They used threats of force and actual force to clear Greek villages.²³⁶ They set the inhabitants an ultimatum for leaving, stole their cattle, drove them from their farms, abused the women and killed some of them.²³⁷ As a result, more than 100,000 and up to 200,000 Greeks fled from the Aegean coast and Thrace and moved to the Greek islands of the Aegean.²³⁸ Muslim Albanians and Cretans, who were themselves refugees from formerly Ottoman territories, moved into their houses.²³⁹

The simultaneous attacks on the Greeks of the Kara Bournou peninsula, which coincided with the landing of 600 muhadjir families at Kato-Panayia and with the landing of a number of other such families at Chesmé who were to replace the Greeks of Alatsata, [...] indicate that a major, organized, and effective anti-Greek campaign took place.²⁴⁰

²³³ Kévorkian and Paboudjian (1992: 44-45).

²³⁴ Kévorkian and Paboudjian (1992: 44-45).

²³⁵ Bjørnlund (2008: 46).

²³⁶ Bjørnlund (2008: 46).

²³⁷ Bjørnlund (2008: 46).

²³⁸ Zürcher (2003: p. 2).

²³⁹ Bjørnlund (2008: 42).

²⁴⁰ Bjørnlund (2008: 47-48).

Their flight simultaneously provided housing for Muslim immigrants, cleared the local economy of Greeks and made their other property available. As in the case of Armenian refugees in late Ottoman times, the Aegean Greeks were not officially expelled, but fled economic discrimination and physical abuse.

The motivation behind this drastic step was at least twofold: political and security oriented on the one hand (to put pressure on the Greek government to solve the island dispute in favor of the Ottoman Empire, to eliminate the concentrations of non-Muslims in the region²⁴¹, to eliminate potential collaborators with the enemy) and economic on the other (to ‘nationalize’ the economy).²⁴² There is disagreement over whether lack of space and scarcity of arable land also played a role. While Bjørnlund says that the Aegean region was sparsely populated and that it had plenty of arable soil for Greeks and *muhajirs* alike,²⁴³ Terzibaşoğlu repeatedly states that arable land was scarce everywhere in Western Anatolia because of the influx of masses of immigrants and that there was constant fighting over this limited resource.²⁴⁴ If this is true, it was an additional incentive for driving the Greeks out of the region.

Bjørnlund attributes the relative restraint of the Special Organization (after all the Greeks were only expelled and not massacred) to uncertainty over the international reaction and the Ottoman Empire’s insufficient preparation for war. “[...] even though Turkification through persecution was CUP policy, it was a policy that, at this point at least, could not be followed too openly or with any widespread use of regular military forces.”²⁴⁵ The Ottoman Empire was not ready to go to war and feared that Greece would attack it if it killed Greeks on a large scale. More particularly, the Ottoman authorities halted the persecution of the Greeks because the two dreadnoughts the Ottoman Empire had bought from Britain had not yet been delivered (and actually never would be).²⁴⁶

²⁴¹ Hans-Lukas Kieser (2002: 257).

²⁴² Zürcher (2003: 2).

²⁴³ Bjørnlund (2008: 45).

²⁴⁴ Terzibaşoğlu (2004: 159)

²⁴⁵ Bjørnlund (2008: 48).

²⁴⁶ Bjørnlund (2008: footnote 73).

An additional reason for holding back was probably that at this point, there were still moral restraints acting upon the CUP, which it would throw off with the progression of WWI and the brutalization of all warring parties. But the absence of a stern response to the expulsion of the Greeks emboldened the CUP and convinced them that more radical measures could be employed for the Turkification of the Empire.²⁴⁷ This interpretation makes 1914 a testing ground for the empire-wide deportation and killing of Armenians in 1915.

In the same year in which the Aegean Greeks were driven out, several Armenian and Greek professors at Constantinople University were fired without warning or cause other than their ethnicity.²⁴⁸ This act was totally insignificant in terms of numbers but is significant in terms of motivation since it targeted members of the Christian intelligentsia. Only one year later, on 24 April 1915, over two hundred Istanbulite Armenian intellectuals were deported and most of them killed, which deprived the Armenians of an important part of their leadership. This is a method commonly used in genocide in order to reduce the resistance of the victim group. Knowing this suggests that the firing of a handful of Armenian and Greek professors in 1914 was not a random incident but a test.

The biggest wave of Armenian emigration occurred during and immediately after the genocide of 1915 when hundreds of thousands fled to the Russian Empire, Persia and the Middle East as well as to Europe, the USA and South America. Some fled in anticipation of deportation, others during the deportations and yet others months or years later. It seems that the first group was the smallest one since the order usually came at short notice so that people were not able to avoid the roundup unless they lived right by the Russian border and were given assistance.²⁴⁹ Thousands of Armenians returned to their homes with the Russian army when it advanced into Ottoman territory (Kars, Van) but had to withdraw with it so

²⁴⁷ Bjørnlund (2008: 51).

²⁴⁸ Bjørnlund (2008: 45-55).

²⁴⁹ Dersim was the only refuge for Armenians who sought a safe passage to Russia. According to Nuri Dersimi, 36,000 Armenians were saved thanks to the systematic rescue efforts of paid Kurdish guides. The CUP, which was aware of the Dersimi-Armenian understanding, tried to impede it in June 1915 already. Kieser (2010: 144).

that their stay was not of long duration. The vast majority of the Armenians that resettled in French- and British-occupied Cilicia and southeast Turkey were likewise forced to leave when the French and British armies withdrew, as will be explained in more detail below. The motivation for the Armenians' expulsion was the same as that for the expulsion of the Aegean Greeks in 1914, but it did not end with unofficially inducing them to leave the Ottoman Empire or Turkey since many were subsequently forbidden from reentering.

During the interim period, there were two governments with opposing views on the future nation in Turkey, the Ottoman government in Istanbul and the provisional government in Ankara (1921-23). In addition, there were French, British, Greek and Italian occupying forces that stayed for various lengths of time. The extent of their authority was constantly changing and except for the nationalist government in Ankara, none of the other parties were in power for long enough to have much of an effect on the population under their control.

Thousands of Armenians who had survived in Anatolia or returned continued to be persecuted, massacred, deported and expropriated.²⁵⁰ In this decade, tens of thousands left the country due to harassment, threats and being deprived of citizenship. Local authorities scared them away in the well-tested fashion through media campaigns,²⁵¹ by denying them any rights in court and by threatening to take their lives.²⁵² They also hampered foreign relief efforts - the American hospital in Kharput, for example, could only receive patients approved by the nationalist authorities. Many Greeks and Armenians were therefore turned away and died on the doorstep.²⁵³ Many Armenians left for Syria and Lebanon then but many others, especially further east in Marash, Aintab, Urfa and Kilis stayed after 1922.²⁵⁴ In the Kurdish countryside, thousands of Armenians came to live like serfs, dependent on and exploited by the *agha* or *sheikh* but at the same time protected from being killed.²⁵⁵

²⁵⁰ Marashlian (1999: 113).

²⁵¹ Marashlian (1999: 127).

²⁵² Marashlian (1999: 128).

²⁵³ Marashlian (1999: 128).

²⁵⁴ Tachjian (2009 a: 6).

²⁵⁵ Tachjian (2009 a: 6).

The provisional government employed a double strategy for getting rid of the remaining or returned Armenians and for preventing those that were abroad from returning. It issued the Travel and Traffic Decree which stipulated that “[all] those who had left the country with Ottoman documents or without a valid passport had to apply to Turkish diplomatic representations abroad for permission to return.”²⁵⁶ Since the provisional government had not given passports or certificates of citizenship to non-Muslims, any Christian or Jew who wanted to return had to apply to a Turkish consulate and have his application reviewed by the General Directory for Public Order. Applications made by Armenians were apparently routinely turned down since Görgü Guttstadt notes that the decree “mainly prevented Armenians in the United States from returning to Turkey, while Turks and Jews there got permission, even if they only possessed Ottoman documents.”²⁵⁷ This shows two things: Firstly, the provisional government was determined not to allow Armenian communities, however weakened, to take foot again in Anatolia. Secondly, Armenians were considered enemies of the state while Jews were not. This should change, though, within the next two decades. In the 1930s and 40s, Jews, too, would be targeted and denaturalized because they were the only remaining minority that had a standing in the economy.

The Armenians of southern and southeast Turkey were feeling relatively safe for as long as these regions were under French and British control. The British were neutral towards the various ethnicities under their rule whereas the French were openly pro-Armenian, employed them in the local administration and security forces or militia and tried to restore their property. But when the last French contingents left Cilicia in January 1922 in accordance with the Ankara agreement, the region came under Turkish rule and Armenians had to fear for their lives again.

After Greece’s failed occupation of parts of Western Anatolia and its defeat in the war with the Turkish ‘national’ resistance, between 400.000 and 500.000 Ottoman Greeks fled in great haste²⁵⁸ because they had become victims of the Turkish army’s atrocities just

²⁵⁶ Görgü Guttstadt (2006: 52).

²⁵⁷ Görgü Guttstadt (2006: 52).

²⁵⁸ Zürcher (2003: 3).

like Muslim Ottomans of the Greek army's. In addition, Greek Ottomans feared to be punished for real or suspected collaboration with the enemy. This huge exodus was not planned but nevertheless fit neatly in with the overall thrust of clearing Turkish territory of Christians.

The Turkish-Greek population exchange of 1922-23 was the third of three suggested population exchanges and the only one that was carried out. The first exchange was agreed on in September 1913, two months after the end of the second Balkan war, and was to take place between Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire. It was to be voluntary but it never materialized because of the outbreak of WWI.²⁵⁹ The second proposed exchange, in May 1914, should have been carried out between Greece and the Ottoman Empire, and likewise be voluntary, but did not realize either because of WWI. It seems that both these exchanges were intended to legitimize expulsions that had already taken place, in the first case of Muslims and in the second of the Aegean Greeks.²⁶⁰ The third exchange, between Greece and Turkey in 1922-23, actually took place. In contrast to the other two, it was not voluntary but forced everyone out who had not already fled. Those affected by the treaty were the Karamanlis in central Anatolia (200,000), the Pontian Greeks on the Eastern Black Sea coast (200,000) and several hundred thousand Greek Orthodox in and around Constantinople.²⁶¹ If the latter could prove that they were long-standing residents, they were exempted. Anybody else, though, was harassed and made to leave. All in all 430,000 people, who in many cases spoke only Turkish, had no wish to leave and lived the same lives as their Muslim neighbors were affected by the exchange. But since ethno-religious homogeneity was thought to be of higher value in the long run than immediate practicality or necessity, it was carried out anyway and only the Greeks of Istanbul and the Muslims of Western Thrace were exempted. With this move, Turkey rid itself of most of its Greek citizens of old standing almost completely. Due to the reciprocal intake of Muslims from Greece, Turkey not only homogenized its population, but also increased its size which was in line with overall population policies since Hamidiyan times (see chapter three).

²⁵⁹ Zürcher (2003: 2).

²⁶⁰ Zürcher (2003: 2-3).

²⁶¹ Zürcher (2008: 11).

To summarize, more than a million Armenians and Greeks respectively left the Ottoman Empire and Turkey within one generation, from the 1890s to the 1920s. Their departure was prompted by the fear of losing their lives, withdrawal of citizenship and an international agreement that forced them to leave their homes. Most of this outbound population move took place under the CUP which sought to build a strong Turkish nation by removing those ethno-religious groups that it identified as dangerous, prime among them the Armenians and Greeks.

Killings

Having dealt with the removal of Armenians and Greeks from Turkey which still allowed them to live elsewhere, we are now coming to how their existence was ended altogether as part of the homogenization of Anatolia's population. The Hamidiyan massacres of 1894-96 directly took the lives of 80-100,000 Armenians and indirectly those of tens of thousands more.

In terms of their function for the Ottoman state, the 1894-6 massacres combined political elements of a 'cull' of a proto-national element, including terrorization and expropriation, with a neo-conservative religious backlash against an 'inferior', upstart religious group.²⁶²

Gaunt argues that Armenians were less likely to be killed in rural places than in urban places such as Diyarbakır because in the cities there was a higher degree of economic stratification and rivalry in which Armenians stood above Muslims which created ill feeling among the latter.²⁶³ These massacres "were also a warning to Armenian nationalists and the powers not to press the reform issue. The extent of Abdülhamid II's direct complicity in the full spectrum of the massacres is, however, unclear."²⁶⁴ Some officials, military and police protected Christian lives and property whereas others participated in their destruction.²⁶⁵

²⁶² Bloxham (2003: 55).

²⁶³ Gaunt (2006: 44).

²⁶⁴ Bloxham (2005: 55).

²⁶⁵ Gaunt (2006: 42).

According to Bloxham, the participation of the Hamidiye should not be exaggerated. “Ordinary Muslims and *muhajirs* came to the fore, particularly Kurds (including some who had not hitherto taken part in abuse of Armenians), and, notably, Muslim religious leaders, students, and brotherhoods.”²⁶⁶ Even though the idea of Turkish nation building had not yet been formulated, these massacres fit into the bigger picture of the removal of Christians and they had the same result as later nation building measures would: they homogenized the population and de-Christianized the economy. Interestingly, the killings of 1895-6 and of 1915 had opposite intentions, the earlier one was meant to basically preserve the status quo by killing a limited number of Armenians whereas the latter was meant to totally change the status quo by getting rid of all Armenians.

In the Cilicia massacre of 1909, up to 20,000 Armenians were killed along with several hundred other Christians and up to 2,000 Muslims. We know even less than in the Hamidiyan case in how far the government was responsible for this massacre. It was prompted by Muslim resentment at the Christians’ constitutional freedoms, Armenian nationalistic celebrations of this freedom, dissatisfaction with economic inequalities and ethnic tension in an area that had recently seen famine, the influx of Muslim migrant workers and Balkan and Caucasian *muhajirs*.²⁶⁷ As with the Hamidiyan massacres, Armenians were neither killed as part of a Turkification plan, nor was it a coincidence that Armenians were killed rather than, say, Circassians. Rather, they fell victim to massacre because there was a tendency of large-scale violence against Christians rather than Muslims in the late Ottoman Empire. Gaunt notes that in the massacre of 1909 possibly for the first time, no distinction was made between Armenians and other Oriental Christians.²⁶⁸ According to him, this is the point where ‘Armenophobia’ turned into general anti-Christian feeling.

In the course of the expulsion of the Greeks in 1914 killings occurred, such as the massacre of Phocaea (today: Foça) north of Smyrna on June 12th²⁶⁹ and the killing of

²⁶⁶ Bloxham (2005: 55).

²⁶⁷ Bloxham (2005: 61).

²⁶⁸ Gaunt (2006: 44).

²⁶⁹ Bjørnlund (2008: 47).

everyone who tried to resist expulsion in the village of Serekieuy in the Menemen district.²⁷⁰ Overall, though, the Greek exodus was not marked by massive killings. The fear of it was enough to make people flee and the Ottoman state sought to avoid a confrontation with Greece at that point.

During the period reviewed, the greatest number of people of one community killed as part of nation building were the Armenians between 1915 and 1917. Armenian women and children were directly killed before, during or after deportation or died of hunger, thirst, exhaustion or disease. The same was true for their men except that they were placed in labor battalions.

Few of these soldiers survived the war as most of the labor battalions were being worked to death, at times even liquidated though the task was unfinished. In April 1915, the government ordered an assembly of 4,000 slave-labor soldiers for major road construction outside Diyarbakir and found that there were so few left that Christian women had to be pressed into filling out the ranks.²⁷¹

This may have cost the lives of half of the Ottoman Armenian population of two million.²⁷² In eastern Anatolia, all Christians were deported, Armenians as well as Assyrians. Protestants and Catholics were not generally spared but in certain localities they were.²⁷³ One breakdown of fatalities by denomination, given by the French Dominican Jacques Rhétoré, shows that the death toll of Protestants and Catholics was as high as that of other denominations. In the *vilayet* of Diyarbakır, for example, 97 per cent of Gregorian Armenians, 92 per cent of Catholic Armenians, 90 per cent of Chaldeans, 62 per cent of Syriac Catholics, 72 per cent of Syriac Orthodox and 67 per cent of Armenian or Syriac Protestants were killed.²⁷⁴

While during the Hamidiyan massacres officials could protect the Armenians under their authority without risking their lives, this was no longer possible in 1915. Officials who refused to have Christians deported or killed were replaced or killed which reflects the changes brought about by “the Young Turk rise to power, [and] the development of new

²⁷⁰ Bjørnlund (2008: 48).

²⁷¹ Gaunt (2006: 299).

²⁷² Levene (1998: 397).

²⁷³ Gaunt (2006: 77).

²⁷⁴ Gaunt (2006 : 301).

nationalist Turkish ideologies, which contributed to the identification of all Christians – no longer just Armenians – as subversive elements and allies of the enemy.²⁷⁵

In 1920-21, after the end of CUP control and before a new, countrywide government had been established, the massacring of Armenian survivors of the genocide resumed with Kemalist units attacking cities in the South in which Armenian survivors had sought refuge: 5.000 Armenians in Cilicia²⁷⁶ and 8.000 in Adana were killed and many more in Mersin, Marash and Aintab. Armenians in the interior were no better off.²⁷⁷ In Hajen (Hadjin), Armenians put up a fight for seven months but were defeated and the five hundred survivors fled the torched city.²⁷⁸ Deportations, for example from Malatia, also resumed in these years. On the governmental level, the reason for hunting down the remaining Armenians was that the government wanted to establish an Anatolia free of Christians before the Lausanne Peace Conference would oblige it to guarantee the safety of the Anatolian Christians. It wanted any obligations resulting from the peace agreement to be null and void.²⁷⁹ On the personal level, this

all-out effort to eradicate the Armenians was related to the recruitment of former Ottoman officials implicated in the wartime deportation and massacres, including some who were released from detention on the island of Malta in April-May 1921, into the ranks of the rulers in Angora.²⁸⁰

They feared losing the property they had stolen and to be held accountable for the crimes they had committed in the name of preserving the Empire. They tried to liquidate the surviving witnesses so that they would not raise any claims against them. Thus both the government and individuals engaged in ‘finishing the genocide’, as Marashlian puts it, in order not to have to deal with Ottoman Armenians in the future.

²⁷⁵ Gaunt (2006: 44).

²⁷⁶ Marashlian (1999: 122).

²⁷⁷ Marashlian (1999: 124).

²⁷⁸ Adalian (1999 a: 110).

²⁷⁹ Marashlian (1999: 128, 136).

²⁸⁰ Marashlian (1999: 124).

Whereas in the previous section on emigration, expulsion and denaturalization, there was no marked difference in the treatment of Armenians and Greeks, there is in this part on killing. Roughly 1,200,000 Armenians were killed during the period under consideration, while Greeks lost their lives in large numbers only during the Greco-Turk war (which is excluded from this analysis).²⁸¹ The reasons for this Greek-Armenian difference were given in the introduction under ‘Armenians and Greeks’. As for the motives for killing Armenians, they were different under Abdülhamid II than during the latter CUP period. Under Abdülhamid II, killing was used as punishment, it was a terror tactic meant to scare an ‘unruly’ people into submission. Misgivings at the Armenians’ perceived economic superiority, resentment of their newly-gained equality with Muslims and religiously-inspired distaste of them played a secondary role. After the lost Balkan Wars, on the other hand, security considerations became paramount. The CUP feared that Armenians would collaborate with the Russian, French or British enemy and fight its rule from within the country. The CUP believed that in the long run it could only resist incursions into Anatolia and be free from traitors within by gradually turning everybody into a member of what they thought of as the most loyal population, the Turks. To achieve this, they had to deal with the greatest threat first (Armenians) and in the harshest manner necessary and then take on the lighter problems (Muslim minorities). The killing of Armenians at the same time eliminated them from the economy (see chapter five) and, a welcome side effect, provided housing for Muslim immigrants that kept coming in huge numbers.

From the CUP’s point of view, killing Armenians rather than exiling them had the advantage that they would never again cause trouble, that they would neither go to war with Turkey, nor reclaim property or witness against it. It was the most ruthless but also the ‘safest’ way of removing them. At the same time, the international response had to be calculated, and general killings could only be ordered and carried out at an advanced stage of radicalization, brutalization and sense of encirclement.

²⁸¹ In the course of the Greek invasion of parts of Western Anatolia (1919-1922) lots of people were killed on both sides, soldiers in battle and civilians behind the lines. The former fatalities I do not count as victims of nation building, since they occurred during the confrontation of two armies. Civilian deaths I would count, but the numbers are unknown. The same applies to the Armeno-Turkish war of 1920 during which Kazım Karabekir’s army conquered Armenian-occupied Kars and cleared the now Turkish area of Armenians. This I consider part of nation building, but again we lack figures. Adalian (1999 a: 110).

Assimilation

One could distinguish in this part between men and women which would give us interesting clues as to their different capabilities in the CUP's eyes – women being seen as weak and reprogrammable but also as valuable mothers of the new nation and men as strong and carriers of the ethnic identity and therefore a constant threat if left alive.²⁸² But since very little information exists on how grown men survived the massacres and deportations, since indeed very few men did survive, it seems to make more sense to regard the survivors as undistinguished with regard to gender and to differentiate between institutional and non-institutional assimilation and non-assimilation. Armenians and Greeks who had survived and wanted to stay in Anatolia had in the long run little choice but to assimilate and lose their Greek or Armenian identity, or at least to hide it to the degree that only very few people knew of their true identity. It is true that there were short-term alternatives such as working in a trade or profession that was for the moment indispensable and therefore saved one from immediate death (e.g. smithery, medicine).²⁸³ Doing forced labor such as the men who worked in the Amanus Mountains on the railway falls into the same category. Some women could pretend that they were doing indispensable labor in factories when this was actually part of a rescue program.²⁸⁴ Becoming the mistress of a Turkish officer could be a means for women to avoid

²⁸² Derderian (2005: 4).

²⁸³ About the early summer of 1915: “Between 5 and 10 per cent of a minority might be left in place, and artisans pursuing crafts important to the army could remain: these included a few bootmakers, saddlemakers, and metalworkers, but even they led a precarious life.” Gaunt (2006: 68).

²⁸⁴ Supported by the American Consul Jackson, the German Consul Rössler and Swiss merchants, Rohner managed to protect around one thousand Armenian children and several women and even men. Furthermore, roughly ten thousand women found refuge in textile workshops of the Ottoman army. The Ottoman Muslim director of these workshops cooperated with Rohner. Kieser (2010: 443). The following quote may refer to the same form of employment but interprets it differently: “At the same time [during WWI] many women were employed as slaves in factories (imalat hane) for the benefit of the Ottoman army, especially in Aleppo and Damascus. It was this slavery that allowed them to survive and avoid deportation to the deserts. Others, as we have seen, found Muslim protectors who also became their sexual partners.” (Tachjian 2009 b: 77).

deportation altogether and not to negate their Armenianness (though it precluded a return to the Armenian community). But in the long run, assimilation through conversion, restricting oneself to speaking or learning to speak only Turkish or Kurdish, accepting a new name and not talking about the past was the way forward for most Armenians and Greeks who survived in Turkey. It is important to note, though, that there were Armenians and possibly Greeks as well who either managed to survive and assert their Armenian identity in the province or who resurfaced as Armenians or Greeks after a time and lived in Anatolia for decades after their respective catastrophe. Also, conversions to Syriac Orthodoxy and acceptance of the Alevi faith occurred which was not in the intent of the Turkish state but nevertheless allowed Armenian survivors to blend in and it was less of a change for them than conversion to Sunni Islam. The following part is divided into institutional and non-institutional assimilation and non-assimilation with the caveat that it is not always possible to draw a line between the three.²⁸⁵

Institutional Assimilation

The CUP counted on children's ability to adjust to changing circumstances and their inability to remember their families or mother tongue, if it was not Turkish or Kurdish already, if separated from both at a young age. Child survivors of massacre or deportation were therefore the most likely to be left alive. Armenian, Greek or Assyrian children in state orphanages grew up as Turks, maybe even particularly nationalist Turks, because of the education they received there and out of a sense of indebtedness for having been raised at all. During the war years,

Turkish authorities collected thousands of children on the roads of exile and placed them in newly opened establishments where they received an education characterised by strict disciplinary codes that was aimed at 'turkifying' them and converting them to Islam. Such institutions could be found the length and breadth of the empire, for

²⁸⁵ I consider conversion to Islam as an example of institutional assimilation since Islam was the state religion and imams state employees. Conversion to another Christian denomination or Alevism, though, I consider as non-institutional assimilation since this conversion was not officially recognized, and probably not even known by the Ottoman authorities.

example, in Aleppo, Mardin, Urfa, Kayseri, Istanbul, Adana, Damascus, Aytura and elsewhere.²⁸⁶

Greek deportees in 1914 as well as Armenian deportees in 1915 were often given the choice between conversion to Islam and deportation and/or death. An unknown number of Greeks who converted in 1914 were left in place rather than shipped to Greece and an equally unknown number of Armenian women, men and children converted to save their lives. According to Tachjian, “[...] the majority of the Armenians deported to the areas around Hama, Homs, Damascus and Kerek, be they men or women, [...] accepted Islam to survive.”²⁸⁷. Sensing that these conversions were not sincere and fearing that the policy of survival-through-conversion could backfire, the Ottoman authorities sometimes did not accept conversion and deported the people anyway.

Non-Institutional Assimilation

Non-institutional assimilation must have been the more widespread variant in those chaotic times, especially in the East of Anatolia. Armenian women and children were sometimes picked up and taken into Turkish, Kurdish or Arab homes and raised out of charity and pity and sometimes allowed to go when it was safe to leave and go abroad.²⁸⁸ So they assimilated only temporarily. Others stayed with their new families or clans their whole lives, either because they did not want to be uprooted again or because they had no hope of finding surviving relatives or, in the case of children, because they had accepted their foster parents as their new parents. In the case of women who had born a child from a Muslim, they may not have had the heart to leave it behind but at the same time knew that they could not take it back into Armenian society, either. Others were taken in and used as servants or serfs and they could only either completely fit in or flee. Yet others, in the cities, were sold as (sexual) slaves. They, too, had no choice and could at best flee, though

²⁸⁶ Tachjian (2009 b: 65).

²⁸⁷ Tachjian (2009 b: 77).

²⁸⁸ Marashlian (1999: 120).

they were unlikely to be accepted back into Armenian diaspora communities because of the shame they had supposedly brought on themselves.

In Mardin, there were Armenians who assimilated not to Turkish or Kurdish Muslims or Alevites but to Syriac Christians which is an interesting alternative.²⁸⁹ Apparently that was possible and a lesser step to take than to completely change one's religion, if only outwardly. What is also interesting is the degree of unorthodox religiosity that existed for a generation or so after the deportations and possibly until today. Biner, for instance, mentions Kurds who married islamized Armenian women but allowed them to quietly attend service with the Syriac Christians on Sundays.²⁹⁰ Margosyan recounts the story of an Armenian girl from Diyarbakır province who had been deported and disappeared.

Years later, by chance, she appeared in front of her again-found relatives as the long-beared Sheikh Seyhmus' [...] wife Zeyno. Not having children of her own, Zeyno brought up as her own Şeyhmus' [...] three sons from his deceased first wife, who also treat[ed] her like their own mother. Zeyno Bibi used to come a couple of times a year during Christmas and Easter to celebrate the holidays of her relatives. The children of the house approached, with wonderment, this woman who quietly moved to the antechamber to pray during the day whenever she heard the call to prayer.²⁹¹

This shows that on the very local or individual level, there could be a lot of tolerance and that some survivors were able to move back and forth between their adopted Muslim family and their former Christian one. What we see is that there were all kinds of motives for taking in Armenians and Greeks and that there were many degrees of assimilation. On the part of the rescuers, too, there was the whole range of behaviors and motivations from self-sacrifice and altruism (danger of being killed as a punishment for having hidden Armenians) to pragmatism to exploitation and sadism. And the Armenians, too, ranged from those that planned their escape all along and only simulated assimilation to those that had no chance of remembering or did not want to remember and who spoke nothing but Turkish, embraced Islam, and kept all their memories to themselves.²⁹²

²⁸⁹ Biner (2010 b: 73).

²⁹⁰ Biner (2010 b: 76-77).

²⁹¹ Margosyan (1995). The quoted section is translated by and found in Göçek (2011: 209).

²⁹² See, for instance, Çetin (2008).

Non-Assimilation

As hard as it is to imagine, there were Armenians who set up new lives for themselves as Armenians in Anatolia. Exactly under which circumstances this was possible is not known. Margosyan mentions that many Armenian widows worked in men's jobs at construction sites as laborers, plasterers and painters.²⁹³ In the 1960s, there were still or again whole streets with Armenian shops and even signs written in Armenian in Sivas.²⁹⁴ How many Armenians assimilated, how many continued to live as Armenians and how many left the country after a while is very difficult to estimate. The former figure must be at least in the tens of thousands since by late 1919, foreign charities recovered ten thousand women alone from harems and this was probably the smaller part of those forced into them.²⁹⁵ By late 1921, diaspora Armenian organizations took an estimated 3,000 out of 4-5,000 Armenian orphans out of households in Constantinople. Armenian authorities estimated that 100.000 orphans remained in inner Anatolia.²⁹⁶

Conclusion

The CUP's preferred way of eliminating Armenians and Greeks was to make them leave the country. If this failed or seemed too dangerous, it organized their killing, if they were Armenian. The last option for those left behind, the women and children, was their assimilation into the new nation. The efforts made at assimilating those Armenians and Greeks that had neither fled nor been killed, both institutionally and privately, show that the CUP did not tolerate the remaining minorities, however weakened, to continue to exist as such. It tried to force them into giving up their distinctness and to blend into the new nation in the making. At the same time, the minorities could never be too assimilated for the state to give up its suspicion of them (for which there is ample evidence in chapters six and

²⁹³ Margosyan (1995: 46).

²⁹⁴ Pers. com. Adanır.

²⁹⁵ Marashlian (1999: 122).

²⁹⁶ Marashlian (1999: 122).

seven). The pressure to conform was not the same everywhere, though, so that in certain localities, notably Izmir and Istanbul, Armenians and Greeks were able to rebuild a community life and continue to live as Armenians and Greeks. How the Turkish Republic continued the nation building project, chapters six and seven will show.

5.

ISLAMIFYING AND NATIONALIZING THE ECONOMY IN PRE-REPUBLICAN TIMES

It is no easy task to group the events and actions under this heading since all distinctions are more or less artificial and imprecise. For example, the distinction between legal and illegal actions suggests that the former were somehow ‘right’ and the others ‘wrong’ and that it is possible to draw a clear line between legal and illegal when actually there was a great deal of intentional vagueness. Another way of grouping the events, acts and measures is the formal versus informal divide, the former including any type of redistribution that had an official stamp, whereas the latter sums up any act of expropriation and appropriation that was carried out without it, spontaneously, and by private people. But this already opens up another dilemma: Much of what happened unofficially was wanted by the authorities and many authorities enriched themselves privately.

I settled on distinguishing between measures that privileged Muslims over non-Muslims and measures that deprived non-Muslims of their property and redistributed it. The difference lies in that the former is less severe than the latter and that the coexistence of Armenians, Greeks and Muslims would still have been possible. A new *modus vivendi* could have been found, had the CUP contented itself with abrogating the capitulations which favored non-Muslims and with only *discriminating* against non-Muslims. But the large-scale *expropriation* of Armenians and Greeks, among others, took their livelihood from them and made their continued existence in the country almost impossible so that they left in large numbers. Discrimination, expropriation and appropriation also constitute roughly consecutive stages in the nationalization process in the sense that almost

everywhere Armenians were first discriminated against and then, during ongoing discrimination, also expropriated. When discrimination alone did not achieve the desired result and when with WWI the opportunity for more radical measures came, the CUP made the most of it and systematically removed the Armenian population from its homes and took its property.

Issue of Legality

The Armenian case being the best researched case concerning the issue of legality, I will mainly draw examples from this one, but many characteristics of CUP legislation are transferable, which I will indicate as I go along. In a nutshell, CUP legislation can be characterized as reactive, retroactive, serving the lawmakers rather than justice, non-binding, vague, contradictory and misleading. Laws were nevertheless issued because the semblance of legality was crucial in suppressing international and internal voices of protest. The CUP's laws were often made ad-hoc, on the spot, as events unfolded and necessities arose. The beginning deportation of the Armenians in 1915 prompted the Entente powers to state that they would hold those implicated in the persecution of Armenians personally responsible. Only two days later, on 26 May 1915, Talat submitted a memorandum to the Ottoman cabinet. Four days later, the Ottoman cabinet sanctioned his earlier orders and the new deportation law.²⁹⁷

This at the same time illustrates another characteristic of the CUP's legislation, its retroactive nature, since it legalized acts *after* they had been carried out.

The Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) launched both the deportation and the dispossession of Armenians well before the promulgation of any laws or official decrees. The deportation decrees of May 23, 1915 and the deportation law of May 27, 1915 were issued after the deportations had already begun. Decrees and laws merely served to unite the hitherto diverse practices and render the overall policy more consistent. So too was the CUP's approach to confiscation. Telegrams to various provinces ordering the liquidation of immovable property were followed by the streamlined program of June 10, 1915 that established the key agency overseeing the liquidation process – the Abandoned Properties Commission (Emval-ı Metruke

²⁹⁷ Kaiser (2006: 55-56).

Komisyonu). These were not yet christened ‘Liquidation Commissions,’ but nevertheless mostly fulfilled that function.²⁹⁸

The CUP had no interest in justice but only in guarding what it had gained against competing claims, for example the property owners’. It did so by restricting the claimants’ rights, by setting very high hurdles to appeal and by giving absolute powers to its agencies, for example the commissions. A report by legal experts at the German Consulate-General in Constantinople characterized one law as the ‘legalization of pillage’.

Quite correctly, the report stated that the procedures for the liquidation of Armenian property were sheer formalities that only outwardly appeared in common with the law. The new law was evidently not intended to safeguard the interests of the foreign creditors, but to free the Ottoman government of any responsibility for the damages incurred [...].²⁹⁹

Another example for the primacy of appropriation over justice is the prohibition to rent or sell property to neighbors, acquaintances, foreigners or other Christians such as Greeks or Christian Arabs which would effectively prevent the seizure of their property. They were also forbidden from

sending it abroad to family members, giving valuables to American missionaries and consuls, mailing it directly to their new residences at their final destinations. It is these kinds of prohibitions that shed light on the rationale behind the expropriations. They strongly suggest that there was no intention of either compensating Armenians fairly for their dispossession, or offering them any prospect of a future return to their homes. Hilmar Kaiser has rightly concluded that these restrictions were ‘a plain admission of official criminal intent’.³⁰⁰

According to the Abandoned Properties Law,

[all] proceeds from sales had to be transferred to the Finance Ministry, which would safeguard the funds in the name of the sold property’s original owner. Owners could, however, only claim their money after the end of the ‘present situation.’ Thus, the payment was postponed indefinitely. In cases where property rights were contested, the owner had no right to intervene but had to leave the matter to state officials, who

²⁹⁸ Uğur Ümit Üngör 2011. Confiscation and Colonization: The Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property. *Armenian Weekly*, April 22, 2011, p. 4.

²⁹⁹ Kaiser (2006: 61).

³⁰⁰ Uğur Ümit Üngör 2011. Confiscation and Colonization: The Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property. *Armenian Weekly*, April 22, 2011, p. 4.

would represent him. [...] Property transfers up to 15 days before the deportation were illegal.³⁰¹

These provisions give the impression of justice but they were actually a masked expropriation notice since claimants had no chance against the state. Under the circumstances, an Ottoman state official would not decide in an Armenian claimant's favor nor did an Armenian have the chance to sell anything more than two weeks before the deportation date if he was only notified days or hours in advance.

Laws were also often vague or contradictory in themselves to leave room for interpretation and to legalize a wide range of actions. Another feature of CUP legislation was that it was not binding. While at times, officials stressed that their acts were in conformity with the law, at others they made no such effort and blatantly disrespected their own laws. "The Ottoman authorities themselves implicitly admitted that the new laws and regulations had no practical significance. The authorities had effectively refused to follow their own rules when they failed to officially establish the liquidation commissions."³⁰² What was binding, though, if not the law, was orders, given directly or in encrypted telegrams:

a simple order by a department director in the Interior Ministry was sufficient to overcome limitations set by Ottoman law."³⁰³ "[...] orders issued by Talaat Bey, the Ottoman Interior Minister, and his assistants carried greater weight than published provisional laws. In other words, these laws – and, accordingly, the legality of Ottoman government policies – were merely a fiction."³⁰⁴

Purpose of Legislation

As we have seen, CUP laws were vague and not always binding, they could be passed retrospectively, they were often passed on the spot when the necessity for them arose and there was no concern for justice. One may ask why they were needed at all then. I suggest

³⁰¹ Kaiser (2006: 60)

³⁰² Kaiser (2006: 62).

³⁰³ Kaiser (2006: 70-71).

³⁰⁴ Kaiser (2006: 50).

there were at least three reasons for passing such laws: to appease international criticism, to ensure the Ottoman state against restitution claims and to silence the qualms of internal critics by pointing out that everything that happened was legal. The German government and German (insurance) companies, for instance, threatened to sue the Ottoman government for the losses they had sustained as a result of its policies.³⁰⁵ A petition by the Deutsche Orient Bank states that the liquidation commissions' activities were

illegal as no law existed that legitimated the forcible sale of property owned by deported persons. The bank's statement came at a most inopportune moment, as most Armenian communities had already been destroyed and the property confiscated.³⁰⁶

But in practice the law that was consequently passed made little change, it did not account for the commissions' policies. "It was an attempt to disguise illegal Ottoman government policy and pre-empt claims by legal owners and their creditors."³⁰⁷ Many of the state's actions were thus legal in the sense that laws existed that covered them though in spirit these laws violated the idea of justice and equality since there was virtually no legal recourse or appeal and because they legalized the killing of innocent people.

Passing such laws was nevertheless possible and acceptable because it took place in the context of a single-party state where there was no legal opposition, where critics were assassinated and because it happened during war. Emergency situations such as war are propitious times for the passing of laws that would otherwise be unacceptable because they massively infringe upon citizens' rights. But the necessity of 'standing together against the common enemy', of 'being vigilant', 'detecting traitors early on', of 'making sacrifices for

³⁰⁵ "The insurance companies and banks [...] sought compensation for the financial losses resulting from the Young Turk government's criminal sequestration policies. They were also wary of their reputations and of their competitive positions with respect to other companies. The insurance companies pressed their countries' foreign ministries to hold the Ottoman government liable for the financial damages they had sustained." Üngör (2010: 224). Some Armenians for their part, both at the time and their descendants today, demand that the life insurance companies pay them for their losses. Then as well as now, the companies do everything in their power to evade payments. But recently, thanks to verdicts in Holocaust restitution cases, some claimants were successful: In 2005, the two insurance companies New York Life Insurance Co. and AXA S.A. grudgingly paid several million dollars which, however, was "less than 2 percent of their total debts on pre-genocide life-insurance policy benefits to the victims' heirs." Üngör (2010: 225).

³⁰⁶ Kaiser (2006: 59).

³⁰⁷ Kaiser (2006: 60).

a limited period of time' lessens objections to such laws, even or especially if they single out one or several groups that are to bear the brunt of the burden of such laws. In our case this group more than any other was the Armenians. Not only were Armenian soldiers disarmed and forced to work in labor battalions like the Greeks, the justified suspicion of certain Armenian settlements on the Russian and Persian borders of the Empire and in the Gulf of Iskenderun was extended to all Armenians anywhere in the Empire and was the justification for their systematic deportation and killing. And after the end of the war of independence, Armenians were denied entry into Turkey whereas other minority groups were not.

There were justified reasons for singling out the Armenians during the war years namely the earlier formation of Armenian revolutionary parties and some Armenians' pleas for the involvement of foreign powers which had both been longstanding threats to the territorial integrity of the Empire. With the outbreak of war, these concerns were compounded with the acute fear that Ottoman Armenians would join Russian Armenians or be armed by them and fight the Ottoman army the country. But the interpretation of their treatment during WWI should not be limited a military rationale. The treatment of Armenians before and after WWI was similar in that it tended towards reducing their numbers and forcing them to keep a low profile. The Hamidiyan massacres were intended to cow them into acceptance of their secondary status and the clearing of Anatolia of survivors in the 1920s was meant to remove whoever insisted on staying Armenian and to warn those that were in the process of assimilation not to raise their heads. The Armenian genocide should thus be seen as part of Turkish nation building for which the war provided only a suitable opportunity. "[...] the Armenian Genocide formed part of a government policy to destroy the Empire's non-Turkish communities. Significantly, the Ottoman government had adopted this policy well before the beginning of the First World War and the Armenian Genocide."³⁰⁸

³⁰⁸ Kaiser (2006: 50).

End of Minority Privileges and Beginning Discrimination Against Minorities

In its mildest form, nascent economic nationalism meant hindering non-Muslims from doing business by selectively firing them if they were employed by the state or Muslim businesses, and by boycotting their businesses if they were self-employed. The other side of the coin was the encouragement of Muslims to do business by providing them with credit and establishing Muslim-only business institutions.

The first boycott that aimed at harming Christian business for the sake of setting up a Muslim bourgeoisie was proclaimed in 1909 upon the Austrian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. It called for the boycotting of shops selling Austrian goods, many of which were owned by Christians. “[...] similarly, a general boycott of Greek commerce was undertaken during the 1909 declaration by Crete to unite with Greece.”³⁰⁹ Another boycott was declared in 1913 with the result that within a few months, 600 Muslim-owned shops sprang up in Istanbul.³¹⁰ Besides the wish to create a Muslim bourgeoisie, resentment at the Christian bourgeoisie’s affluence and at income inequalities³¹¹ played a role in the call for boycott as well as doubt about the loyalty of the Greeks. These suspicions were not unfounded since the Istanbul Greek community had helped with the war expenses of Greece. In particular, Averoff, an Ottoman Greek citizen, had bought and donated a battleship to the Greek navy.³¹² Economic boycotts were not limited to the time of the Balkan Wars, in 1922 they were proclaimed again and exorbitant taxes imposed to drive out the remaining Armenians.³¹³ According to Göçek, the Ottoman government “consciously placed Turks in jobs monopolized by the Greeks”³¹⁴ in resettling the hundreds

³⁰⁹ Göçek (2002: 25).

³¹⁰ Toprak (1997: 5).

³¹¹ People were paid different amounts for doing the same work depending on their country of origin and their religion. Europeans were paid the most, Ottoman Christians or Jews less and Ottoman Muslims by far the least. Quataert (1983: 79).

³¹² Aktar (1996: 268).

³¹³ Marashlian (1999: 136).

³¹⁴ Göçek (2002: 25).

of thousands of Balkan refugees. It is doubtful whether these refugees were able to fill out the positions the Greeks had held, but the CUP may well have tried it.

The outbreak of World War I finally gave the CUP the opportunity to abrogate the capitulations whose impact had reached far beyond the economy and “effectively unraveled the nationality question.”³¹⁵ Not only had they exempted those enjoying its privileges from Ottoman law and taxation, but they had also made them ‘outsiders’ of disputed loyalty by issuing European passports to them. In addition, the capitulations had given foreign powers the right to ‘protect’ Christian minorities against unjust Ottoman treatment which served as a pretext for their interference into Ottoman affairs. The capitulations therefore had a hugely negative impact on Ottoman sovereignty as well as on the Muslim millet’s perception as the ruling millet. According to Ahmad, the Turkish and Jewish communities therefore welcomed the abrogation of the capitulations as the “deliverance from foreign control; [but] the Christians mourned, uncertain as to their future.”³¹⁶

As for discriminatory measures, an instance of an employee being fired because of his ethnicity occurred in the same year when Greek employees of the Singer Co. in Smyrna were threatened that after the expiration of a certain period, they would be replaced.³¹⁷ This was as yet a haphazard measure but it should become systematized before long and in Republican times, certain professions and offices would be limited to Muslims, both by law and by tacit agreement. Among the CUP’s establishments aimed at increasing the Muslim share in business were joint-stock companies, cooperatives and banks which the state funded and which even small merchants and shopkeepers were encouraged to buy shares from in order to increase the participation of Muslims.³¹⁸ Newly established banks that supported Muslim private enterprises were National Credit Bank, General Bank, National Economy Bank, İşbank and the Bank of National Prestige.³¹⁹ So-called national companies were set up in the capital and in the provinces and various professions and occupations

³¹⁵ Levene (1998: 399).

³¹⁶ Ahmad (2002: 224).

³¹⁷ Bjørnlund (2008: 50).

³¹⁸ Toprak (1997: 7).

³¹⁹ Özkirimli and Sofos (2008: 162).

(artisans, merchants, farmers, etc..) established Muslim-only associations which, not unlike guilds, were meant to control the market and set prices. However, this failed and most essential goods were unavailable except in the black market and at astronomical prices.³²⁰ The National Consumption Society was to encourage people to buy local goods rather than imported ones [...], even if at higher prices.³²¹ Thus a whole business infrastructure was set up that excluded non-Muslims.

Keyder and Toprak make a significant observation from two different angles. Keyder notes that “[...] there was usually [a] one-to-one correspondence between the roster of the committee of Union and Progress local organization and the shareholders of new companies.”³²² Toprak for his part states that

Muslim farmers and merchants who were integrated into the ‘national market’ and who benefited from Turkish nationalism played a very significant role in the post-war national movement and in the making of Republican Turkey.³²³

In other words, the traditional Muslim bureaucratic bourgeoisie started to engage in business and Muslims who were willing to open a business only needed to demonstrate their loyalty to the CUP. This is a phenomenon we will come across again and again in the following decades – ownership of companies and access to business opportunities was a reward for political loyalty. As Toprak and Acar state, every subsequent government should create its own bourgeoisie. The link that was thus created between political power and economic power was a novelty that would have far-reaching consequences in Republican times (see Counting the Cost in chapter seven).

Expropriation and Appropriation, Destruction and Theft

As mentioned above, the expropriation of Armenians and Greeks was often the next stage of escalation, when boycotts were not effective in clearing the field economically or

³²⁰ Aktar (1996: 282).

³²¹ Özkirimli and Sofos (2008: 162).

³²² Keyder (1987: 63).

³²³ Toprak (1997: 8).

demographically or if it did not happen fast enough. The property we are talking about here was varied, it was anything that had belonged to Armenians and Greeks – peasants’ land and urban estate in the cities, any kind of private houses from villagers’ huts to *yalis* on the Bosphorus, communal buildings such as hospitals and orphanages, religious buildings such as monasteries and churches, business buildings such as workshops, warehouses and offices; tools and instruments such as agricultural tools, seed, livestock, machines, vehicles as well as private belonging such as clothes, books, furniture, jewelry, cash and financial wealth such as bonds, stocks and live insurances.

As the examples given below will demonstrate, Armenians and Greeks were deprived of much of their property “as part of a conscious effort to facilitate Turkey’s drive to modern nation-statehood.”³²⁴ This happened either through theft or robbery when they were still with their property or in their absence, after they had had to flee i) without being able to take their property with them or ii) without being permitted to take it. Both the state and individuals working for the state and individuals unrelated to it were guilty of large-scale theft. The complicated issue of legality was discussed above. The contradiction between theory and practice is another one worth expanding upon. In theory, all Armenian and Greek property belonged to the state which distributed it according to material need and nationalist merit among the Muslim population. In practice, it often ended up in the wrong hands because of conflicting interests and competition over the ‘booty’, as will also be explained in more detail below. Akçam summarizes the aims of Armenian expropriation and the appropriation of the Armenians’ property as follows: They were meant to extend the Muslim bourgeoisie, to provide for the needs of new immigrants, to meet the needs of the military, to cover the expense of the deportations and to cover other state needs. I would add that another important aim was the generation of political loyalty and support.³²⁵

³²⁴ Levene (1998: 420).

³²⁵ Akçam (2006: 189-90).

Expropriation of Armenians in the 1890s and of Greeks in 1914

Kévorkian and Paboudjian state that in the period from 1890 to 1910 at least 741,000 hectares of Armenian land were illegally taken or confiscated by state representatives.³²⁶ This includes the land taken from Armenians during the Hamidiyan massacres and the Cilician massacres but is not limited to these episodes, since during the whole period Armenian peasants in the east of the Empire were struggling to hold on to their land. The land of Armenians who were driven away during or after the massacres was never returned.³²⁷ As a result of the killing of craftsmen, peasants and merchants and the destruction of their workplaces during both massacres, the ‘Armenian economy’ (and consequently the Ottoman economy) received a huge blow.³²⁸ Among other cities, Urfa “witnessed material destruction and a serious economic and demographic decline” after the pogroms of 1895.³²⁹

The Greeks who fled the Aegean part of Turkey twenty years later in 1914 had a few days to take their most important belongings in some places whereas in others they fled in such haste “that their homes and possessions were left largely intact. It was the governors’ responsibility to arrange for the orderly redistribution of Greek property, but it was often plundered by locals or by *muhadjirs* arriving from Salonica before they could fulfill their task.”³³⁰ Appropriation on the basis of ‘first come, first served’ should happen again and again in the following decade.

Expropriation of Armenians in 1915

As soon as the Ottoman Empire entered World War I, (a convenient pretext for discriminatory treatment), it enacted a series of temporary laws that made wide-ranging

³²⁶ Kévorkian and Paboudjian (1992 : 44-45).

³²⁷ Bjørnlund (2008: 44).

³²⁸ Der Matossian (2007: 7-8).

³²⁹ Öktem (2004: 570).

³³⁰ Bjørnlund (2008: 48).

property confiscations in the guise of a war tax (*teklif-i harbiyye*) in the eastern provinces legal. The Armenian villages around Sivas, for example, had to give one thousand carts of goods to the army.³³¹ A supplementary law from June 10, 1915 “contained instructions on how to register and protect the properties of the deportees, and how to dispose of others through public auctions (the revenues of which would be given to the owners upon their return from the war).”³³²

The body in charge of executing this law was the Abandoned Properties Commission (*Emval-i Metruke*). It was supposed to keep detailed registers of Armenians’ movable and immovable property and to safeguard it until their return or to send it to their new place of settlement. The bureaucratic, scrupulous (and hypocritical) nature of its workings is apparent from the fact that the deportees were handed receipts to reclaim their property, the officials fully well knowing that there was no way they would ever get their property back. The migrants that were settled in Armenian houses were also registered along with the “type, quantity and value of the land distributed”³³³ to them. “[Most] of the movable property was looted and parts of immovable properties were sold in auctions at a fraction of their original value or given as booty for Kurdish tribes to encourage them to participate in the war” (such as the Alevi Kurds of Dersim).³³⁴ The contradiction between what the state decreed and what it enacted is further evident from the fact that state officials would seal Armenian shops to prevent any losses, while the same state officials would juggle the accounts from the auctions and pocket a share or even break in and steal on a large scale.³³⁵

Some Armenians tried to sell their houses before being deported but the prices were ridiculously low³³⁶ since potential buyers knew that a little later they would get the object for free and also because the market was flooded with Armenian property.

Furthermore, there were so-called safety commissions (*emniyet komisyonu*) which took jewels, gold, stocks, bonds and other valuables from the Armenians during deportation,

³³¹ Der Matossian (2007: 14).

³³² Der Matossian (2007: 9).

³³³ Der Matossian (2007: 11).

³³⁴ Der Matossian (2007: 12).

³³⁵ Der Matossian (2007: 13).

³³⁶ Marshlian (1999: 137).

supposedly to protect them from being stolen by Kurds on the way and with the intention of handing them back at the destination. In truth, the deportees were forced to part with their last property and the items were never returned. Finally, there were two more ad-hoc fees the deported had to pay in gold, one for their personal ‘safety’ (*selametlik*) and another for stepping on land (*toprak basti*).³³⁷

However, this is not the whole extent of the theft of Armenian wealth. The CUP also confiscated money and jewels deposited with the Ottoman Bank.³³⁸ According to Rev. Jernazian, the Abandoned Properties Commission seized the very sizable sum of 140,000 gold pieces from the Ottoman Bank which Armenians had deposited there as a capital fund.³³⁹ The CUP also had an account with the German Reichsbank in Berlin that was most likely looted Armenian assets.³⁴⁰ According to André Mandelstam, the Ottoman government deposited 5,000,000 Turkish Lira (the equivalent of 30,000 kilograms of gold) at the Reichsbank in Berlin in 1916. Üngör states that this “astronomic amount of money was most probably the aggregate of all Armenian bank accounts, as well as the total sum gained from the liquidations in the provinces.”³⁴¹

Der Matossian mentions that thousands of Armenians bought life insurances from European and American companies shortly before the genocide.³⁴² It is not clear whether they would have done so in any case or whether they had any forebodings. In a conversation Talat Pasha had with Morgenthau, the former demanded that he provide him with a list of all Ottoman Armenian policy holders of *New York Life Insurance Company* and *Equitable Life of New York*.³⁴³ He argued that their policy holders were all dead with no heirs and that their policies consequently fell to the Ottoman government and state. But Morgenthau refused to do anything of the kind and so the CUP probably did not get hold of

³³⁷ Der Matossian (2007: 15).

³³⁸ Der Matossian (2007: 13).

³³⁹ Der Matossian (2007: 13).

³⁴⁰ Üngör (2010: 225).

³⁴¹ Uğur Ümit Üngör 2011. Confiscation and Colonization: The Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property. *Armenian Weekly*, April 22, 2011, p. 3.

³⁴² Üngör (2010: 223).

³⁴³ Morgenthau, (2003: 233).

this capital. To come back to the CUP's gains at the expense of the Armenians, it needs to be mentioned that Armenian Ottoman citizens also held insurances with the *Ottoman Public Insurance Company (Osmanlı Umum Sigorta Şirketi)* and the *Turkish National Insurance Company (Türk Milli Sigorta Şirketi)*.³⁴⁴ That of course made it easier for the government to lay its hands on their deposits, but I have no figures that confirm this assumption.

Apparently, the removal of most Armenian competitors alone did not succeed in establishing a 'national' bourgeoisie since in January 1916, when the Armenian genocide was almost over, Talat still felt the need to stress that "the Ottoman economy had to be become (sic!) an exclusively Muslim one. He decreed that Armenian property must fall into Muslim hands."³⁴⁵ The government therefore encouraged the establishment of more Muslim joint-stock companies.³⁴⁶ "The new companies, however, had to be protected from falling under the control of foreign capital. Thus the government would exercise some supervision."³⁴⁷ But apparently this failed since Keyder states that contrary to expectations, "the departure of the Greeks and the Armenians [...] left the field open to foreign capital."³⁴⁸

As mentioned earlier, the provisional government pursued the same policies as the CUP in continuing to expropriate non-Muslims. Probably in response to the Treaty of Sevres (1920), it passed an appropriation law. Article 144 of the Treaty of Sevres declared the Abandoned Properties Commission and the laws pertaining to it to be null and void and obliged the Turkish government to return any recoverable property that had been taken from Armenians since 1914. The provisional government's law stated that whoever knows of abandoned or hidden assets and provides information about them will receive one tenth of their value. Thus far from returning any stolen goods, it tried to gain more.

³⁴⁴ Der Matossian (2007: 18).

³⁴⁵ Kaiser (2006: 64).

³⁴⁶ Kaiser (2006: 64).

³⁴⁷ Kaiser (2006: 64).

³⁴⁸ Keyder (1994: 51).

Marashlian notes that the systematic plundering (and killing) of Christians continued in 1920-21 when the CUP was no longer in power yet Young Turks and others everywhere in the country were intent on keeping what they had gained at the Armenians' and Greeks' expense. Armenians were denied keeping or reclaiming their property through administrative and extra-legal methods,³⁴⁹ Armenian men were jailed solely to extort ransom from their relatives and Turkish officials frankly stated that the only way they could get money was by blackmailing Christians.³⁵⁰ Lawyers often refused to defend Christians so that these trials typically ended with the confiscation of all the defendant's possessions.³⁵¹ Armenian merchants were forbidden from operating unless they had a Turkish partner which was the first stage in the takeover of their businesses.³⁵² Nazım Hikmet in his epic verse piece *Human Landscapes From My Country* creates such a character, Burhan Özedar.³⁵³ Özedar notices that a Greek company produces cigarette paper that is used all over Anatolia, a profitable business. He then intimates to the Ankara government that no cigarette paper should be used that comes without the Turkish flag's star and crescent. Next, he makes the Greek business owner understand that he would do well to have a Turkish-Muslim partner. The Greek owner gets the point, they become partners, and as a consequence, Özedar's wealth grows with every year that passes. He invests it in apartments and charitable foundations such as hospitals and also promotes the memory of Ahmet Paşa in Sivas, to connect himself to the local Muslim community there.³⁵⁴ Though this is a fictional character, it was very likely modeled on existing figures.

Non-Muslim doctors and lawyers could also be forbidden from practicing their profession altogether.³⁵⁵ In the countryside, Armenian land, cattle and other movable assets were often stolen so that their former owners were forced to move to the cities where they were unable to earn a living. When they decided to leave the country, they were robbed one

³⁴⁹ Marashlian (1999: 124).

³⁵⁰ Marashlian (1999: 129).

³⁵¹ Tachjian (2009 a: 4).

³⁵² Tachjan (2009 a: 5).

³⁵³ Hikmet (1987: 133-34).

³⁵⁴ Pers. com. Berktaş.

³⁵⁵ Tachjian (2009 a: 5).

last time when they were made to pay for passports and pay real or imaginary debts.³⁵⁶ On that occasion they were also forbidden from reentry.

With the occupation and administration of the southern and southeastern part of Turkey by the British and the French, many deported but surviving Armenians returned and found their homes inhabited by Muslims and all their other property used or taken. The French were generally sympathetic to demands for restitution whereas the British were not. But even the property the returnees regained they lost again in many cases when they were driven out with the departure of the foreign forces.

According to Der Matossian, the process of the liquidation of Armenian property began in WWI with its confiscation and ended in Republican times with its appropriation.³⁵⁷ This is correct in so far as the process of appropriation continued into Republican times and went on for years but this does not mean that it started only then. As is clear from the examples given above, most of what could be appropriated was appropriated on the spot, people did not wait for eight years or longer. Der Matossian makes a very important point, though, in stating that

the movement of ‘Armenian capital’ from the Ottoman Empire to the Republican era does not only demonstrate a historical continuity, but also sheds light on capital movements during different political regimes and the role that this capital plays in the creation of new economic classes.³⁵⁸

Expropriation of Greeks in 1922-23

Information on what the Ottoman Greeks left behind and what they were able to take with themselves in the 1920s is rather contradictory and of course varies depending on which group is concerned. The Greeks that fled with the Greek army, for example, left in such haste that they could take only very little property with them. The 250.000 Greeks and 50.000 Armenians of Western Thrace, on the other hand, had time to prepare for their departure. This was possible because British forces in the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles

³⁵⁶ Tachjian (2009 a: 5).

³⁵⁷ Der Matossian (2007: 4).

³⁵⁸ Der Matossian (2007: 4).

prevented Turkey from transferring its forces to Western Thrace and pushing the Greeks and Armenians out overnight.³⁵⁹ Like Armenians, some Greeks hid gold in their houses in the hope of returning or recovering it at a later point, which did not happen, though.³⁶⁰ Others “managed to bring considerable cash and valuables” to Greece which allowed them to set up new businesses there.³⁶¹ Keyder writes that a

crude calculation, which is certainly an underestimate, suggests that the departure of the Greeks implied the transfer to Moslem landlords of close to one-fifth of the best land in Western Anatolia. In cities, the abandoned property and wealth, not to speak of the business positions thus made available, were surely of even greater value.³⁶²

The question of who was compensated and to what extent is another one fraught with contradictions. The Lausanne Convention foresaw the compensation of the Turkish/Muslim and Greek/Christian exchangees for the property they had left behind, but in practice this did not happen, whether because of a lack of resources, documentation and funds, or lack of political will. Zürcher states that

the task of assessing the value of the property left behind and disposing of it in an equitable manner proved simply too complicated. The mixed commission continued its work until October 1934, but the bulk of the migrants never saw any money.³⁶³

This agrees with Köker’s assessment that most exchangees from Turkey in effect lost their property. This was in part because locals had already occupied the abandoned Greek property during the year that had passed between the Greeks’ departure and the Muslims’ arrival³⁶⁴ and in part because the extent of the authority of the Ministry of Finance and the Commission of Immigrants was not clear.

Although the immovable property left by the Rums was supposed to be distributed to the newcomers through the commission, the Ministry had already disposed of much of it through public auction or through leases to locals, army officers and state employees.³⁶⁵

³⁵⁹ Zürcher (2003: 3).

³⁶⁰ Köker (2004: 197).

³⁶¹ Kontogiorgi (2004: 64).

³⁶² Keyder (1987: 82).

³⁶³ Zürcher (2003: 5).

³⁶⁴ Aktar (2004: 86).

³⁶⁵ Köker (2004: 205).

Army officers, for example, received only a small percentage of their salary in cash and the remainder was paid in kind, namely in drafts on the Abandoned Properties Commission, “so they have become dealers in old furniture.”³⁶⁶ “Furthermore, the reallocation mechanism was overtly political, especially in urban areas.”³⁶⁷ A point already stressed earlier. Even though mutual compensation was surely complicated, it could have been achieved had it been wanted. What was lacking more than anything on the Turkish side was the will to return anything after the government and locals had made every effort to appropriate as much as possible.

It was not only left-behind property that was taken, but the nationalist government even tried to grab what was beyond its reach. In October 1922, it tried to get hold of the goods and securities deposited in foreign banks in Smyrna just as the CUP had successfully done with Armenians deposits. Using its April law on abandoned properties as justification, it demanded that the foreign banks in Smyrna furnish it with lists.³⁶⁸ I have no information on whether this was successful or not. Another example of the lengths to which the nationalist government went to attain more property is the case of around one thousand wealthy Arabs in Mersin, Tarsus and Adana who were expropriated as part of the population exchange. A minority within the minority, they belonged to the Antioch Greek-Orthodox Church and had names such as Naccache, Barbour, Nader, Sursok, Boutros and Touweyni.³⁶⁹ They had opted for Turkish citizenship and stayed in Turkey after the French retreat so as not to lose their extensive properties.³⁷⁰ “They were generally extremely rich families that owned extensive areas of land and other valuable assets in Cilicia.”³⁷¹ Even though the exchange agreement did not stipulate that members of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople were to be exchanged, Ankara used it to “despoil the Greek

³⁶⁶ Dispatch sent by the Acting Consul-General in Izmir to the Marquess Curzon in London: FO 424: British Confidential Reports / Document dated 21 July 1923 / E 8317/199/44 in Aktar (2004: 86).

³⁶⁷ Köker (2004: 205).

³⁶⁸ Marashlian (1999: 136).

³⁶⁹ Tachjian (2004: 231).

³⁷⁰ Tachjian (2004: 232).

³⁷¹ Tachjian (2009 a: 11).

Orthodox Arabic-speaking families of Cilicia of all their assets with the object of seizing their rich lands.”³⁷² Those that had stayed thus lost everything in the population exchange just as those community members that had left because they were forbidden from reentering Turkey.³⁷³

Part of the Greek property that passed into Muslim hands was lost in the sense that it did not serve its new owners who, out of ignorance, often destroyed it.

They [the *muhacirs*] landed on ready-made houses and lands. They cut down those beautiful vine-yards left from the infidels and used them as wood. They devastated this plain. Now they treat vineyards and olive as gold. Now they’ve learned.³⁷⁴

According to another statement,

[t]hose who came to Muradiye had to learn how to manage the vineyards and olive orchards. They were not familiar with the land, climate or the type of agriculture. It was the first time they had met with olive trees, and according to Haşim Akçasoy, *muhacirs* cut them down because they thought the fruit was inedible.³⁷⁵

As a result, the government stopped allocating olive orchards to *muhacirs* and reclaimed the ones already assigned.

The economic consequences of the population exchange for Turkey were thus at least twofold: the lack of skill through the removal of the Greeks and the waste of some of the remaining potential through mismanagement. The removal of the Greeks from Anatolia left the Turkish economy with a shortage of skills which the new arrivals could not replace. The poorly planned resettlement only aggravated the situation.³⁷⁶ “The arbitrary assignment of refugees to unfamiliar habitats eventually led to the degeneration of agricultural and natural resources: grazing land was denuded, water resources depleted, and the landscape deforested.”³⁷⁷

³⁷² Tachjian (2009 a: 11).

³⁷³ Tachjian (2004: 233-34).

³⁷⁴ Köker (2004: 200).

³⁷⁵ Köker (2004: 199).

³⁷⁶ Köker (2004: 205).

³⁷⁷ Köker (2004: 204).

But in order not to paint too simplistic a picture of brain drain and success versus backwardness and gloom, we have to take into consideration that there were at least two groups of Muslim exchangees whose abilities and background were similar to the Christian bourgeoisie, the exchangees from Cunda and the Salonicans. Many Muslim exchangees from Cunda claim they retained their socio-economic status in the new country and that, thanks to their knowledge of both Turkish and Greek, the highly educated ones among them were able to act as political intermediaries between the Turkish state and the less astute Mytilinii.³⁷⁸ A few of them even said they were able to rise and place themselves in a niche market, namely the Greek tourism industry of Cunda and Ayvalık.³⁷⁹ Significantly, they also refused to be called *muhacirs* which they associated with destitution and preferred *mübadeleci* since they had come with their money and property.³⁸⁰

The other group consisted in the Salonicans, Jews, Muslims and Dönme. Salonica had been the third largest economic center in the Empire and the part played by Muslim businessmen in its prosperity had been relatively larger than in Istanbul or Izmir. They were also the largest urban group to immigrate to Turkey,³⁸¹ they had adopted bourgeois lifestyles and,³⁸² most importantly, they had a capitalist tradition. The Dönme among them had become important businessmen in the 19th century in the textile trade and they continued to invest in textiles and related manufacturing after arriving in Turkey. In how far they were able to replace Armenians and Greeks is an open question, though. There are basically two opposing interpretations: One view holds that they were few, that they lived mostly in Istanbul (“the new republican government in Ankara treated all Istanbul businessmen with some coolness”³⁸³) and that they were distrusted as half-outsiders due to their religion (it seems that like the minority businessmen, they received no state assistance).³⁸⁴ In addition, they had not earned credentials in the war of liberation.

³⁷⁸ Köker (2004: 214).

³⁷⁹ Köker (2004: 214-15)

³⁸⁰ Köker (2004: 210).

³⁸¹ Keyder (1994: 53).

³⁸² Keyder (1994: 54).

³⁸³ Keyder (1994: 53).

³⁸⁴ Keyder (1994: 56).

According to the proponents of this view, the Salonicans were not able to and were not given the chance to replace the minority bourgeoisie. They lost their relative standing with the imposition of the wealth tax and adopted a low profile to avoid further discrimination.

Keyder writes that they

generally forfeited the chance to expand into new fields; they remained within the confines of their initial business undertakings. By the 1960s they only supplied small niches in old markets. Of the entire non-Muslim group of businessmen only a small number of Jewish families retained their relative status in the economy, and even they did not regain [...] confidence in the political situation until the mid-1950s.³⁸⁵

The other view holds that Dönme had a huge, but hidden, impact on all aspects of Republican life, and that the CUP trusted them because of their common origins in Salonica. Advocates of this thesis tend towards conspiracy theories and anti-Semitism. Since there is very little reliable information about the Dönme in Republican Turkey, it is impossible to make a balanced judgment of their involvement in the Republican economy. But it seems likely that these two groups of new Turkish citizens absorbed some of the shock that the near disappearance of the former bourgeoisie had caused. Furthermore, it seems that one of the two groups, the Salonicans or at least the Dönme among them, which could have led the new bourgeoisie, was more and more marginalized until it lost all its significance with the imposition of the wealth tax. This is a good example of how capitalist and nationalist goals can clash, as suggested in chapter two.

What Happened to the Property after Expropriation

Some of the Armenian and Greek property left behind continued to be used as before, some was used differently, some was destroyed and some remained beyond anybody's reach. The villa of the Kasabyans who were deported from Ankara and expropriated in 1915, for example, was turned into the president's mansion Çankaya.³⁸⁶ In the provinces, simple houses were used for the settlement of refugees with the double aim of sheltering

³⁸⁵ Keyder (1994: 58).

³⁸⁶ Soner Yalçın, 2007. 'Çankaya Köşkü'nün İlk Sahibi Ermeniydi', *Hürriyet*, 29/3/2007.

them and increasing the state's hold on a given area.³⁸⁷ Many churches were turned into mosques, granaries, stables, factories, prisons or electric power stations.³⁸⁸ Some property was actively destroyed such as the cemetery in front of the Armenian Church of St. John in Urfa. It was leveled to the ground by the first governor of the Republican regime, Fuat Pasha, to make space for a street, bypassing the old town.³⁸⁹ Many Armenian churches quickly turned into ruins when people used them as a stone pits to renovate or construct their own houses. However, disregard and need were not the only reasons for the destruction of Armenian heritage in Turkey. The wish to eliminate reminders of the Armenians' presence also played an important role in it because it gave strength to the claim that Anatolia was Turkish land only and it removed indications that Armenians may not have left voluntarily and that some of the current inhabitants may have been guilty of evicting and plundering them. Some left-behind property remained beyond anybody's reach such as the gold many more well-off families hid in their houses or gardens in the hope of returning. According to Biner, the search for 'Armenian gold' continues into the present³⁹⁰ and has led people "to dig up their own or empty houses and cemeteries. [...] holes in walls, basements and courtyards are the marks of their obsessive search"³⁹¹

One big question is whether the newly gained property served people well. Öztürkmen observes that even "[...] today, one can hear stories how such property, once belonging to non-Muslims, was spent as fast as it was acquired, or else brought unhappiness to families who owned it."³⁹² This may be due to superstition or a self-fulfilling prophecy but it could also be that people whose wealth doubled over night really did not know how to handle it, just like the stereotypical lottery winner who squanders the million within a few years and dies poor. Chapter seven will return to this question under Counting the Cost.

³⁸⁷ Zürcher (2008: 10).

³⁸⁸ Öktem (2004: 571).

³⁸⁹ Öktem (2004: 571).

³⁹⁰ "[...] rumors accusing him [a young Kurdish man in Mardin] of hunting for treasure in the ruins of Christian houses and villages." Biner (2010 b: 80).

³⁹¹ Biner (2010 b: 83-84).

³⁹² Öztürkmen (2003: 188).

Competition over the Distribution of Armenian and Greek Property

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, there was competition over who got what property. This was similar in the Armenian and Greek cases but since more information is available on the former, I will draw examples from that case. The contending parties were different ministries (the interior ministry which sought to establish a national economy and the Ottoman army which put forward military needs),³⁹³ different levels of government (the central government and local government)³⁹⁴ and the state versus individuals that had their personal enrichment in mind. This conflict of interests could, and did, often take place within the same person, for example when an army officer directed rations meant for his soldiers to his family and friends, or when an official in charge of auctioning off Armenian furniture and forwarding the proceeds to the state treasury picked the best items for himself before advertising the auction. There are plenty of examples of Young Turk officials who acted in their own interest, rather than the state's.

The beneficiaries of redistribution can be divided into three groups, those that the CUP had designated as deserving attention, those that were not officially designated as beneficiaries but that were meant to benefit and those that were not meant to benefit but did so anyway. Groups and parties officially intended to benefit from the redistribution of goods were, in no particular order, the army, the 'national' economy, the needy Muslim population and immigrants.

The army received a large part of Armenian property, provisions such as wheat, soap and medical equipment.³⁹⁵ A section of the needy Muslim population was provided with the necessities of daily life like clothing and other goods.³⁹⁶ Migrants received land, housing, vineyards, orchards and agricultural instruments. Talat kept a precise record of

³⁹³ Uğur Ümit Üngör 2011. Confiscation and Colonization: the Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property, *Armenian Weekly*, April 22, 2011, p. 4.

³⁹⁴ Kaiser (2006: 70).

³⁹⁵ Kaiser (2006: 66).

³⁹⁶ Kaiser (2006: 66).

how much was attributed, down to the number of carts, animals and even seeds.³⁹⁷ Prospective members of the ‘national’ economy were supposed to be chosen from among the skilled Muslim members of society and Armenian workshops were to go to Muslims practicing the same profession so that nothing would be wasted. In practice, redistribution was not that orderly, a lot of resources were wasted since not qualification but political loyalty were the main criterion for assignment. Though overt, this distribution mechanism was unofficial as the following will show.

Groups not officially designated as beneficiaries of Armenian expropriation but meant to be so were the CUP and Young Turk loyalists and profiteers. The extent of this appropriation was very considerable. Authorities often confiscated or auctioned off only a fraction of the property that had originally been there because it had been stolen or they themselves had pocketed it earlier. “At Kerrassund, for instance, the authorities had officially confiscated Armenian property with a total value of only T£102, while the real value had been estimated at about T£10,000.”³⁹⁸ According to a contemporary, the CUP elite took the cream of the crop of Armenian property for itself rather than have it sold and the proceeds forwarded to the treasury.

‘Eskişehir’s most modernized and pretty houses lay around the train station... A large Armenian mansion for the princes, two canary-yellow adjacent houses near the Sarisu bridge to Talaat Bey and his friend Canbolat Bey, a wonderful Armenian mansion in the Armenian neighborhood to Topal İsmail Hakkı. All the houses convenient for residing near the train station have all (sic!) been allocated to the elite of the İttihadists.’³⁹⁹

Another example comes from a Turkish author called Hasan Amca who in the 5 and 6 April 1919 issue of *Alemdar* declared that Reşid Bey went to his post in Diyarbakır with no more than two chests but returned to Istanbul with wagonloads of plundered Armenian goods. This illustrates how professional interests (setting up a ‘national’ bourgeoisie) and private ones (personal enrichment) could clash and greed win over ideology.

³⁹⁷ Uğur Ümit Üngör 2011. Confiscation and Colonization: the Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property, *Armenian Weekly*, April 22, 2011, p. 6.

³⁹⁸ Kaiser (2006: 67).

³⁹⁹ Uğur Ümit Üngör 2011. Confiscation and Colonization: the Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property, *Armenian Weekly*, April 22, 2011, p. 6.

That political loyalty was rewarded through assigning property or that being assigned property was an incentive for future loyalty is a point stressed again and again in the accounts of appropriation. The following passage out of Sabancı's memoirs inadvertently illustrates that nationalist credentials rather than management skill or professional expertise were required.

In order to resume production, the government in Ankara was casting around for entrepreneurs competent to take over the abandoned factories and farms. For example, Nuh Nacı of Kayseri was summoned to Ankara by Celal Bey (Bayar). Nuh Nacı had participated in the Sivas Congress as delegate from Kayseri and had won Mustafa Kemal's confidence during the years of the War of Liberation. He was elected Deputy for Kayseri in the post-war Assembly but subsequently resigned his seat. Celal Bey handed over to him one or two of the factories abandoned by the Armenians and Greeks and asked him to run them.⁴⁰⁰

Celal Bayar had been involved in the expulsion of the Aegean Greeks and the Armenian genocide so this course of action was to be expected. Supporters of the CUP were not only assigned property but also given opportunities for profiteering, the exact same practice that was decried as unpatriotic when non-Muslims engaged in it.

Under the guise of making provision for the capital city and the army, the CUP instituted allocation mechanisms which totally bypassed the market. The Ottoman trade monopoly system had returned in all but name, making use of the newly available technology: since means of transport were scarce, political favourites who could obtain the use of a railway freight car became instant magnates.⁴⁰¹

Another example comes from Kayseri where "a quickly formed Muslim company bought Armenian stores and goods wholesale, for 200 Turkish pounds. Shortly afterwards, the property was sold for 10,000 pounds."⁴⁰² Speculation was also widespread, but of course not official.⁴⁰³

To come to the groups that profited from redistribution with neither the CUP's official nor tacit approval, these were ordinary men, women and children who pilfered or

⁴⁰⁰ Sabancı (1988: 8-9).

⁴⁰¹ Keyder (1987: 63).

⁴⁰² Kaiser (2006: 67).

⁴⁰³ "Due to price differences for basic foodstuff between big cities and the countryside, anyone who obtained a special permission to transport goods to Istanbul via public railways became rich overnight." Uğur Ümit Üngör 2011. Confiscation and Colonization: the Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property, *Armenian Weekly*, April 22, 2011, p. 4.

took what was left behind all along the expropriation process with this being neither a reward nor an incentive for political loyalty. The goods thus transferred were much less valuable than those traded in the examples above, probably mostly household goods, clothes, animals, houses in the villages and the like.

Finally, we are coming to a small group of people who, unexpectedly, may also have profited from the Armenians' and Greeks' expropriation, namely the remaining minority members. As mentioned above under 'legality', Armenians were forbidden from selling or giving for safekeeping any of their property to fellow non-Muslims because this would have undermined the CUP's 'nationalization' efforts. Evidence that the remaining Armenians, Greeks, Assyrians or Jews profited materially is scarce, probably because the whole question of redistribution is underresearched but maybe also because it is a sensitive issue (it blurs the line between exploiters and exploited ones). In the Southeast of Turkey, where most of the surviving Armenians and Assyrians lived, it is likely that Armenians and Assyrians moved into abandoned Armenian houses, though it is hard to call it 'profiting' when survivors of massacres seek a roof over their head not caring whom it belongs to. In the immaterial realm, there is ill feeling between the departed Armenians and the remaining Syriacs of Mardin. Armenians accuse Syriacs of having been collaborators by having re-baptized Armenian children, by having made them part of their community and by claiming originally Armenian monuments, mansions and churches. They accuse them of having taken over their heritage and made themselves "the only 'authentic' Christian community within contemporary, cosmopolitan Mardin."⁴⁰⁴ What is beyond doubt is that the remaining minority businessmen benefited from the business opportunities that had opened up with the sudden absence of the majority of Armenians and Greeks. It created a demand for and scarce supply of their business skill. In Izmir, it was Jews who took on Armenian and Greek positions and in Adana Jews as well as Arab Christians. According to Sabancı's memoirs,

the outstanding businessmen of Adana [in the 1920s] were Corç Lutfullah and Alber Diyab, both Lebanese Catholics. These two had a monopoly on all matters relating to exports and agencies. Muslim businessmen, ignorant of foreign languages,

⁴⁰⁴ Biner (2010 b: 87).

held them in high esteem, because they were regarded as totally competent in these fields.⁴⁰⁵

Levantines, too, probably benefited from the vacuum that the Armenian and Greek removal had created in the economy. For instance, there was not a single Muslim among the founders of the Izmir Chamber of Commerce, they were all Levantines.⁴⁰⁶

Extent of the Property Transfer

World War I in the Ottoman Empire clearly provided favourable conditions for becoming rich within a very short time with little fear of being held accountable for the means employed. It did so not only the way most wars do for profiteers but even more so since most of the property of around four million people fell vacant within a mere ten years. This wealth must have been greater than the percentage of its owners in the overall population suggests (almost 20 per cent) since the commercial bourgeoisie was almost entirely made up of members of the Armenian and Greek communities. In principle, all Armenian and Greek property was transferred to the state to serve national interests and projects but in practice it was different as we have seen above. Kaiser is only partially right in stating that

the entire Ottoman government apparatus that included several central government ministries, provincial and local authorities, as well as village elders, were involved in transferring the Armenian private, ecclesiastical and community property.⁴⁰⁷

In fact, individuals of *all social classes everywhere in the country* took part in the plundering of Armenians. From the rich pasha in Ankara who took over his Armenian neighbors' villa to the Muslim lady who got a box full of the lady of the house's jewelry for a pittance to the government official who would only issue a receipt for the confiscated ware house against payment of a fee to the deportation guard near Kayseri who would take a bribe for not taking away their donkey to the nomad or peasant woman who squeezed the

⁴⁰⁵ Sabancı (1988: 7).

⁴⁰⁶ Toprak and Acar (2010: 193).

⁴⁰⁷ Der Matossian (2007: 17).

last gold coin from those members of the family that reached the Syrian desert. Keyder states that “[...] not only the immigrants but probably every single wealthy Muslim in a position to make the transformation to bourgeois status had acquired some property from the departing Greeks and Armenians.”⁴⁰⁸

Consequently, those who took the opportunity of enriching themselves did so not only at the Armenians’ and Greeks’ expense but also at that of their fellow Muslims’ and the military’s. According to Gerlach, ‘the rich of 1916’ who had made fortunes through speculation became proverbial. Their doings led to unrest in the capital in 1915 already and threatened CUP rule.⁴⁰⁹ More gravely, they were responsible for the starvation of tens of thousands of people in Istanbul and on the Smyrna plain. In 1916 and 1917, hundreds of people died every day of hunger in both cities.⁴¹⁰ Gerlach rightly states that it is a bitter irony that many of the Turkish victims among civilians and soldiers go back not to Armenian acts but to the very people, the new bourgeoisie, who are praised as the heart of the Turkish nation.⁴¹¹ He also very aptly states that only through corruption, usury, political nepotism and violence was the new economic elite able to create for itself an invulnerable position; and that it did so with great brutality. “In the twenties, this economic elite dominated Turkey’s economic life not so much because of its own strength but rather because of the previous violent removal of other economic elites. It was so to say a belated original accumulation”, which is the point already made in chapter two.⁴¹²

Impact on Turkish Economic Life

The impact the elimination of the Armenians and Greeks had on the Ottoman economy was grave. The percentage of non-Muslims in the population dropped from 20 per

⁴⁰⁸ Keyder (1994: 54).

⁴⁰⁹ Gerlach (2002: 385-86).

⁴¹⁰ Gerlach (2002: 389).

⁴¹¹ Gerlach (2002: 391).

⁴¹² Gerlach (2002: 388), my own translation from German.

cent to about two per cent⁴¹³ and the country thereby lost “the skills of an entire commercial and industrial middle class”.⁴¹⁴ The role of non-Muslims in the bourgeoisie and urban artisan class became greatly diminished and that that of Muslims grew. Only in Istanbul, where the percentage of non-Muslims was higher than anywhere else in the country, a mere 1,200 out of 4,300 companies (28 per cent) belonged to Muslim Turks.⁴¹⁵ Elsewhere, the percentage of Muslim-owned businesses must have been much higher. Üngör states that “a whole generation of Turkish-owned firms ‘established in 1916’”⁴¹⁶ mushroomed across the Empire after the Armenian genocide.

Though possessions and capital in Muslim hands greatly increased, these Muslims were unable to replace the absented Armenians and Greeks in terms of skills, experience and networks. Aktar rightly points out that

not only the entrepreneurs but the most skilled section of the late Ottoman working population perished within ten years. [... The] Turkish bourgeoisie and urban artisans were far from replacing the minorities in all sectors of economic and social life. [...] As a newly developing social class their aspirations and actual capacity were limited and inadequate for a better vocation. Thus the development and dissemination of a more skilled industrial working population had to wait for some more decades.⁴¹⁷

Zürcher makes the same point: “In 1923 Turkey was not only a country almost without managers and engineers, but it was a country almost without trained waiters, welders or electricians. It would take at least a generation to rebuild the skills that had disappeared.”⁴¹⁸

⁴¹³ Zürcher (2003: 6).

⁴¹⁴ Zürcher (2003: 6).

⁴¹⁵ Aktar (2000: 55-56) and Özkirimli and Sofos (2008: 166).

⁴¹⁶ Uğur Ümit Üngör 2011. Confiscation and Colonization: the Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property, *Armenian Weekly*, April 22, 2011, p. 5.

⁴¹⁷ Aktar (1996: 286).

⁴¹⁸ Zürcher (2007: 99).

Critique of the CUP's 'Nationalization' Policies

The question here is not whether what the CUP did was morally right – the answer is obvious- but whether the means it employed to reach its aim were effective. Üngör states that the “[...] practice of mass confiscation and plunder was in fact a shortcut to the notion of the aspired ‘national economy’.”⁴¹⁹ The CUP may well have hoped so but I doubt it really was. On the surface yes, a ‘national’ bourgeoisie came into being within a few years, but it seems to have taken decades to more or less *replace* the minority bourgeoisie.

Keyder states that the CUP members

were unprepared for their sudden accession to power. They had no specific programme to implement, nor had they yet discovered the social group whose interests could provide an orientation for future policies. Consequently, they changed and evolved rather rapidly in the face of events.⁴²⁰

He criticizes the CUP for not having studied the social structure or the mechanisms of imperialism to understand the Empire's problems. Instead, he says, it upheld a discourse that was anti-absolutist, “tinted with an ill-defined resentment of economic dependence”⁴²¹ and “ill-understood desire to overcome economic backwardness.”⁴²² The CUP “prescribed administrative reforms as the cure to the ills they could diagnose while remaining ignorant of their economic aspects.”⁴²³ While we may wish the CUP had indeed limited itself to administrative reforms, I agree with him that they lacked insight into economic and social processes as well as patience. The CUP's infrastructural improvements (roads, postal addresses, communications etc.) were a good start for the country's overall economic development and Muslims could have gained a larger share of business through reform or positive discrimination. This can be illustrated with the 1915 prohibition to use English and French in commercial correspondence. The rationale behind it must have been to put Muslim and Christians on an equal footing by removing the competitive advantage often

⁴¹⁹ Üngör (2008 b: paragraph 24).

⁴²⁰ Keyder (1987: 59).

⁴²¹ Keyder (1987: 53).

⁴²² Keyder (1987: 53).

⁴²³ Keyder (1987: 54-55).

foreign-educated urban Christians had over urban Muslims. The CUP may even have hoped to give Muslim Turks an advantage over Christian employees since Turks may have known Turkish better than some of them. (Levantines did not speak Turkish, many Jews only communicated in Ladino and some Armenian and Greek businessmen may not have known Turkish as well as Turks). What the CUP did not consider was how businessmen would conduct international relations without using either of the two international languages, French being the diplomatic one and English the language used in business transactions.

By prohibiting the use of English and French, the CUP punished the minorities as much as Muslim Ottomans. It could have educated Muslim boys to the same standards as the sons of the Christian bourgeoisie, apprenticed them with Armenians, Greeks and Jews, sent them abroad to improve their language skills and let them gain professional expertise. In addition, it could have provided them with credit for the setting up of Muslim-owned businesses. Over time, this would have put Muslims and Christians on an equal footing, with a small advantage for the former. Also, the transfer of knowledge and experience would have been unbroken and professionalism and competitiveness would have been maintained. Of course, this would have cost not only time, at least a generation, but also money. Bankrupted and at risk of breaking apart completely, the Ottoman Empire lacked both. As Keyder says, only under more peaceful conditions, would the CUP policies have resulted “in the attainment of greater political control over the market, and in the relative ascendancy of the non-Christian elements in the bourgeoisie.”⁴²⁴ Still, the CUP could have taken another course of action and modified its plan to *include* Muslims into the bourgeoisie rather than hope to replace it from one year to the next. This would have spared the minority bourgeoisie and the country would still have modernized, probably more successfully so. In this light, the CUP’s economic policies were shortsighted. There was criticism of the CUP’s economic policies before the war when members of the Liberal Union counseled caution and argued that it was superfluous and ridiculous to boycott shops since this only damaged local commerce.⁴²⁵ But not heeding the warning, the CUP saw World War I as a golden opportunity for advancing its goal of Turkification rapidly. Appropriation was not the leading idea of the deportations and killing of Armenians, but

⁴²⁴ Keyder (1987: 75).

⁴²⁵ Ahmad (1980: 332-3).

once it had happened, there was no reason not to take advantage of the situation and take their property.

Istanbul-Izmir Paradox: Why were the Armenians of Istanbul and Izmir Largely Spared Deportation and Expropriation?

In view of the CUP's program of ethnic homogenization and property transfer from non-Muslims to Muslims, which it carried out scrupulously even in the countryside and into the 1920s, it is puzzling that it should have let the Armenian communities of Istanbul and Izmir alive, in possession of their property, remain concentrated and retain their communal structures. The only exception to this seems to be the 200 members of the Istanbul Armenian elite who were deported on 24th April 1915 and some 400 more who were taken away shortly after and mostly killed early on in the deportation process.⁴²⁶

The conventional explanation is that the CUP tried to carry out the deportations and mass killings in secrecy in order not to make negative headlines in the international press and to avoid unnecessary tensions with Germany which would have been implied in its condemnation. According to this explanation, the Armenians of Istanbul and Izmir were spared because the presence of foreign diplomatic personnel in these two cities would have made it impossible to maintain secrecy whereas in the provinces there were far fewer foreigners who could report home.

It is true that the CUP instructed the executors of its orders to be discreet and to dispose of the corpses in a manner that they would not be visible to passers-by. Thus the deportees were killed outside the cities, not in their streets, though the fact that it was easier to get rid of the corpses and to avoid the spread of diseases where the population was densest surely also played a role in this decision. Likewise, foreign witnesses were forbidden from taking photos and all publications relating to what was happening in the Ottoman Empire were censored in the Empire and in Germany.

But these measures were ineffective because what was happening could not be hidden and also because the perpetrators often took no care to hide anything, such as when they

⁴²⁶ Ternon (1990: 185).

threw thousands of corpses into the Euphrates which floated away and bore witness to massacres upstream. Foreigners witnessed the deportation of their Armenian neighbors, colleagues, or protégés, they saw corpses lying by the road in the countryside and they circumvented the prohibitions and took photos (for instance the German army medic Armin Wegner) and wrote and published reports (see for example Johannes Lepsius' *Bericht über die Lage des Armenischen Volkes in der Türkei*, also known as *Der Todesgang des Armenischen Volkes*, which was published and disseminated in 1916 in spite of German censorship). Last but not least, CUP members themselves could be frank about their goals (see Talat Pasha's and Morgenthau's conversations). The international public was thus well informed about what was going on in the Ottoman Empire.

By the time it carried out the Armenian genocide, the CUP believed that it was fighting a deadly struggle that could only result in either Turkish-Muslim victory or destruction. If, in other words, the CUP had nothing to lose, there was no reason for it to make an exception for the Armenians of the two most important and most prosperous cities in Anatolia. Considering the fact that the CUP and the Kemalists pursued their project of ethnic homogenization and economic 'nationalization' with great ardor and thoroughness in the provinces, it is puzzling that they should have allowed the Armenians in Istanbul and Izmir to i) remain concentrated and to maintain a community life (in complete contradiction to their policy of dispersion and assimilation, especially the five-per-cent rule) and ii) to keep their property (even though some of the Istanbul Armenians were surely among the wealthiest in the country).

Another explanation that has been given is that the Istanbul Armenians were spared because the city was under British occupation which meant that the CUP had no power there. But that was only in the period from 1918 to 1923, the CUP could have driven out its Armenians before that, but it did not. Also, Izmir was not under foreign occupation until 1919 so Young Turks could have attacked the Armenian population of that city, too, if they had wanted to.

Yet another reason given is that many of the Armenians in Istanbul and Izmir were Catholics and Protestants rather than Apostolic. Foreign missionaries who had converted them saw them as their protégés and lobbied with their governments for their exemption from deportation. One would have to find out whether the percentage of Protestant and

Catholic Armenians in Istanbul and Izmir was higher than elsewhere. But even if it was, it is doubtful that this is the explanation since in the southeastern provinces, the percentage of deported non-orthodox Christians was as high as that of orthodox ones as shown in chapter four.⁴²⁷ To quote a final attempt at explanation, according to Smith, who quotes Dadrian, German ambassador Metternich wrote in a report on 7 December 1915 that

4000 Armenians had recently been removed from Constantinople, that the total number of those deported from the Ottoman capital up to that time had reached 30,000, and that ‘gradually a clean sweep will be made of the remaining 80,000 Armenian inhabitants of the Ottoman capital.’⁴²⁸

This asserts the possibility that Armenians were deported from Istanbul. If that were correct, the CUP indeed planned to remove all Armenians from the capital and started carrying out its plan but did not complete it, for whatever reasons. It would also mean that the concentration of Armenians in Istanbul is not a result of non-deportation but of the migration of survivors to the capital. But if this migration happened before 1918, the question remains why Armenians were permitted to concentrate and stay there. So far, it is an unsolved puzzle.

⁴²⁷ Üngör suggests that the definition of the victim group changed during the genocide, from a religious definition based on the millet system (‘Apostolic Christians are to be deported’) to a national or racial definition (‘people of Armenian ethnicity are to be deported, no matter whether Apostolic, Protestant or Catholic, even those converted to Islam’). Uğur Ümit Üngör 2011. Confiscation and Colonization: the Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property, *Armenian Weekly*, April 22, 2011, p. 3. If true, this would explain why all Armenians, even converted ones, could be deported. At first sight, Üngör’s argument disagrees with Gaunt’s assertion that during the 1910s Armenophobia turned into general anti-Christian feeling (chapter three). But on second thought it seems possible that the fear of the Armenian threat and the imperial threat led to a general fear of Christians while at the same time increasingly national, even racial, thinking prompted a fear of anybody born Armenian, no matter whether he had become Muslim or not. It may be that uneducated people tended towards the former whereas the elite that was familiar with the latest thought in Europe tended towards the latter.

⁴²⁸ Smith (1999: 162).

Conclusion

Next to the homogenization of the population, placing the Ottoman-Turkish economy in Muslim hands was the other main goal of CUP nation building. The CUP did so by restricting business opportunities of non-Muslims and by creating them for Muslims. But in part because results did not materialize soon enough, they also expelled Armenians and Greeks and killed the former on a large scale which advanced two other goals at the same time: it contributed to the unmixing of populations and to the ‘nationalization’ of the economy by removing competitors and making huge amounts of property and capital available to Muslims. In theory, everything that had been taken from the Armenians and Greeks was state property and to be distributed by the state. In practice, competition over the spoils and large-scale corruption meant that the outcome of redistribution was very different from what it had been declared to be. CUP loyalists especially were rewarded handsomely and made huge profits. But since they lacked the skill, experience and networks of the Armenian and Greek members of the bourgeoisie, they were unable to replace them. The economy experienced a long drawn-out recession and much of the newly gained property was wasted.

6.

HOMOGENIZATION OF THE NATION IN REPUBLICAN TIMES

We are now entering a new stage of nation building with regard to Armenians and Greeks, for the parameters (territory and people) were largely fixed and the state was working within these parameters. Armenians were still expelled and mistreated, and even killed in the thousands in the 1920s. But compared to the time when hundreds of thousands were killed or expelled, this period constituted a phase of calming down and consolidation.

With the end of the decade of wars and the chaos accompanying it, the conditions for the state's shaping the population by promoting what it deemed desirable and suppressing what it deemed undesirable were excellent. The nation was further homogenized by way of forcing as many 'undesirables' as possible out and forcing the remaining 'undesirables' to give up their distinctness and to become 'Turkish'. The former were either formally expelled or unofficially forced to leave the country or deprived of their citizenship and forbidden from reentry (mark the similarity to the late Ottoman period.). The latter were forced to assimilate through pressure on them to give up any language other than Turkish, to convert to Islam, to adopt Turkish names and the like.

Before we proceed, it is important to recall the intertwinedness of expropriation and emigration and the overlap between this chapter and the next one. One of the ways in which Armenians could be forced to leave the country was by plundering them or confiscating their source of making a living. If they could not be sure of their property or had already lost it, they had good reason to leave the country. Though expropriation was an important factor in the emigration of Armenians and Greeks, it will be treated under 'nationalization

of the economy'. The reverse was also true: By expelling someone without giving him the chance to take his property with him or to sell it and take the profit, one had at the same time expropriated him and contributed to the 'nationalization' of the economy. As in chapters four and five, the two aspects will be dealt with separately while one should keep in mind that they were closely related.

It is also important to recall that the assimilatory and expulsory effect of events like 1943 and 1955 went beyond those immediately targeted, beyond the number who, say, were deported or whose property was destroyed. Nobody knew when such a thing would happen next, who would be targeted then, for how long it would last and how bad it would be. Each time such a disaster struck one or other of the minorities, those who were not targeted were also intimidated and scared because they could not know when it would be their turn. As a result they would choose to emigrate as a precaution or, if they stayed, tried everything to keep a low profile. Such acts therefore had an assimilatory and expulsory effect beyond the designated victim group.

Expulsion

Accounts of the living circumstances of Armenians and Assyrians in the Southeast of Turkey in the 1920s do not distinguish between the period up to 1923 and the period starting in 1923. It seems that it made no difference, that killings, expulsion and expropriation simply carried on in regions that were not under French or British occupation. The Armenians who had survived or returned to the Turkish-Syrian border region did not leave voluntarily in the 1920s nor were they formally expelled during the first half of the decade.⁴²⁹ Instead, institutions close to the CHP such as local newspapers, the *Türk Ocakları* and notables made the everyday lives of the remaining Armenians

⁴²⁹ The return of surviving Armenians was not confined to the South and Southeast of Turkey: "According to two separate reports (one comprising British-collected figures, the other comprising Ottoman figures), anywhere between 2,761 and 5,800 Armenians in Adapazarı (out of a reported total of either 26,000 or 17,240) had lived to return by June 1919. That spring, 1,800 Armenians, out of a pre-1915 population of 11,300, returned to the environs of İzmit." Gingeras (2009: 52-53).

impossible. “On closer inspection, it is interesting to see that many of these people and the most important of them, were former members of the CUP who had significant experience in [...] the organization of mass deportations.”⁴³⁰

The methods used against them differed depending on the time and location. There were press campaigns that declared the minorities to be enemies of the Turkish state and that demanded that they leave. In Cilicia, posters were put up on Christian-owned shops saying that they had one month to leave. In Marash, Armenians were insulted and stoned.⁴³¹ Furthermore, there was pressure on them to move from the countryside into towns where they were pressured to leave the country. As a result of these actions, the minority populations of towns such as Urfa, Marash and Aintab dropped from about 5,000 to less than 100.⁴³² “Despite the scope of the expulsions from 1921 to 1923, a few pockets of Armenians managed to cling to several localities.”⁴³³ According to different sources, the flight from southern Turkey continued until 1929 or even into the 1930s.⁴³⁴

Towards the end of the 1920s, Turkey added denaturalization and official expulsion orders to the harassment of the Christian minorities. In May 1927, parliament passed a law stating that anyone who had not taken part in the War of Independence and who had remained abroad between 24 July 1923 and 27 May 1927 was excluded from Turkish nationality. This affected all male Armenians because they had not taken part in the War of Independence as well as those females that, due to their deportation or flight, found themselves outside the borders of the new Turkish state in the given period. Not only did the Turkish government thereby contribute further to the homogenization of the population in this part of the country. It also put an end to the property dispute, there was no more hope for the return of stolen property.⁴³⁵ According to a British consul in Aleppo, 30,000 Armenians were expelled from Turkey in the years 1929-30 alone.⁴³⁶

⁴³⁰ Tachjian (2009 a: 5).

⁴³¹ Tachjian (2009 a: 5).

⁴³² Tachjian (2009 a: 6).

⁴³³ Marashlian (1999: 145).

⁴³⁴ Tachjian (2009 a: 7).

⁴³⁵ Der Matossian (2007: 16).

⁴³⁶ Walker (1980: 345).

In the 1930s and 1940s, several thousand members of the minorities were deprived of Turkish citizenship. The state considering them as undeserving and disloyal, they were not to be part of the Turkish nation. It is likely that this involved Armenians as they had already been denied papers in the 1920s, though the source is not clear on this point. In 1929, the first mass denaturalizations involving hundreds of formerly Turkish citizens were carried out. In the 1930s, the rate increased greatly and the reasons given were non-participation in the war of liberation and 'not having ties to Turkish culture'. In the early forties, denaturalization increased even further with 700 people stripped of their citizenship in 1940 and 1941, respectively. In 1943, 1,400 people were denaturalized.⁴³⁷ It seems that most of the members of the minorities were deprived of their citizenship while they were abroad, especially in France.

Hatay 1938

When the *sanjak* of Alexandrette became part of Turkey in 1938, close to 50,000 people emigrated from the province (almost half of which were Armenian) out of fear that they would otherwise be killed. According to French statistics from 1936, Armenians had made up twelve per cent of the population of 220,000 with almost forty per cent Turks, almost thirty per cent Alawite Arabs and almost ten per cent Sunni Arabs and Christian Arabs each.⁴³⁸

In the 1920s, as soon as the area was under French occupation, tens of thousands of Armenians had resettled there which led to tensions with local Muslims, massacres and counter-massacres. Turks who did not want to get caught between Armenians and Arabs fled to the interior of Anatolia.⁴³⁹ The future of this part and its inhabitants remained uncertain until in May 1937 a League of Nations resolution made the *sanjak* an 'independent entity' separate from Syria and granted its Turkish inhabitants administrative and cultural autonomy.

⁴³⁷ Görgü Guttstadt (2006: 53-54).

⁴³⁸ Pekesen (2006: 61).

⁴³⁹ Pekesen (2006: 59).

The time had obviously arrived for Ankara to take concrete measures geared to extending Turkish military, political and economic influence over the area. The subsequent period saw a systematic Turkification of the administration, the educational system and the judicial apparatus in the sanjak region. This implied, among other things, that Turks were given or allowed to take positions in the civil service, and that public institutions, such as mosques, schools and hospitals, were segregated.⁴⁴⁰

Subsequently gang war between Arab and Turkish factions flamed up again, the Turkish army occupied the *sanjak*, proclaimed it the republic of Hatay in September 1938 and less than a year later, in July 1939, declared its union with Turkey. Britain supported this course of action and France accepted it. As in Cilicia in 1922, once the French evacuated the *sanjak* of Alexandrette in 1938,

near panic broke out and large-scale emigration could no longer be prevented. About 90 percent of the Armenian population, some 22,000 persons, emigrated in the first ten days after the union of the province with Turkey. They were followed over time by 10,000 Alawites, 5,000 Orthodox Christians and 12,000 Sunni Arabs.⁴⁴¹

Note that none of these groups would have been accepted as ‘full’ Turks, Alawites and Orthodox Christians for religious reasons and Sunni Arabs because of their ethnicity. They knew that they would be forced to give up their identity, if not their lives, and therefore fled the country. Part of the Armenians went by land to northern Syria and part by sea to northern Syrian port cities and to Lebanon. There, they were accommodated in camps and existing Armenian community buildings.⁴⁴² Why Turkey was intent on making this heterogeneous region part of Turkey at a time when it had given up almost all irredentist claim is an open question.

Wealth Tax 1942-43

The wealth tax was levied three years into World War II in which Turkey did not take part but throughout which it nevertheless stayed mobilized. This tax impoverished virtually

⁴⁴⁰ Pekesen (2006: 63).

⁴⁴¹ Pekesen (2006: 63).

⁴⁴² Pekesen (2006: 63).

the entire minority population, drove thousands of its members out of the country and thereby contributed to making the still rather cosmopolitan population of Istanbul more homogenous.

I argue that the state's and government's main aim was to destroy the minorities' position in business and to make many members of the minorities emigrate by exacting as much money as possible from them. This is clear from confidential statements and the discriminatory and unnecessarily frightening, humiliating and cruel way in which the law was applied. Completely disowned, and fearing the worst (and the government making no effort to alleviate these fears), thousands emigrated at the earliest opportunity. A secondary motive was to challenge political enemies, to protect political friends⁴⁴³ and to pay for keeping the army in arms without burdening the Muslim part of the population.

Though the tax itself was not discriminatory, the way in which it was levied was since it placed a much heavier burden on minorities, including the Dönme,⁴⁴⁴ than on Muslims. The tax was levied on 114,000 individuals and firms among which Christian and Jewish Turks constituted the biggest group though foreigners and some Muslim Turks were also taxed.⁴⁴⁵ It seems that Muslims were taxed for two reasons: by mistake (some Muslims were also overtaxed because of the haphazard nature of the assessment, but not as grossly as the minorities⁴⁴⁶) or for political reasons ("In some cities, Mersin, Adana, Ankara, Izmir and Istanbul, some Moslem Turks (really exceptions), have been heavily taxed, chiefly for political reasons."⁴⁴⁷) In the case of Muslims, the tax collectors' decision could be

⁴⁴³ Bali (2005: 399) and Yalman (375-383).

⁴⁴⁴ From a report dated September 1943 annexed to a letter dated July 20 to AJC in Bali (2005: 363).

⁴⁴⁵ Among the foreigners assessed were White Russians, Yugoslavs, Greeks, Bulgarians, Italians, British, Germans, French and Americans. "The treatment of foreign-owned businesses and institutions was almost as discriminatory as that of native. Those owned by Greeks, Yugoslavs and Italians were taxed on approximately the same scale as those owned by the Turkish minorities, while those owned by French, German and Bulgarian citizens were taxed less heavily. Americans and British got off relatively lightly." Foreigners were taxed but not deported. From the letter of a British person living in Istanbul, December/January 1942/3 in Bali (2005: 222).

⁴⁴⁶ From the letter of a foreign journalist, Ankara January 5, 1943 in Bali (2005: 228).

⁴⁴⁷ From a report dated September 1943 annexed to a letter dated July 20 to AJC in Bali (2005: 363).

overturned, as the example of Sakıp Sabancı's father suggests. His father was asked to pay 316.000 TL,⁴⁴⁸ an amount much higher than he had expected. According to family history, this shock resulted in his developing diabetes. But it seems that he ended up not paying: "My father, however, was left unscathed by this tax."⁴⁴⁹ And even when Muslims were made to pay, they were neither sent to labor camps nor was their property confiscated.⁴⁵⁰

What is interesting is that the discriminatory application of the wealth tax went beyond the Muslim - non-Muslim divide. Rather, non-Muslims were subdivided into non-Muslims (Armenians, Greeks and Jews), Dönme and foreigners. Faik Ökte, Turkey's minister of finance during the implementation of the wealth tax in Istanbul, revealed in his memoirs in 1951 that

taxpayers were divided into two separate lists, the M list for Muslims and the G list for non-Muslims (gayrimüslim). Later, two other categories were created for foreigners (E for ecnebi) and for the dönme (D for dönme) [...]. Only 7 per cent of the taxpayers in İstanbul belonged to the Muslim-Turkish population; of the remaining 93 per cent, 87 per cent belonged to the 'non-Muslim' category and 6 per cent was mixed.⁴⁵¹

In this context, mixed presumably meant foreigners and Dönme together. The subgroups (Armenians, Greeks, Jews, Dönme and foreigners) stood in a hierarchy of 'taxworthiness'. There were those a little untrustworthy and therefore better punished preemptively, those more untrustworthy and punished harder and those beyond the pale that had to be crushed. This point is best proven by the different relations of assessment to capital: Armenian merchants were taxed at 232 per cent, Jewish merchants at 179 per cent, Greek merchants at 156 per cent and Muslim merchants at 5 per cent.⁴⁵² As is clear from this distribution, Armenians were a league of their own, Jews and Greeks in more or less the same bracket and Muslims almost fell out of the picture, so little were they taxed.

This is the same categorization of citizens as that underlying the zones of settlement for Turkish-Muslim 'trustworthy' citizens, non-Turkish Muslim 'assimilable' citizens and

⁴⁴⁸ Sabancı (1988: 39).

⁴⁴⁹ Sabancı (1988: 45).

⁴⁵⁰ From a letter by the American Jewish Committee, March 26, 1947 in Bali (2005: 340).

⁴⁵¹ Özkirimli and Sofos (2008: 169).

⁴⁵² From a letter by Edward La Fontaine's Sons, Istanbul May 13, 1943 in Bali (2005: 231).

non-Turkish Muslim ‘non-assimilable’ and non-Turkish, non-Muslim ‘untrustworthy’ citizens. Another example is the denaturalization of non-Muslims by the interim government which, upon application, issued papers to Jews but not to Armenians.

The total assessment for the whole country amounted to 456 million TL⁴⁵³ with 280 million to be paid by Christians and Jews and 176 million by Muslims.⁴⁵⁴ The minorities, who constituted 2 per cent of the population, were thus deemed to own more property than the remaining 98 per cent of the population. In the tax office’s projection, over 300 million TL of the 456 million TL was to come from Istanbul because this was where most members of the minorities lived.⁴⁵⁵

Another reason why the levying of the wealth tax was unfair was that it taxed not only profiteers or the rich but anybody. Even someone earning low wages such as a seamstress, a grocer or a liftboy was taxed if he or she was Jewish, Greek or Armenian.⁴⁵⁶ Furthermore, “even children under the age of 15”⁴⁵⁷ and charitable institutions such as “minority hospitals[,] orphanages, school teachers and priests”⁴⁵⁸ were charged impossible amounts which is absurd because such charities do not make money by definition.

As mentioned above, the wealth tax was instituted in a way that was on purpose frightening to make the victims pay as much as possible but also, I argue, to induce them to leave the country after payment. There were three scenarios for the person called upon to pay this tax. If he was lucky, he managed to raise the amount demanded within 15 days, paid it in cash and was off the hook.⁴⁵⁹ More often, he was not able to pay everything at once, but at least 50 per cent and appeared able to raise the full amount by and by. In that

⁴⁵³ According to a different source, the total assessment was 425 million. *The Capital Levy: A Key to the Understanding of Current Trends in Turkey* by the Office of Strategic Services, Research and Analysis Branch, 3rd May 1944, in Bali (2005: 322).

⁴⁵⁴ From a letter by the American Jewish Committee, March 26, 1947 in Bali (2005: 340).

⁴⁵⁵ *The Capital Levy: A Key to the Understanding of Current Trends in Turkey* by the Office of Strategic Services, Research and Analysis Branch, 3rd May 1944, in Bali (2005: 322).

⁴⁵⁶ From the letter of a British person living in Istanbul, December/January 1942/3 in Bali (2005: 222).

⁴⁵⁷ From the letter of a foreign journalist, Ankara, January 5, 1943 in Bali (2005: 225).

⁴⁵⁸ From the letter of a foreign journalist, Ankara, January 5, 1943 in Bali (2005: 225).

⁴⁵⁹ From a report dated September 1943 annexed to a letter dated July 20 to AJC in Bali (2005: 383).

case, he was given another 15 days and if he then paid, he was left in peace or if he could not, he was deported. If he saw no way of ever paying the full amount, he was deported immediately: “[...] the next day the people’s assets are confiscated and they are taken to prison for a few days until there are about 30 or 40 people together in order to form a group [for deportation].”⁴⁶⁰ There was no appeal and family members were jointly responsible. If the taxpayer could not pay, any relative could be forced to stand up for him.⁴⁶¹ As a result of this harsh treatment, some people committed suicide.⁴⁶²

Not only did this treatment spell ruin for hundreds or thousands of families, it was also unnecessarily cruel, meaning crueler than would have been necessary to get the money but cruel enough to make the minorities despair of Turkey and consider leaving. One witness wrote:

It is difficult to describe the cruelty with which the seizures were executed. Sick people were thrown out of their beds and babies out of their cradles. In the course of a few days people of financial and social standing found themselves on the pavement and the tragedy goes on. [...] No medical examination of the deportees is permitted. Persons who had had stroke or who had just undergone an operation and were still in bandages were thrown out of their beds or hospitals and imprisoned (sic). The maimed, the infirm and the blind suffered the same fate. The wives, mothers, sisters, or daughters of those who did not happen to be at home when called for were arrested and dragged to police stations, where they were badly beaten under the accusation [accusation] (sic) that their relatives were in hiding and that they had refused to reveal the hiding-places.⁴⁶³

Men as old as old as 70 or 80 were deported ⁴⁶⁴ and many others had to leave their wives and young children destitute. All in all, 1,500 people were sent to labor camps.⁴⁶⁵

⁴⁶⁰ From a letter by Salomon Ergas, a Yugoslav citizen, Istanbul 13.02.1943 in Bali (2005: 215).

⁴⁶¹ From a report dated September 1943 annexed to a letter dated July 20 to AJC in Bali (2005: 383).

⁴⁶² From an anonymous letter, July 30, 1943 in Bali (2005: 216).

⁴⁶³ From a report by the American Consulate General Istanbul, August 3, 1943 in Bali (2005: 296).

⁴⁶⁴ From a letter by Salomon Ergas, a Yugoslav citizen, Istanbul 13.02.1943 in Bali (2005: 214).

⁴⁶⁵ The Capital Levy: A Key to the Understanding of Current Trends in Turkey by the Office of Strategic Services, Research and Analysis Branch, 3rd May 1944, in Bali (2005: 322).

Their destinations were Aşkale, Kopdağ, Karabik, Çiçekli and Erzurum,⁴⁶⁶ the most forbidding places in Anatolia, where in winter temperatures could drop to minus 30 degrees Celsius. Some were transported in cattle cars for four days and three nights straight without a stop and no food, water or medical aid. Upon arrival, they had to walk the remaining 30 km to the labor camp.⁴⁶⁷ In their destinations, no provisions were made for their arrival, the deportees had to provide their own food with the 10 to 15 lira they had been allowed to take with them⁴⁶⁸ and neither doctors nor medicine were available.⁴⁶⁹

The deportees in Erzurum live 50 in a room and the rooms are so small that those who took camp beds with them can find no space for them. In other places the deportees sleep in filthy cafes or in stables which they share with animals. From the foregoing the level of nutrition and cleanliness which has been reached can be easily realised. Letters from the deportees to their families have to be short, written in Turkish and are censored.⁴⁷⁰

There were also reports of physical abuse in the labor camps.⁴⁷¹ Under these conditions, it was no wonder that “[t]owards the end 2 or 3 taxpayers died every day.”⁴⁷²

Finally, the deportees were exposed to humiliation and chicanery that had no purpose other than to break their morale and, again, to make them leave the country after their return from the camps. In Istanbul, they were taken to Haydarpaşa railway station in hand cuffs like criminals and transported in unheated carriages for three days and nights with

⁴⁶⁶ From a report by the American Consulate General Istanbul, August 3, 1943 in Bali (2005: 296).

⁴⁶⁷ From a report dated September 1943 annexed to a letter dated July 20, 1945 mailed to AJC in Bali (2005: 366).

⁴⁶⁸ From a letter by Salomon Ergas, a Yugoslav citizen, Istanbul 13.02.1943 in Bali (2005: 214).

⁴⁶⁹ From a letter by a Mr. Franco, September 10, 1943 in Bali (2005: 220).

⁴⁷⁰ From a report by the American Consulate General Istanbul, August 3, 1943 in Bali (2005: 297).

⁴⁷¹ From a letter by a Mr. Franco, September 10, 1943 and p. 315 from the diary of a wealthy Jewish business man in Istanbul, August 26, 1943 in Bali (2005: 220).

⁴⁷² From the diary of a wealthy Jewish business man in Istanbul, August 26, 1943 in Bali (2005: 316).

neither food nor blankets being provided.⁴⁷³ The labor they were forced to perform in the camps was little productive but enormously publicized.⁴⁷⁴ They broke stones and constructed roads in summer and shoveled snow in winter. This work served neither the state much nor the deportees since the pay they received for their work was far too little to allow them to ever pay their 'debts'. But the labor camps and work they performed there had a different purpose, namely to humiliate and wear out the deportees⁴⁷⁵ and to terrorize the rest of the population. Muslims and non-Muslims were kept in the constant fear that any of them could be deported next. Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany employed the fearsome specter of the camps to cow society at around the same time and Turkey was inspired by them.

A formerly wealthy Jewish businessman remembers how he and his fellow deportees were regularly intimidated and threatened in the camp:

The camp was under the command of a Colonel (Albay), a sadist who took an infernal joy in demoralizing the taxpayers in all sorts of ways. One of his favorite and most effective methods consisted in collecting the prisoners for the roll-call and giving them talks. This is what he said in substance: 'You are all bad citizens and traitors. If anyone gives me the slightest order I will cut all your throats just as I did with the Kurds at Dersim'.⁴⁷⁶

With the Armenian catastrophe only one generation old and the Holocaust contemporaneous, the Turkish state's mistreatment of its minorities during the implementation of the wealth tax must have given rise to the worst fears. It made false claims and ran anti-semitic and other racist campaigns against the minorities in the press, there was no appeal, people unable to pay were detained, stripped of all valuables and deported by train like the Armenians of Western Turkey in 1915, and brought to camps with no provisions which was reminiscent of Deir el-Zor and Ra's ul-'Ayn in 1916. The

⁴⁷³ NARA, RG 226, Entry 16, Records of the Research and Analysis Branch, Office of Strategic Services (Regular Series) 1941-1945, Document no. 47678, dated 25 April 1943 in Bali (2005: 92).

⁴⁷⁴ Pers. com. Berktaç.

⁴⁷⁵ From a letter by Salomon Ergas, a Yugoslav citizen, Istanbul 13.02.1943 in Bali (2005: 214).

⁴⁷⁶ From the diary of a wealthy Jewish businessman in Istanbul, August 26, 1943 in Bali (2005: 313).

deportees also had to perform forced labor like non-Muslim soldiers in the labor battalions during WWI, which very few Armenians survived. It is true that only men were deported, not women and children, and that nobody was directly killed and that the wealth tax was called off after only a year. But in the beginning nobody knew this and anybody would have been justified for thinking that this was only the first step and that they would eventually all be killed. In view of this, the government's message was clearly that there was no place for Christians and Jews in Turkey anymore and that they would better leave before it was too late. The Turkish government had no objection to the emigration of Armenians and Jews in the years following the imposition of the wealth tax. It could easily have prevented their departure but it did not which suggests that it expected and wished for their departure because as a result, the population and economy would become more Muslim and Turkish.

Greek Pogrom of 1955

This pogrom targeted primarily the property of 85,000 Greeks living in 29 neighborhoods of Istanbul and scattered over an area of 45 square kilometers.⁴⁷⁷ Possibly with encouragement from Britain,⁴⁷⁸ the state, the DP government under Menderes⁴⁷⁹ and several high senior officials controlled, planned and executed it.⁴⁸⁰ They had a bomb explode in the consular complex in Thessalonica which includes Atatürk's birthplace to make it appear as if Greeks had attacked this symbolic place. They thought that this would incite anti-Greek hatred in Turkey and be a convenient excuse for mob outrage. On the day of the pogrom, between 100,000 and 200,000 pogromists⁴⁸¹, tightly organized and equipped with instruments of destruction, were brought into Istanbul and given instructions to

⁴⁷⁷ Vryonis (2005: 53).

⁴⁷⁸ Vryonis (2005: 47).

⁴⁷⁹ According to a different view, the pogrom was planned and organized by the deep state, not the government, which only had demonstrations in mind. The government was consequently shocked by the degree of violence and destruction. Pers. com. Berktaç.

⁴⁸⁰ Vryonis (2005: 76).

⁴⁸¹ Vryonis (2005: 53).

descend on Greek shops and houses in waves and to destroy as much as possible but not to kill.⁴⁸² In addition, labor unions, student groups, the KTC (Kıbrıs Türktür Cemiyeti) and ethnic Turkish regional organizations⁴⁸³ all recruited demonstrators and looters while the heads of police and the armed forces were given orders not to intervene. The pogrom took place in a “nationalistic, religious, racist, and political atmosphere”⁴⁸⁴ and members of all social strata of Istanbul society participated willingly in the pogrom.⁴⁸⁵

The main means of eliminating Greeks from Istanbul’s economy was to destroy their livelihood and homes so that they would lose hope in Turkey and leave the country. Though some of their movable property was appropriated, most of it seems to have been destroyed so that only immovable property like houses and estate fell into the state’s or Muslim individuals’ hands. One reason for having their property destroyed rather than stolen may have been that the state hoped that this would make it look more like an outburst of mob fury. Another may be that it was a stronger statement and ‘safer’ for the government since destroyed property cannot be returned whereas negotiations over monetary compensation can be dragged out almost indefinitely (as they were).

Another feature of this pogrom was that the Greeks were terrorized but that the attackers stopped short of generally killing them. (At least thirty people *were* killed,⁴⁸⁶ but these were ‘accidents’ or exceptions.) Had the attackers been allowed to or instructed to kill, hundreds could easily have died on that night. The prohibition to murder was presumably based on the hope that this would minimize the blame the international community would direct at Turkey. It was the state’s way of achieving a maximum result (elimination of Greeks from the economy and the population) at minimum risk, brutality and bloodshed.

What is furthermore noteworthy about the attack on the Greek communities of Istanbul and Izmir on that night is its comprehensiveness. It was not only Greek *shops* and *homes* that were destroyed (though they witnessed the majority of the damage) but also

⁴⁸² Vryonis (2005: 212).

⁴⁸³ Vryonis (2005: 73).

⁴⁸⁴ Vryonis (2005: 77).

⁴⁸⁵ Vryonis (2005 : 76).

⁴⁸⁶ Vryonis (2005: 213).

community buildings. Libraries, schools, churches, clinics, cemeteries, cultural and athletic institutions had been gathering points of the Greek community, constituted and affirmed it as such, and cared for its maintenance. The destruction of these institutions made it very clear that there was no longer a basis for Greek community life in Istanbul.

But there is yet another level of violence which aimed at *desecrating* institutions, persons and values that stood in high regard or that were holy. Churches, icons, monasteries and cemeteries were purposefully desecrated, monks beaten and humiliated⁴⁸⁷ (in some cases apparently circumcised),⁴⁸⁸ girls and women raped⁴⁸⁹ and the sanctity of the home and family honor violated.⁴⁹⁰ Together, these acts aimed at the humiliation and moral destruction of the Greeks. As a result, thousands left the country for good.

The pogrom's main purpose was thus to send a signal to Greece and Cyprus, to eliminate the remaining Greeks from the Turkish economy (in which they had just started to play a significant role again), and to make them leave the country.⁴⁹¹ By destroying the property of its Greek population in one night, the Turkish government killed three birds with one stone. A secondary consideration was to divert the blame for Menderes' failed economic policies away from his government unto the Greeks who were to act as scapegoats.⁴⁹² This rather failed since it was soon found out that it was a plot and Menderes and Zorlu were tried and found guilty in the Yassiada trial in 1960-61 and consequently executed (though not primarily on account of the pogrom).

⁴⁸⁷ Vryonis (2005: 214).

⁴⁸⁸ Vryonis (2005: 224-26).

⁴⁸⁹ There were probably 200 cases of rape. "[...] there is sufficient evidence to assume that rape was committed to such an extent as to constitute moral damage to the community and provoke widespread fear of what might happen to Greek girls and women in the future." Vryonis (2005: 224).

⁴⁹⁰ Vryonis (2005: 236).

⁴⁹¹ Vryonis (2005: 227).

⁴⁹² Vryonis (2005: 189).

Migration of Armenians and Other Christians in the 1950s and 1960s

According to Komşuoğlu and Örs, most Armenian migration occurred during the single-party period but it continued into the 1950s and 1960s and from the Southeast even into the 1990s.⁴⁹³ The reasons for migration from villages and towns to cities and especially to Istanbul were diverse and not exclusive to Armenians or the other minorities. Economic hardship and natural disaster⁴⁹⁴ affected the rural population as a whole, though to slightly different degrees. Social reasons for the migration of Armenians were both an unavoidable outcome of the Armenian genocide some decades earlier (in many locations, the remaining Armenians felt lonely and isolated) and the result of hostile acts mid-century. Besides numerous reasons for these migrations, there exist opposed views on their desirability.

One of the unavoidable long-term results of the Armenian genocide was that the remaining or returned Armenians lived in much diminished communities which often lacked teachers and priests. This made maintaining an Armenian way of life difficult: Priests had to be called from afar to conduct baptisms, weddings and funerals,⁴⁹⁵ children were less likely to learn to read and write Armenian and marriage partners were scarce.⁴⁹⁶ The added trauma and sense of loneliness induced many parents to send their children to boarding schools in Istanbul which was often only the first step in the whole family's move.⁴⁹⁷ Van Bruinessen⁴⁹⁸ adds to this the fact that the migration of rural Muslims to towns turned the Christians there into a minority. This resulted in all locally elected officials being Muslim which of course weakened the Christians' position. Migration in the hope of finding work further diminished the Christian communities' staying powers because Christians were preferred by agencies which chose them because of their, on

⁴⁹³ Komşuoğlu and Örs (2011: 225, 233).

⁴⁹⁴ Komşuoğlu and Örs mention the Varto-Muş earthquake in 1966. (2011: 230).

⁴⁹⁵ Komşuoğlu and Örs (2011: 228).

⁴⁹⁶ Komşuoğlu and Örs (2011: 119).

⁴⁹⁷ Komşuoğlu and Örs (2011: 228).

⁴⁹⁸ Van Bruinessen made his observations in eastern Turkey in the late 1970s but they are probably applicable to earlier decades as well.

average, higher level of education. As it was the most enterprising members that left, the remaining communities were doubly weakened.

Besides the Armenians' dispersion, too small communities and unemployment which induced them to leave for Istanbul or abroad, there were other social factors that forced them to pack their things. According to van Bruinessen, Christian peasants were at the bottom of the social hierarchy with nobody to defend them against the oppression of rich landowners who tried to buy their land or who usurped it. Nor were they able to defend themselves against poor Muslim peasants who took out their anger at increased economic inequalities on them. In addition, the fact that the Christians' financial situation was relatively better than that of Muslims due to their "superior agricultural technology and skills"⁴⁹⁹ provoked envy. In towns, too the fact that the religious division partially overlapped with class division (Christians tended to work in better-paid jobs than Muslims) made them the victims of envy and attacks. A final reason van Bruinessen gives for the tenuous position of Christians in Eastern Turkey is the anti-Christian atmosphere that both fascist and Islamist circles supported. Komşuoğlu and Örs mention in particular Greek Cypriots' extensive use of Christian symbols and ASALA's terrorism, both of which were associated with Turkish Armenian.⁵⁰⁰ Economic inequalities, poverty, anti-Christian prejudice and scapegoating thus led to theft, plunder and the destruction of Christians' houses which made them leave their villages and towns. In his conclusion, van Bruinessen states the following:

The Christians of Eastern Turkey are persecuted, this is a fact that no one acquainted with their situation can deny. The persecution does not originate with the government, nor can the Ankara government be justly accused of unwillingness to protect its Christian subjects from persecution by their co-citizens. Nevertheless the persecution of Christians amounts to much more than terror exercised by a number of private individuals. The local representatives of the government are involved in the persecution, not incidentally but systematically.⁵⁰¹

⁴⁹⁹ Bruinessen (2000 b: 65).

⁵⁰⁰ Komşuoğlu and Örs (2011: 232-233).

⁵⁰¹ Bruinessen (2000 b: 67).

It was thus not Ankara that implemented a policy that cleared the provinces of Armenians but local government authorities in addition to people unrelated to the government that, for a variety of reasons, pushed Armenians out of their old homes. Government actors thus consciously contributed to nation building and people unrelated to the government did so unconsciously but the outcome was the same: it contributed to the further homogenization of Anatolia's population. At first glance, pushing Armenians out of the provinces contradicts the state's assimilation policy since it concentrated non-Muslims in a few places rather than disperse them all over the country. But actually, it was not an assimilation measure, but a two-staged expulsion measure with the first stage consisting in internal migration and the second one in emigration from the country.⁵⁰² One example of the latter is the emigration of the 600 Kurdish-speaking Armenians who had survived in Şirnak until the mid-1960s. Most of them then moved to the Netherlands.⁵⁰³

Yet, there is another side to the concentration of Armenian in Istanbul which is that it was welcomed and supported by parts of the Armenian community in Istanbul because it made caring for the remaining Armenian community in Turkey easier than if its members were scattered in the provinces. Güzelyan, an Armenian Protestant lay preacher, initiated a relocation program that was later taken over by the Apostolic Armenian Patriarchate. Between the 1960s and the 1980s, he "tried to resettle the remaining Western Armenian population to Istanbul through this program in order to teach their children in the language and belief of their ancestors."⁵⁰⁴ This created dissent among Armenians some of whom rightly pointed out that this only preserved Istanbul-Armenian culture a bit longer at the expense of the traditions of Anatolian Armenians. They argued that it led to memory loss and the homogenization of Turkish Armenian culture.⁵⁰⁵ It is clear that the Turkish state and the Armenian Patriarchate pursued opposite aims in concentrating Armenians in Istanbul – the state wanted to ultimately expel the remaining Armenians while the Patriarchate wanted to strengthen their hold in Turkey, if only in one city. By 1965, 61,000

⁵⁰² İçduygu, Toktaş and Soner (2008: 370).

⁵⁰³ Hewsen (2000: 243).

⁵⁰⁴ Hofmann (2002: 19).

⁵⁰⁵ Komşuoğlu and Örs (2011: 230).

Gregorian Armenians lived in Istanbul out of a total of 70,000 which means that more than ten per cent still lived outside Istanbul.⁵⁰⁶ One generation later, in 1998, only five percent of the 72,000 Turkish Armenians still lived there.⁵⁰⁷

Expulsion of Greeks in 1964

In 1964, the Turkish government cancelled the Ankara agreement (1963) and deported more than 11,000 so-called *établis* Greeks (Greek citizens living and working permanently in Istanbul). This was also in violation of a Turkish-Greek agreement of 1930 which granted special rights to *établis*.⁵⁰⁸ The official reason given was that they had constituted a threat for the ‘external and internal security of Turkey’, but the real one was the wish to punish the *établis* Greeks for Greek Cypriots’ seeking political union with Greece. Due to family and economic ties between *établis* Greeks and Turkish Greeks, many more were actually forced to leave Turkey so that all in all more than 40,000 Greeks emigrated.⁵⁰⁹ According to the Committee for Monitoring Minority Rights, they had to leave Turkey within days and could take no more than 20 kg of luggage and 20 TL with them.⁵¹⁰

More Greeks emigrated due to harassment which broke out with the Cyprus war. By 1975, fewer than 5,000 Greeks remained.⁵¹¹ The elimination of Greeks was thereby complete. These are examples of Turkey’s treatment of its minorities as hostages whenever it seems necessary to exert pressure on an international partner. In the 1970s, during ASALA’s terror attacks, the Armenian community of Istanbul felt obliged to constantly distance itself from these attacks out of fear that it would otherwise be punished for ASALA’s crimes. And assaults on Armenian community life certainly occurred, though the

⁵⁰⁶ Komşuoğlu and Örs (2011: 232).

⁵⁰⁷ Taline Voskeritchian, 1998. Drawing Strength from the History and Cultural Legacy of their Beloved City. *Armenian International Magazine*. December, p. 38.

⁵⁰⁸ Toprak and Acar (2010: 192).

⁵⁰⁹ Öktem (2004: 575).

⁵¹⁰ Committee for Monitoring Minority Rights (1996: 5).

⁵¹¹ Alexandris (1983: 142).

authorship is unclear. The Armenian Apostolic Patriarchate, for instance, was bombed in retaliation for an assault on the son of a Turkish ambassador.⁵¹² Another example is the Turkish government's ominous declaration that it could not guarantee for the safety of Turkish Jews when a conference on the Armenian genocide was announced to take place in Tel Aviv in 1982.⁵¹³

Killings

Compared to the war years, the killings of Armenians and Greeks in Republican times were on a very small scale (many thousand) and occurred only during the first decade and, as far as we know, only in the South and Southeast, where most of the survivors had gathered. Even though these killings did not make much of a difference in the national census, they did contribute to the homogenization of the population in a circumscribed territory.

Assimilation

The institutional and non-institutional assimilation of the official and unofficial minorities continued throughout the period since such projects take at least one generation, but often several to achieve their goal. Zürcher estimates that in the 1930s around 30 per cent of the population did not speak Turkish as its mother tongue so there was a lot of work to be done for the nationalists.⁵¹⁴ Like in pre-Republican times, people were assimilated by changing their outward circumstances (forced resettlement and forced conversion) and by changing their consciousness (through education, the media, official pronouncements and celebrations). The difference was that in Republican times, the emphasis was on the latter,

⁵¹² Hofmann (2002: 19).

⁵¹³ Smith (1999: 165).

⁵¹⁴ Zürcher (2007: 108-109).

since people were already sufficiently dispersed and the state had enough time to reprogram them. A striking example of forced conversion decades into Republican times is the case of the 600 inhabitants of the village of Acar (Harent in Armenian) in the district of Siirt in 1983. They had been known for their resilience in maintaining an Armenian identity, had listened to Armenian and Kurdish foreign programmes and given their children typically Armenian names.⁵¹⁵ Koutcharian attributes their conversion to the failure of a previous punitive expedition the Turkish military carried out into Iraqi Kurdistan.⁵¹⁶

Chapter three already gave examples of the marginalization and elimination of non-Turkish cultures in. These were not specific to Armenians and Greeks and this part will therefore only briefly show how these measures could pressure members of these two communities into conforming and assimilating. The Citizen Speak Turkish campaign branded any Turkish citizens speaking any language other than Turkish as unpatriotic and suspect. Many Turkish Armenian or Turkish Greek parents must have decided not to speak Armenian or Greek with their children at home in order to protect them at school and on the street and in the hope that they would have better job opportunities if they spoke Turkish without an accent or if they were not known to speak any language other than Turkish. That way, Armenian or Greek would die out in this family within a generation. Language, like religion, is a very important part of one's identity. If one is forced to give up speaking one's mother tongue and forbidden from passing it on to one's children, it deprives one of an essential part of one's chosen 'otherness' or distinctness and can be a grave loss.

As for the names law, it likewise contributed to the minorities' Turkification by suppressing this part of their non-Turkish culture. Names can be regarded as historical heritage that connects the bearer of the name to a certain geography, language, ethnicity, clan, family or profession. Family names can be passed on for generations and give prestige to the bearer. Restrictions on family names therefore cut some of these ties, symbolically uproot the person and, in the eyes of society, gave him a new identity that has no history. Minority schools were a partial exception to the assimilation effort. But there were numerous restrictions and disincentives for sending one's kids there and their mere existence was probably a concession to the Lausanne Treaty.

⁵¹⁵ Hofmann (2002: 18).

⁵¹⁶ Koutcharian (1989: 172).

Not all members of the minorities minded the state's assimilation drive, there were individuals who embraced the new tenets, propagated them and urged their coreligionists to give up their particularism. The most well-known example is probably Moise Cohen, also known as Tekinalp, but non-Jews, too, volunteered for advancing the Turkification project. The Ottoman Armenian Agop Martayan (Dilaçar, 1895-1979), for instance, was a proponent of the Turkish History Thesis.⁵¹⁷ The unconditional acceptance of Turkish nationalism by people whom it marginalizes is similar to the zeal with which individuals who convert to another religion as adults and out of conviction often observe the laws of their new religion. They make a conscious decision, want to prove their worth to their new coreligionists and inspire others and therefore go to extremes.

Issue of Legality

What characterizes the laws that were applied against the minorities? For one, they were deliberately vague so as to cover a wide range of actions. About the wealth tax law, an American source at the time stated that it

was deliberately couched in nebulous terms, I believe, in order to allow the utmost elasticity in application. All right of appeal from the Assessors' decisions was denied in order that the executive officers of the government might have a free hand to make the most arbitrary discriminations without fear of the courts or danger of acting in a technically illegal way.⁵¹⁸

The same reasoning had been applied to the legislation for the deportation of the Armenians. Secondly, existing laws or treaty obligations were consistently violated. It was as if two laws existed, the written one that could be disregarded and the tacitly understood one that was obeyed. The confidential lists that distinguished between Muslims and non-Muslims at the time of the wealth tax are one example. Another is the unofficial prohibition for 'non-ethnic Turks' to join the "higher ranks of the military and civil bureaucracy although legally there is no restriction."⁵¹⁹ This is based on the same categorization of

⁵¹⁷ Çağaptay (2004: 88-89).

⁵¹⁸ From a report by the American Consulate General Istanbul, August 3, 1943 in Bali (2005: 304).

⁵¹⁹ Şeker (2005: 67).

Turkishness and trustworthiness as the 1934 settlement law. The consistent violation of the Lausanne minority protections act is another example.

Conclusion

During Republican times, the state thus continued to homogenize the population through the elimination of Armenians and Greeks, though by different means than those employed in late Ottoman times. There were relatively few killings and expulsions but the pressure to assimilate was heavy and sustained. Turkey expelled tens of thousands of Armenians from the South and Southeast of the country in the 1920s and continued with the assimilation of the remaining Armenians and Greeks. The pressure exerted on them made many of them move from the countryside into cities or from the provinces to Istanbul where they were either able to lead a low-key community life or where they decided to leave the country for good. The wealth tax of 1942-43 and the pogrom of 1955 had catastrophic effects on both communities and beyond them and led to the emigration of thousands. By the year 2000, the percentage of minorities (of which the Armenians and Greeks constituted the biggest part) in the overall population had dropped from two per cent in 1927 to less than 0.2 per cent.⁵²⁰

⁵²⁰ İçduygu, Toktaş and Soner (2008: 358).

7.

NATIONALIZATION OF THE ECONOMY IN REPUBLICAN TIMES

Discrimination

During the first ten years of the Republic, economic discrimination consisted in reserving state employment for Muslims, closing certain occupations and professions to non-Muslims and setting quotas for the employment of Muslims in private companies, whether Turkish or foreign. From the 1930s onwards, after state economic enterprises had been set up, employment with them also was restricted to Muslims.

Between 1923 and 1924, all non-Muslims who had been working for the state lost their positions. Two years later, in 1926, all non-Muslims who had been working for the national railway were likewise made redundant and deprived of the status of civil servant which was reserved for so-called ethnic Turks.⁵²¹ This not only signaled to anybody that Armenians, Greeks or Jews could not even be trusted enough to sort income tax papers or conduct a train. It also deprived these minorities of the widest field of employment. The state sector was enormous and though salaries were not high, they were paid regularly. The law thus pushed minorities into the private economy. Their situation is comparable to that of Jews in most of medieval and early modern Europe. Forbidden from owning land and joining guilds, they were forced to prove themselves in the few jobs open to them, namely trade and money lending. They concentrated in these fields and often excelled in them.

⁵²¹ Pekesen (2010: 10).

Paradoxically, they were blamed for this very situation. It was somewhat similar in Turkey during Republican times: The minorities were prohibited from working for the state but blamed for running their own businesses and making money that way. As for the private sector, foreign companies were required to keep their books in Turkish and to make sure that at least 75 per cent of their staff was Muslim Turkish.⁵²²

In this period firms, shopkeepers, companies and sometimes even professionals such as doctors and lawyers were told to dismiss their non-Muslim employees and hire Muslim Turks instead. Perfect examples of the discrimination against non-Muslim minorities, most of these demands had neither a legal basis nor any constitutional justification; they were simply de facto pressures exerted by the Turkish bureaucracy.⁵²³

In southern and southeastern Turkey, Armenian shops continued to be boycotted and Armenians were denied work permits in towns and Muslims were forbidden from employing Armenians or working for them.⁵²⁴ Certain occupations in the private sector such as diving and ship chandling⁵²⁵ were closed to non-Muslims. In 1932, law number 2007 restricted certain professions and trades to Turkish citizens as a result of which nearly nine thousand non-exchanged *établis* Greeks lost their jobs and soon after migrated to Greece for good. This happened in spite of the clauses specifying minority rights in the Treaty of Lausanne.⁵²⁶

Expropriation

There were basically three ways in which Armenians and Greeks were expropriated during Republican times which were not dissimilar to those employed earlier. Firstly, there was expropriation through the passing of expropriation laws. Secondly, there was what I call de-facto or bureaucratic expropriation meaning that through the passing of a law,

⁵²² Aktar (2004: 92).

⁵²³ Aktar (2004: 92).

⁵²⁴ Tachjian (2009: 4).

⁵²⁵ Özkirimli and Sofos (2008: 166).

⁵²⁶ Aktar (2004: 93).

minorities were deprived of keeping or regaining their property, even though the law was not explicitly an expropriation law. And thirdly, there was expropriation without any legal basis, just by creating facts which always happened with state approval and sometimes added state planning.

On April 15, 1923, half a year before the establishment of the Republic, parliament passed the 'Law of Abandoned Properties' which stipulated that all property of non-Muslims who had left before the Treaty of Lausanne would fall to the Turkish government. Thereby all Armenians and Greeks who had fled or been expelled during the war years were expropriated. In the same year, another law declared that people nominated to look after left-behind assets were forbidden from doing so any longer. And in the following year the government reserved the right to give a portion of 'abandoned' assets to Turkish citizens.⁵²⁷ These are all examples of retroactive expropriation legislation since the government had been distributing stolen property all along. Between 1926 and 1932, additional expropriation laws were enacted.⁵²⁸

As for de-facto, bureaucratic expropriation, individual Greeks and Jews were deprived of their citizenship during the first years of the Republic. Görgü Guttstadt sees this as the legal confirmation of the expulsions that took place in the decade of wars.⁵²⁹

One can assume that the decisions were related to the acquisition of the expellees' property. According to Article 8 of Law No. 1312, persons who ceased to be citizens had to sell their property in Turkey within one year. If this could not be accomplished before the deadline the government would handle the sale.⁵³⁰

Expropriation without any legal basis in the 1920s seems to have taken place mostly in southern and southeastern Turkey, maybe because this is where most non-Muslims found themselves at the time except for in Istanbul where they were protected from continued persecution by the Istanbul government and by the British. But in the South and Southeast, non-Muslims were fair game and for example accused of having committed crimes against Muslims during the French occupation or of not having paid fictive debts. The Armenians

⁵²⁷ Tachjian (2009: 10).

⁵²⁸ Marashlian (1999: 145).

⁵²⁹ Görgü Guttstadt (2006: 53).

⁵³⁰ Görgü Guttstadt (2006: 53).

who fled Hatay within the first two days of union with Turkey probably lost most of their (regained) property because they feared for their lives too much to prepare their departure or handle any sales.

While discriminatory and expropriatory laws and practices continued throughout the period between 1923 and 1960s, two catastrophic events shook the remaining Greeks, Jews and Armenians: the wealth tax of 1943 (de-facto, bureaucratic expropriation) and the pogrom of 6./7. September 1955 (expropriation with no legal basis whatsoever). During these two organized incidents, the state plundered and destroyed much of the minorities' property and signaled to them that their presence in Turkey was no longer tolerated which led to the immigration of thousands of Jews, Greeks and Armenians.

Wealth Tax 1942-43

The wealth tax had a disastrous effect on the minorities' material existence, it pushed them out of the Turkish economy and allowed Muslims to take over their businesses. Whoever was called upon to pay was completely ruined. Taxpayers had to sell all their property, absolutely everything, down to their cooking pots and bedding, they mortgaged it or auctioned it off. But it was very difficult to get a decent price for the property, most of it fetched only a fraction of its real value.⁵³¹ In some cases the tax collectors could not wait: "Police have carried out 'conservatory seizures' of property and goods of some firms, alleging the owners were about to conceal it to prevent seizure by the government."⁵³² "[...] the amount of the tax in the Istanbul province alone was 344 million liras, or almost 50% of the total currency in circulation."⁵³³ By 1944, when the unpaid assessments were cancelled and the tax abolished, 315,000,000 had been collected which is 74 per cent of the amount

⁵³¹ From a letter by Salomon Ergas, a Yugoslav citizen, Istanbul 13.02.1943 in Bali (2005: 215).

⁵³² From a letter by a foreign journalist, Ankara January 5, 1943 in Bali (2005: 228).

⁵³³ From a report by the American Consulate General Istanbul, August 3, 1943 in Bali (2005: 302).

levied.⁵³⁴ Istanbul had only paid 25% of its assessment, probably because its minorities had been over assessed.⁵³⁵

The levying of the wealth tax contributed to the ‘nationalization’ of the economy not only by pushing minorities out of business, but also by giving Muslims the opportunity to take over their businesses. Since Jews and Christians were deprived of their financial resources, only Turkish Moslems were in a position to buy them.⁵³⁶ One foreign observer wrote: “You have no idea how many stores are taken by the Moslem Turks. Business is completely stopped it is something that is hard to realize.”⁵³⁷ Aktar estimates that 98 per cent of the real estate belonging to non-Muslims was either bought by Muslim individuals or confiscated by the state.⁵³⁸

Though in theory the state treasury (and by extension the Muslim population) should have been the sole beneficiaries, it seems that corrupt officials in charge of confiscation and deportations took their share, too. The same had happened during the Armenian genocide, though on a much bigger scale. For instance, a British official went to a barn where deportees were kept for 10 days, guarded by the police like prisoners, prior to their deportation and noted the following:

I had gone to see our lawyer, Mr. Eskenazi, aged about 55. He told me that when arrested he had 11 liras on him. 10 were taken by the police and he was left with 1 lira. Mr. Pessa, representing the Coats Cotton Thread people, told me he had some 30 liras. This was taken as well as his penknife, watch and wedding ring and was left with 35 piastres.⁵³⁹

This small-scale plunder continued by the guards in the camps:

⁵³⁴ Bali (2005: 322).

⁵³⁵ The Capital Levy: A Key to the Understanding of Current Trends in Turkey by the Office of Strategic Services, Research and Analysis Branch, 3rd May 1944, in Bali (2005: 322).

⁵³⁶ From a letter by Salomon Ergas, a Yugoslav citizen, Istanbul 13.02.1943 in Bali (2005: 215).

⁵³⁷ From a letter by Salomon Ergas, a Yugoslav citizen, Istanbul 13.02.1943 in Bali (2005: 215).

⁵³⁸ Aktar (2000: 204).

⁵³⁹ From a British report for the Prime Minister’s Office, March 26, 1943 in Bali (2005: 272).

According to the law the work demanded a payment of two and a half Turkish pounds a day. But no more than 2 or 3 piastres a day were paid under the pretext that the results of the work weren't sufficient.⁵⁴⁰

Relatives of forced laborers were allowed to send them parcels to the camps including a maximum of 25 TL⁵⁴¹ but “between 5 and 20 Turkish liras were seized on account of the tax payable.”⁵⁴²

As indicated in chapter five, one of the main motives for levying the wealth tax in a discriminatory manner was the wish to remove members of the minorities from the economy. Prime Minister Şükrü Saraçoğlu's said so unambiguously in a closed meeting of the Republican People's Party group in the Assembly:

This law is at the same time a revolutionary law. We have an opportunity to obtain our economic independence. We will thus get rid of the foreigners who dominate our markets and give the Turkish market back to the Turks.⁵⁴³

But even if it were not for this evidence, the way in which the wealth tax was exacted makes it clear that the government's purpose was to rob the minorities of as much property as it could and to then see them leave the country, as many observers at the time noted that the real motives were the “collection of money at the expense of the minorities, and their liquidation as an economic group.”⁵⁴⁴ A foreign journalist reported:

In part it goes back to the Capitulations of the late Ottoman period and the 1920's against which the Turks have been reacting ever since by systematically eliminating foreign elements from business, industry, finance, crafts and all other parts of their national life.⁵⁴⁵

And an American:

⁵⁴⁰ From the diary of a wealthy Jewish business man in Istanbul, August 26, 1943 in Bali (2005: 315).

⁵⁴¹ From a letter by a Mr. Franco, September 10, 1943 in Bali (2005: 220).

⁵⁴² From a report by the American Consulate General Istanbul, August 3, 1943 in Bali (2005: 297).

⁵⁴³ Aktar (2000: 147-48).

⁵⁴⁴ The Capital Levy: A Key to the Understanding of Current Trends in Turkey by the Office of Strategic Services, Research and Analysis Branch, 3rd May 1944, in Bali (2005: 321).

⁵⁴⁵ From the letter of a foreign journalist, Ankara January 5, 1943 in Bali (2005: 226).

Many observers, including myself, concluded that the tax was intended to drive the non-Moslem elements out of business and thus to ‘solve’ once and for all the problem of minority control of much of the country’s commercial life.⁵⁴⁶

This is not to say that it was the only reason for the wealth tax, but it was the main one. Had the government primarily wanted to meet the high cost of keeping the army mobilized, it could have charged rich Muslims as well. The following commentator recognized that concern for the population’s welfare (here equated with nationalism) and the partial or individual good (self-enrichment or state’s interests over any others) were in conflict during the wealth tax as they had been in 1915.

The country is at the mercy of men with the limited vision of the hereditary bureaucrat, who has little concern for the population except as the source of government income, who dislikes foreigners and regards non-Moslem fellow citizens as a species of property fit only for exploitation. His animating force is not nationalism but personal advantage in turns of (sic!) [he means: ‘in terms of’] secure income. [...] The public interest in general is being given little consideration, and the interest of the office-holding class, including that of the army officers, is paramount.⁵⁴⁷

The economic effect the wealth tax had on the minorities was their ruin and the psychological effect their total shock and intimidation. They had to rebuild their lives from scratch, whether in Turkey or abroad. Another witness predicted that the effects on the economy would be

varied and far-reaching. Immediately: disorganization of production and distribution in Turkey, (sic!) It is still quite uncertain how many firms will be driven completely out of business, but a great many will be badly weakened, handicapped in future enterprises. Import and export firms, mostly minority-owned are hard-hit and there is great doubt as to what will happen to goods already enroute to bankrupted firms or how other firms can pay for goods ordered from abroad. Foreign firms will have a natural tendency to abandon Turkey as a market.⁵⁴⁸

It is unclear in how far the economy actually suffered and in how far this was due to the closing and takeover of the minority businesses and in how far due to the war or other

⁵⁴⁶ From a Memorandum on the Varlık Vergisi, by Walter L. Wright, Jr., Istanbul February 2, 1943 in Bali (2005: 299).

⁵⁴⁷ From a report by the American Consulate General Istanbul, August 3, 1943 in Bali (2005: 305).

⁵⁴⁸ From the letter of a foreign journalist, Ankara January 5, 1943 in Bali (2005: 226).

factors. What does seem clear is that that the Turkish economy only started to really develop after the war because of liberal economic policies and American aid as well as the cooptation of minority specialists' business expertise (more on this in chapter seven in the section on the two bourgeoisies).

Greek Pogrom of 1955

As shown above, one of the main purpose of the pogrom of 6./7. September 1955 was to drive the Greeks out through the destruction of their existence while appropriation was a secondary motive. An estimated 1,000 homes were completely destroyed, 2,500 homes were damaged ⁵⁴⁹ and 4,000 to 4,500 Greek businesses damaged. ⁵⁵⁰ Armenian and Jewish property was damaged as well “although the attacks against these minorities’ properties were not so systematic and widespread as was the destruction of Greek establishments.”⁵⁵¹ An estimated one billion TL were destroyed.⁵⁵²

The appropriation of movable Greek property did occur, but on a much smaller scale than it would have without its large-scale destruction, it seems to have been an afterthought or a spontaneous act, not the purpose. Witnesses observed that “Turkish men and women often paraded in the clothes and jewelry stolen from their neighbors”⁵⁵³ and that “notable women [...] had become looters, returning to their homes with the booty under their armpits.”⁵⁵⁴

Though thousands of homes were damaged, their basic structures and of course the land on which they were built remained intact. Most of them were likely appropriated, but I

⁵⁴⁹ Vryonis (2005: 235).

⁵⁵⁰ Vryonis (2005: 249).

⁵⁵¹ Vryonis (2005: 241).

⁵⁵² Vryonis (2005: 243).

⁵⁵³ Vryonis (2005: 237).

⁵⁵⁴ Vryonis (2005: 242).

lack information on who the new owners were. After long struggles, partial compensation was finally paid to the victims, but it was very insufficient.⁵⁵⁵

The destruction of Greek businesses had a heavy impact on the Turkish economy because Greeks had controlled a large proportion of export and import businesses, retail and catering trades in Istanbul.⁵⁵⁶ According to Akar, only 8,000 out of 19,000 firms registered in Istanbul at the time belonged to Turkish Muslims⁵⁵⁷ and on İstiklal Caddesi more than half of all shops belonged to Greeks.⁵⁵⁸ One source estimates that the total damage amounted to around 300 million dollars.⁵⁵⁹ A Turkish official observed that “the disturbances have destroyed the economy of the land!”⁵⁶⁰ “A city of 1,500,000 cannot live without a market. Indeed, a large city means a marketplace. Today, Istanbul is a city without a market.”⁵⁶¹ Vryonis comments that the pogrom “not only brought immediate shortages in food and a variety of other goods, but also accelerated the Turkish lira’s fall in value.”⁵⁶²

Armenian and Greek Religious Foundations

From the 1960s onwards, non-Muslim religious foundations were expropriated which was a serious act of discrimination against them.⁵⁶³ It was prompted by the Cyprus problem and legally based on the 1935 Foundations Act (*Vaikflar Yasası*). In 1936, all religious foundations had been asked to submit a list of their property to the government. The idea had been to confiscate the property of Muslim foundations in support of the Caliphate but

⁵⁵⁵ Vryonis (2005: 362-81).

⁵⁵⁶ Vryonis (2005: 239).

⁵⁵⁷ Akar (2009:).

⁵⁵⁸ Vryonis (2005: 260-261).

⁵⁵⁹ Hartunian (1980: 34).

⁵⁶⁰ Vryonis (2005: 237).

⁵⁶¹ Vryonis (2005: 243).

⁵⁶² Vryonis (2005: 243).

⁵⁶³ Toprak and Acar (2010: 192).

in the course of time, the law was mostly used against non-Muslims⁵⁶⁴ and the lists they had provided in the 1930s were employed as a database for the confiscation of their property.

Minority foundations had continued to acquire property since the Foundation Act in 1935. But in 1974, the Court of Appeals declared that non-Muslim foundations could no longer acquire property since this endangered state security and all the property that they had purchased or that had been donated in the meantime was considered illegal and confiscated.⁵⁶⁵

[T]he liquidation caused severe financial stress or the collapse of foundations that had hitherto relied heavily on revenues earned from renting out the properties. Moreover, as the religious foundations lost these properties, their ability to perform communal services in the areas of religion, education and charity was also crippled.⁵⁶⁶

Expulsion of Greeks in 1964

The 11,000 *établis* Greeks that were forced to leave the country and their 30,000 Turkish Greek family members who left with them were “only allowed to take savings not exceeding the equivalent of \$100.”⁵⁶⁷ This meant that 40,000 urban Greeks were factually expropriated. “It is at the end of this nationalist period that the minorities were almost totally destroyed and the path of destruction brought by Turkish nationalist was nearly complete.”⁵⁶⁸

⁵⁶⁴ Toprak and Acar (2010: 193).

⁵⁶⁵ İçduygu, Toktaş and Soner (2008: 373).

⁵⁶⁶ İçduygu, Toktaş and Soner (2008: 373-74).

⁵⁶⁷ Göçek (2006: 102).

⁵⁶⁸ Göçek (2006: 102).

Two Parallel Bourgeoisies 1923-1950s

Among other things, chapter five asked how Armenian and Greek property was used by its new owners and whether the Turkish economy profited from the large-scale property transfer. There were at least two uses, mere keeping and using and maybe selling at one point (for example jewelry or a nice house) and acquiring to produce and make a profit (factories, manufacturing places). We know virtually nothing about how the former served people, but it is hard to imagine that it had no positive effect on their financial situation, that it did not raise living standards. It may also have changed consumption patterns as the redistribution of Jewish property did in Nazi Germany where it widened the middle class and middle-class consumption.⁵⁶⁹ In Turkey, a person who had come into possession of prime estate in 1915 could easily sell it for a fortune in, say, the 1960s, become rich and adopt a corresponding lifestyle. Keyder argues that the Christian bourgeoisie had its own consumption patterns which were very different from those of Muslims of the same class.⁵⁷⁰ A middle-class Muslim family that took over the entire household of a bourgeois Christian family may therefore have changed some of its habits because it was surrounded by items it did not previously possess. These are intriguing questions that have not been explored so far.

As for the effect the elimination of Armenians and Greeks had on business and the economy, I stated that the economy suffered from the sudden Christian absence and war-time destruction which points towards a negative balance. At the same time, the amount of property in Muslim hands and their capital base had clearly increased. Also, the economic field was pretty much cleared of competitors which suggests a positive balance. With this information alone, it is clearly impossible to tell whether the removal of most members of the minorities was more of an advantage or more of a disadvantage for the Turkish economy. In order to find out whether the transfer of property had more of a positive or more of a negative effect and why, I studied the memoirs of Sabancı. My argument that the transfer of property had no positive effect on the economy but that employing the *know-*

⁵⁶⁹ Pers. com. Karaca.

⁵⁷⁰ Keyder (1994: 50).

how of the remaining non-Muslim specialists did is based on this one source and is limited to the economy of Adana. Though not verifiable, it makes sense.

For one generation, from 1923 to the mid 1950s, there existed essentially two parallel commercial bourgeoisies which were both weak for opposing reasons. The non-Muslim bourgeoisie was still weak (because many or most of its Greek and Armenian members had been exiled, killed and expropriated and it had not yet recovered); and the ‘national’ bourgeoisie was not yet strong (though maybe numerous and politically well connected, it lacked experience and professional knowledge, so it was not yet powerful).

The ‘National’ Bourgeoisie and the Minority Bourgeoisie

Sabancı states that almost 30 years after Muslims had taken over Greek-Armenian property, i.e. in the early 1950s, there had still been little industrial development in Adana with only three factories, 11 mills and 21 gins and presses having been added to the stock⁵⁷¹ of seventeen factories that had been there in 1924 already.⁵⁷² “Obviously it had not been possible to secure much growth.”⁵⁷³ He makes the point that the economy of Adana only started to grow in the 50s and to take off in the 1960s several times. Most of the reasons for this delay lie in the near elimination of the non-Muslim bourgeoisie and some in the way in which this situation was handled by the CUP and RPP. In addition, there are external reasons, such as the Great Depression.

But probably the most important reason for the slow development of the Turkish economy during the period was the fact that most of the country’s business know-how along with skills and networks had been exiled or destroyed. The resulting void was not filled; in part because of the unwillingness and in part because of the inability to do so. According to Aktar, “[...] the traditional characteristics of the Turkish urban élite remained intact”⁵⁷⁴ namely keeping steady office jobs rather than buying, selling, and risk taking; and

⁵⁷¹ Sabancı (1988: 8).

⁵⁷² Sabancı (1988: 7-8).

⁵⁷³ Sabancı (1988: 17).

⁵⁷⁴ Aktar (1996: 286).

hoarding rather than investing.⁵⁷⁵ “Very few Muslims [...] chose to take part in entrepreneurial activities.”⁵⁷⁶ This touches on a huge but inconclusive debate in economic history and Ottoman studies about the degree to which the Ottoman commercial bourgeoisie was dominated by non-Muslims in the 19th century and why this was the case.

As for the inability to fill the void, many of the people who were given business opportunities were chosen on the basis of loyalty to the nationalists, not business skills, so it is little wonder that they did not make good entrepreneurs. Ahmed disputes this:

But this was in no way a totally arbitrary policy which utilized men unsuitable for the task. In many cases we find that, attracted by this policy, members of the small-town gentry (eşraf) a, as well as the artisans (esnaf) and small merchants (tüccarı) joined the party.⁵⁷⁷

Be that as it may, even if the new bourgeoisie was mainly capable, Ankara’s political patronage cannot have done it any good. The new bourgeoisie enjoyed a sheltered environment which appears as an advantage only at first sight. The absence of competition, not having to prove oneself and to grow with the challenge leads to self-contentedness and inertia. As a result, the new bourgeoisie did not exploit business opportunities and innovation was slow. With this in mind, the statism of the 1930s can be seen as more than the reason for the national bourgeoisie’s continuing weakness mid-century but its consequence.

What is interesting is that the relatively few remaining Armenian and Greek members of the non-Muslim bourgeoisie, almost all of them in Istanbul, (“110 thousand Anatolian Greeks and 77 thousand Armenians”),⁵⁷⁸ managed to cling on to, rebuild and in some cases even develop their economic position in spite of their traumata, material losses and restricted employment opportunities. “In the big cities like İstanbul, Bursa and İzmir the remaining non-Muslim minorities [...] held a firm position among the members of the commercial bourgeoisie and small producers.”⁵⁷⁹ Only this made the expropriation through

⁵⁷⁵ Ahmad (1980: 337).

⁵⁷⁶ Aktar (1996: 286).

⁵⁷⁷ Ahmad (1980: 338).

⁵⁷⁸ Toprak and Acar (2010: 185).

⁵⁷⁹ Aktar (1996: 286).

the wealth tax worth it. Somehow, the Greeks of Istanbul had (re)attained a central position in the economy by 1955 already, only a decade after the wealth tax had wrought havoc among them.

The Remodeled ‘National’ Bourgeoisie Unchallenged

So much for the two bourgeoisies up to the mid-20th century. Around that time, things changed for both. The remainder of the minority bourgeoisie was basically erased in 1943 and 1955 and the bureaucratic, metropolitan, ‘national’ bourgeoisie waned away and was superseded by a provincial, landowning bourgeoisie. The reasons for the emergence of a remodeled ‘national’ bourgeoisie were Turkey’s economic reorientation due to the American alliance, development aid, and the change in government (DP). As already mentioned, every government in Turkey has had the tendency to promote its favorites in business so that it continuously reconstitutes the bourgeoisie. One such reconstitution took place in the 1950s. The new type of entrepreneurs originated from prominent landowning Cilician families and consisted in provincial merchants and technical experts. The middle peasantry supported liberalization, market freedom and profited through commodity production.⁵⁸⁰ Since the commercial bourgeoisie’s wealth derived from landownership, not gift taking, it was less dependent on the state. “The earlier urban elite of bureaucratic and metropolitan origin had been relegated to a minority presence.”⁵⁸¹

As for the minority commercial bourgeoisie, it did not exist anymore, only a few scattered wealthy families were left. But individual members of the former minority bourgeoisie continued to live in Istanbul, and continued to have rare, sought-after skills. In the absence of other sources in English, I will use the memoirs of Sabancı and argue that it was thanks to the know-how of a handful of minority specialists that his (and possibly other Muslims’) business ventures succeeded and that his family became one of the richest in

⁵⁸⁰ Keyder (1994: 60).

⁵⁸¹ Keyder (1994: 61).

Turkey. About a Jewish employee who had a very special sense for what would sell and who knew his own value, Sabancı says:

When I came to Istanbul I did some research. Working at Textiles Central was Nesim Kasado, a Jew. Although he had had no formal education he had been in the business all his life. It was he who decided what goods were to be produced, in what colour and in what quantity. And when the producers did as he told them, the line would be a sell-out. He had that Jewish agility of mind and he knew the market inside out. [...] I offered him a job on the spot. He was about my father's age. He smiled at the offer and said, 'Do you know how much I'm getting now?' I pressed him and he told me the figure, possibly exaggerating. I at once said, 'I'll give you more.' He tried to conceal it, but I could see he was surprised. [...] I invited him and his wife and children to Adana. I introduced them to the Amado brothers and Salomon Benyaz. [...] The fact that we had brought Nesim Kasado to Adana convinced people in the drapery market that we too could make a go of (sic!) this business. All of a sudden our goods began to attract more attention. The machines were the same, the raw material was the same. I could not see how the quality and design of the goods had changed, but with the arrival of Nesim Kasado our sales rocketed overnight.⁵⁸²

Another time, he managed to hire an Armenian specialist:

We had begun to make new products and we needed experts who knew the market for them. We had heard that another non-Muslim, an Armenian named Avandis Kazancıyan, who worked as a freelance in the Istanbul market, was the man for the job. [...] He worked as a consultant for Bossa for many years.⁵⁸³

Sabancı freely admits that these non-Muslim specialists had an advantage over their Muslim employers, an advantage that they were however unable to understand or copy:

We could not see or divine what Avandis Kazancıyan and Elyafim Kandiyoti did, what skills they possessed, what their secrets were; but the results were plain to see. For when they came to the factory and said to you, 'Make so much of this design and produce that stuff in this way and mind you don't make this mistake', lo and behold, whatever you made would sell. [...] Although we five brothers were in the business and were not without some competence in every aspect of it, we could clearly see that Nesim Kasado, Avandis Kazancıyan and Elyafim Kandiyoti had skills different from ours, whose nature we could not guess.⁵⁸⁴

These examples show that certain non-Muslims still possessed professional knowledge and business skills and instinct in the 1950s that were hard to find elsewhere.

⁵⁸² Sabancı (1988: 92-93).

⁵⁸³ Sabancı (1988: 93).

⁵⁸⁴ Sabancı (1988: 93).

But more importantly, they seem to have played a decisive role in the success of Muslim businesses as Sabancı makes clear in the following statement:

But in the circumstances we had to do it [pay very high salaries to these specialists], and a good thing that we did, because the Sabancı family's success in the textile field was the foundation of later developments. Had Bossa not succeeded in those days, we would never have been where we are now.⁵⁸⁵

Indirectly, Sabancı admits that had it not been for these Jewish, Greek and Armenian specialists, the Sabancı's business would never have succeeded. This is a very important point since it suggests that the Sabancıs (and possibly other Muslim businessmen) became big not because of the *appropriation* of Armenian and/or Greek property, but because they were able to *employ the know-how* of certain remaining Armenians, Greeks and Jews who, after the wealth tax and the pogrom of 1955, were no longer able to work in their own businesses. In other words, the fact that some of the remaining minority specialists were willing to work for the rising Muslim businessmen (while they no longer had the resources to work in their formerly prospering, self-contained, minority-only businesses) accounted for the Sabancıs' success. The 'national' bourgeoisie thus co-opted or absorbed minority specialists after they had been deprived of the means of a competitive existence.⁵⁸⁶

Admittedly, this evidence is very limited (it is only one person's view, and concerns only one city) and possibly partial (Sabancı is unlikely to have admitted that his father took Armenian factories and ran them under his own name). But it provides a good explanation for why Muslim businesses did not prosper until after the minority bourgeoisie was completely destroyed: only then was *both* the economic field cleared of rivals *and* did minority specialists work for Muslim firms.

⁵⁸⁵ Sabancı (1988: 93-94).

⁵⁸⁶ Pers. com. Berktaş.

Continuity from the 1910s to the 1950s and Beyond

The above account and analysis of the demographic and economic elimination of Armenians and Greeks over a period of two generations beckons the question how this continuity can be explained in spite of changing governments, the transition from single-party rule to multi-party democracy and at times of war and peace. There were two factors at play: Firstly, a powerful ideology (Turkish nationalism) that was inculcated into people from an early age and that was reaffirmed throughout their lives. Especially state employees were steeped in Turkish nationalism and Kemalism so that the system continually reproduced itself. Secondly, the same people worked in politics, for the state and in the army and gendarmerie during Young Turk as well as RPP times. This meant that people who had been enthusiastic Young Turks, who had supported the terrorization and expulsion of the Greeks, the boycott of Christian shops or participated in the killing of Assyrians morphed into Republican Kemalists and got in positions where they decided on issues such as immigration, settlement, school curricula and work permits.

Even though the CUP was briefly out of power during the period 1918-22, the proto-nationalist ideology it advocated was ultimately sustained by both the leaders of the Turkish Independence Struggle (who were mostly former members of the CUP) and by the Turkish Republic that these leaders subsequently founded. Hence the CUP ideology that perpetrated the crimes against the Armenians- and that therefore silenced and often punished those who helped the Armenians- has reproduced itself in Turkey to this day.⁵⁸⁷

People were exposed to Turkish nationalist views at the expense of almost any others throughout their school years, time at university, during military service and on any annually recurring celebration. Monuments, the mass media, speeches and books were all used to enforce the Turkish nationalist view of Turkey, the people within it and the world outside.

The academies which train candidates for state service were conspicuous centers for the reproduction and inculcation of Turkish nationalism:

Not only were the important branches of the state inherited by the republic, but the means of reproducing these branches also remained virtually unchanged. [The military academy's] function and way of working remained essentially unchanged.

⁵⁸⁷ Göçek (2011: 230).

The same is true for the Civil Service Academy (Mülkiye), which continued in Istanbul and was reconstituted as the Political Science Faculty in Ankara in 1935. It continued to provide the state with its governors, diplomats and administrators. In time both institutions also became centres of Kemalist indoctrination, where nationalism, republicanism and secularism were articles of faith for staff and students alike – a situation that continues to this day.⁵⁸⁸

As for the continuity in personnel, Zürcher argues that Young Turk and Kemalist leaders did not only originate from a common pool but that the “leadership of the Committee of Union and Progress [...] planned and prepared the national resistance struggle after 1918 and that Mustafa Kemal Pasha and his circle of adherents only gradually gained control of the movement.”⁵⁸⁹ Zürcher’s extension of the Young Turks period almost into 1923 marks a significant departure from Turkish historiography which lets the Young Turk period end in 1918 and interprets the nationalist resistance struggle as a new beginning for which Mustafa Kemal gets the credit.

The reason why many Young Turks that had implicated themselves in crimes during the war came to occupy influential positions in the republic is the mutual need the government and them had for each other. They needed the regime’s protection from trials and demands for the restitution of property and the regime needed them as its constituency, to legitimize its rule. For Zürcher, the Young Turk period therefore does not end until 1945 when those that had been Young Turks in the 1920s retired, the multiparty period began and the RPP was replaced by the DP in the government.⁵⁹⁰ However, the continuity in personnel was not complete. “In 1926 Kemal himself stamped out the remaining cells of the CUP when they were accused of plotting his assassination and sent Dr. Nazim and others to the gallows.”⁵⁹¹ Beyond the government, the bureaucracy, army and gendarmerie, too, were by and large those of the late Empire.⁵⁹² While there were two persuasive reasons for continuity, there were no sufficient reasons for a break, such as war or a revolution in

⁵⁸⁸ Zürcher (2007: 105).

⁵⁸⁹ Zürcher (2007: 102).

⁵⁹⁰ Zürcher (2010: 108).

⁵⁹¹ Adalian (1999 c: 633).

⁵⁹² Zürcher (2007: 103).

Turkey, and outside influences sometimes reinforced the tendencies in the country, such as fascism and Nazism in the 1930s and 40s.⁵⁹³

How ‘Successful’ was Turkish Nation Building?

All the above evidence of decades-long, laborious nation building raises the question in how far it was successful, in how far the CUP and Kemalists achieved what they wanted. This is what this part will examine while the next one asks at what cost it happened. It is of course impossible to answer the question whether Turkish nation building was successful precisely because we lack scales and units with which to weigh and compare the pieces of evidence. Nor do we have a definition of ‘success in nation building’. But at least it is possible to compare some figures that changed between the 1910s and the 1930s or 1960s and to state in how far the population in Turkey displayed the ‘objective’ characteristics of nations, namely a common religion, economy and historic memory, as outlined in chapter two.

The percentage of Muslims in the population grew rapidly in the 1910s, twenties and thirties in spite of the high Muslim death toll during the wars due to the elimination of Christians and the immigration of Muslims. I have already indicated that the percentage of non-Muslims plummeted from almost twenty per cent in 1914 to two and a half per cent in 1927.⁵⁹⁴ By 1945, non-Muslims only constituted 1.5 per cent of the population and twenty years later their percentage had dropped to 0.8.⁵⁹⁵ Though it took a long time, almost fifty years, for Muslims to be unchallenged in the economy, it did happen after waves of persecution, expropriation and expulsion had done away with the last remnants of the minority bourgeoisie and only single affluent families continued to exist.

In how far there is a single view of Turkish history cannot be said here but the material evidence of the existence of former communities is so scarce and continuously disappearing that it alone does not challenge the official version. As for the use of historical

⁵⁹³ Pekesen (2010: 1).

⁵⁹⁴ İçduygu, Toktaş and Soner (2007: 363).

⁵⁹⁵ In 2005, non-Muslims made up a mere 0.2 per cent of Turkey’s population.

place names, there were state offices that used maps full of Greek names in Rize as late as the 1980s.⁵⁹⁶ The population of Tirebolu, a small Black Sea town, used place names such as Ermeni Mezarlığı, Kirseburnu, Todor'un Yeri at least until the 1990s.⁵⁹⁷ But this is at most proof of marginal, local resistance to the state's attempt to erase all evidence of Turkey's multicultural past. The civil society initiatives touched upon in chapter one, though, stand a good chance of changing the monolithic view of Turkish history, if sustained. Öktem mentions that in order to avoid confusion on electoral rolls, the old names are still printed next to the new ones in order to distinguish two 'Pretty Mountains' or the like from each other.⁵⁹⁸ This shows that the zealous bureaucrats were not entirely up to the task they had set themselves, their imagination or repertory of place names was too limited.

To answer the question of success – if the aim was to make every individual in Turkey Muslim and exclusively Turkish-speaking, and to eliminate all knowledge of Turkey's non-Muslim or non-Turkish history, Turkish nation building was not a total success. And the increasingly bold acknowledgement of past and present heterogeneity outlined in the introduction probably is evidence to Turkish nationalists that it did not fully succeed. But if the aim was to marginalize non-Muslim Turks to the degree where they no longer played a role, neither demographically, nor politically, economically or socially, Turkish nation building can only be called a success.

Counting the Cost of Nation Building Through the Elimination of Armenians and Greeks

Even though it is not actually possible to count the cost (again, we lack figures and scales to measure factors such as 'brain drain'), I would like to point to the possibility that far from benefiting Turkish modernization and progress, the elimination of Greeks and Armenians threw the country back in its development and that the remaining population paid a much higher bill for the nation builders' actions than they would ever have

⁵⁹⁶ Öktem (2008: footnote 22).

⁵⁹⁷ Öztürkmen (2003: 192).

⁵⁹⁸ Öktem, (2008: paragraph 66).

imagined. I would also like to suggest that this elimination may be a so far neglected factor in many phenomena or problems Turkey has had. I am not saying that the elimination of the minorities was the sole reason for these problems and phenomena, but suggest that it was *one* of the factors that has so far not sufficiently been taken into consideration.

I have already dealt with some of the long-lasting economic problems which the loss of almost one fifth of the pre-wars population, including a great part of the bourgeoisie and the urban artisan class, caused (see chapter five). I would like to add here some thoughts on the role this played in the impoverishment of Turkey's population, stifling state intervention in the economy, the weakness of labor unions and the delay of class struggle and industrialization.

Impoverishment of the Population

We can only speculate as to the effect the massive redistribution had on living standards, changes in social classes and social mobility. Keyder states that “[...] the population in the 1920s, compared with the pre-World War I population, was smaller, less urban, less commercialized, and certainly poorer.”⁵⁹⁹ This is surprising, even if we account for war-time destruction, considering that at least one fifth of the property owned by the population before the war had become available and in part been distributed. But it is possible that much of it got destroyed or that the property itself did not have much of an effect if it was not used correctly. There may also have been big regional differences or it could be that the divide between rich and poor had become wider. What would in part explain the overall impoverishment is loss of revenues through taxes which took place as a result of flight, expulsion and killing. American Ambassador Abram Elkus reported to the State Department that “it is estimated three millions annually in taxes have been lost, because of the Armenian massacres.”⁶⁰⁰ At the time, one Turkish Pound was worth about 9 dollars.⁶⁰¹ To this we could add the loss in tax revenues due to the Greek-Turkish

⁵⁹⁹ Keyder (1994: 54).

⁶⁰⁰ Elkus (1916: 785).

⁶⁰¹ Dadrian (1986: 191).

population exchange. Üngör makes a very important point in stating that the government “offered ordinary Turks incredible prospects of upward social mobility. [...] the groups who benefited most from this policy were the landowners and the urban merchants.”⁶⁰² If correct, Üngör’s statement suggests that the Young Turks had their share in the impoverishment of the population.

Statism

The lack of a business background and training was one reason that slowed down the bourgeoisie’s and manufacturing class’ development. But there were at least two more: Ankara must have promoted many unsuitable men into management positions because the primary criterion for selection was political loyalty, not professional qualifications. Furthermore, Ankara’s protection and tutelage did not allow this ‘national’ bourgeoisie to develop its entrepreneurial skills.

Mostly due to the lack of business skills of this emerging bourgeoisie, as well as the destructive effects of the Great Depression in 1929, the founders of the new Turkish state were forced in the 1930s to move towards a more protected and autarchic model of economic development. Subsequent growth in the size of the public sector and the newly formed state economic enterprises to compensate and eventually replace private initiative not only dwarfed the Turkish business elite in size, but also consolidated their immaturity.⁶⁰³

In other words, the new bourgeoisie was little qualified because of the way in which the state had created it. The state therefore protected it which made it even less capable. As a result, it needed total protection which completely disabled it. This point is confirmed by Göçek:

As the Muslim Turkish bourgeoisie employed elimination instead of collaboration, the Ottoman bourgeoisie could never develop into a political force. The minority bourgeoisie had the skills and wealth, but lacked political and social power; the Muslim Turkish bourgeoisie had such power in both the state and society but was short on wealth and skills. As they replaced the minority bourgeoisie without the

⁶⁰² Uğur Ümit Üngör 2011. Confiscation and Colonization: the Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property, *Armenian Weekly*, April 22, 2011, p. 5.

⁶⁰³ Aktar (2004: 91-92).

accompanying skill, knowledge and resources, economic problems escalated and invited increased state intervention.⁶⁰⁴

Delay of Class Struggle and Industrialization

Towards the end of the 19th century, the bourgeoisie was no longer exclusively engaged in finance and commerce but started to produce goods in a capitalist manner as well (import substitution). Even though the market for its products was small, essentially the consumption needs of the bourgeoisie itself, this was an important development because “in the entire economic landscape of pre-World War I Anatolia, they [the members of the bourgeoisie] were the only ones which carried the potential of transforming the social structure.”⁶⁰⁵

Import substituting urban manufacturing went along with transforming lifestyles, and a change in

logic, attitude, and political behavior [...] Most importantly, they now had to employ a genuine working class: urban, dispossessed, and politically conscious. [...] In short, the bourgeoisie we have identified as the agent of capitalist accumulation introduced into the social fabric a transformatory dynamic which possessed the requisite potential of creating a new, capitalist, class structure.⁶⁰⁶

However, this development was cut short with the near elimination of the minority bourgeoisie which meant that the Turkish bourgeoisie was much less sizable and significant than it could have been and that as a consequence, the Turkish state became hugely bureaucratic and Turkish industrialization and class struggle were delayed.⁶⁰⁷

The upheaval of the war period had, however, greatly altered the social structure and the balance of class forces within what remained of the Empire. [...] The class conflict which was described above and whose outcome, under a more orderly historical evolution, would have determined the social structure of the new political unit, had taken an unexpected turn through displacement and annihilation.⁶⁰⁸

⁶⁰⁴ Göçek (2011: 119).

⁶⁰⁵ Keyder (1994: 51).

⁶⁰⁶ Keyder (1994: 51).

⁶⁰⁷ Pers. com. Berktaş.

⁶⁰⁸ Keyder (1987: 74).

Weak Labor Unions

Quataert states that

Ottoman Christians disproportionately predominated in most, if not all, of the new unions. Furthermore it is clear that either foreign subjects or recently naturalized foreigners, all Christians (and perhaps a few Jews), led these new labor organizations.⁶⁰⁹

He goes on to say that this domination by profit-makers may have weakened labor in its struggle with capital and the state that was often allied with it.⁶¹⁰ This suggests that the elimination of the Christians was to the advantage of workers because the unions were no longer headed by people whose interests ran counter to theirs. Elsewhere, however, mentioning the anti-Christian boycotts, massacres and the population exchange, Quataert says: “So labour lost many of its leaders who were Christian, and in the early Turkish Republic the labour force in the modern sector was often headless. How this affected its ability to confront the state remains an open question.”⁶¹¹ This sounds as if a Christian heading was better than none at all, or an (inexperienced) Muslim heading. The two statements can be reconciled if one remembers that the labor union leadership of Christians and Jews took place in a poisonous, anti-minority atmosphere which had a negative effect on their attractiveness which consequently kept the unions relatively weak. This is comparable to the ‘red and alien’ labor union scare in the US during the 1920s and thirties.⁶¹² If it had not been for this poisonous atmosphere and if Armenians and Greeks had not been eliminated, laborers in Turkey might have gotten their rights sooner.

⁶⁰⁹ Quataert (2007: 29).

⁶¹⁰ Quataert (2007: 29).

⁶¹¹ Quataert (2007: 29-30).

⁶¹² Pers. com. Berktaç.

Vacuum in Education and Academia

As mentioned, it was not only businessmen and urban artisans that vanished from among the urban Armenian population, but also a great part of the educated class which must have had a long-lasting impact on the development of Turkish society. Greek, Jewish and Armenian professionals had played “a crucial role in the intellectual and social life of the Empire, especially in the production and translation of Western-style knowledge.”⁶¹³ Göçek shows impressively that the Armenian genocide deprived the population of Turkey of many of its most educated, and maybe progressive, members, namely lawyers, statesmen, writers, teachers, editors, poets and many like minds.⁶¹⁴ Throughout the Empire, thousands of Armenian intellectuals were killed.⁶¹⁵ The Armenian genocide

literally destroyed the best and the brightest of an empire. The senseless nationalist policies of the Committee of Union and Progress not only ruined the Ottoman Empire but also set back the progress of the people of Anatolia for at least a century. The Turkish Republic also severely suffered from the loss of such productive, skilled and highly educated subjects. It took the Anatolian cities and town at least a century to once again reach the level of progress they had attained before 1915.⁶¹⁶

The same is very likely true for the Greeks. Their liquidation and the loss of their knowledge, innovativeness and creativity deprived Turkey of political and social development opportunities. Together with the draconian Darül Funun reform (1933), which was a massive restructuring and purge of Istanbul University removing the ‘old guard’,⁶¹⁷ the removal of the non-Muslim intelligentsia left a vacuum in Turkey’s academic institutions that probably lasted for decades. Why else would Turkey have invited German-speaking Jews who fled from the Nazis to set up faculties at Turkish universities at the same time that it was determined to get rid of its own Jews, denaturalized them and abandoned them to the Nazis? Turkey needed the German and Austrian Jews’ learning too

⁶¹³ Göçek (2011: 119).

⁶¹⁴ Hewsen (2000: 184).

⁶¹⁵ Göçek (2011: 222).

⁶¹⁶ Göçek (2011: 222).

⁶¹⁷ Pers. com. Berktaş.

badly to refuse them entry, their numbers were not high and it knew that they would not (want to) stay forever.⁶¹⁸

Speaking as economists, Toprak and Acar severely criticize the state's 'bashing' of minorities at the beginning of the 20th century and that of the emerging Muslim bourgeoisie in the late 1990s. They conclude that both policies amounted to the

depletion of human resources, immiserising modernization, and slowing down the pace of development. [... today] the country is in the process of compensating the huge loss in human resources by sending abroad thousands of students for higher education.⁶¹⁹

This sounds as if the country had still neither learnt nor overcome the intellectual loss.

Loss of Kemalist Model Citizens

One may wonder if the decrease in urbanization, brought about by the removal of the more urbanized Christian communities, led to a growth in conservatism since rural communities are more averse to change than urban ones. Before World War I, at least 25 per cent of the population lived in towns of 10,000 inhabitants or over, whereas after the war only 18 per cent did so.⁶²⁰ Differently put, many of the people the CUP eliminated were exactly the sort of people Atatürk wanted to have in the country and that he tried to bring into being through his modernizing reforms. The non-Muslim bourgeoisie had been educated, westernized and secular 'model Turks' except that they were not Turkish in the

⁶¹⁸ Compare this to Tachau's conclusion as to the motivation for the import of scholars: "The Turkish initiative of 1933 was both far-sighted and magnanimous. It was certainly most timely. In a classical political manner, it harnessed the interests of the Turkish state and society to the well-being of a number of highly skilled human beings – saving their careers, and probably their very lives. In some way, this was a symbolic reenactment, though numerically on a small scale, of the migration of Jews from Spain to the Ottoman Empire some five hundred years earlier. Even the bittersweet ending of the experience for some of the scholars does not diminish the significance of the human contribution represented by the Turkish initiative."⁶¹⁸ Tachau (2002: 245).

⁶¹⁹ Toprak and Acar (2010: 201).

⁶²⁰ Zürcher (2007: 99).

CUP's and nationalists' eyes. Keyder suggests that through his reforms, Atatürk may have attempted to replace all the urban and bourgeois members of the minorities that had vanished and that the reforms may only have been necessary because the urban Christians had been eliminated:

the modernization attempts of the Republican period period (sic!) may be understood in this context, as bids to substitute a nationalist ideology for the cultural germination which had taken place in Anatolian towns prior to the expulsion of the Christian bourgeoisie.⁶²¹

One may wonder whether the 'modernization' of Turkey would not have progressed much more naturally and speedier had it not been for the elimination of the educated Armenians and Greeks.

Weak Civil Society

One of the characteristics of both the bourgeoisie and civil society is their independence of the state. The minority commercial bourgeoisie had been largely independent of the Ottoman state but the 'national bourgeoisie', which was a merger of the Ottoman bureaucratic bourgeoisie with business (remember all the government and state officials who became businessmen mentioned in chapter five), was heavily dependent on it and would not have come into being without its patronage. Keyder brings up this point twice:

[D]uring the 1920s, the growing commercial class did not enter any political or cultural conflict with state functionaries: it simply expressed its gratitude, and hesitantly put forth demands that would bring immediate pecuniary returns. Nor did it continue with the cultural traditions of enlightenment (sic!) which had begun flourishing in the pre-war period. In other words, it exchanged the right to establish (even the faint traces of) a civil society for (what seemed to be) the privilege to make money.⁶²²

Furthermore, the surviving commercial class of pre-CUP vintage was now concentrated – to a greater degree than before – in the two cities of Istanbul and Izmir, now pale reflections of their former glory. The provincial cities, where

⁶²¹ Keyder (1987: 78).

⁶²² Keyder (1987: 82).

economic change and cultural awakening had begun to occur only at the end of the nineteenth century, lost most of this momentum and reverted to their sleepy incarnations as administrative centres. The impact of the expulsion and annihilation of the provincial commercial classes served to destroy all the cultural emoluments that the bourgeoisie had come to desire, create and support. The beginnings of a civil society were thus suffocated before their fruition, and once again the rule of the state threatened to become compact and supreme.⁶²³

The question is whether the ‘national’ bourgeoisie’s dependence on the state could be a factor contributing to the weakness of civil society.

Slowdown of Westernization

Göçek outlines a paradox consisting in the fact that the elimination of Ottoman Christians as supposedly Western agents was hoped to end the fear of the West when it actually increased it.

The Ottoman justification for the elimination of the minority bourgeoisie had been their imputed connections to the West. The Republican elites sustained the same policy, arguing that such elimination would ultimately reduce the hold of the West over Turkish state and society. They also assumed that they could miraculously acquire the skills and knowledge it had taken the minorities centuries to accumulate. They failed on both counts. The end result was richly ironic: the elimination of the minorities who had been the Ottoman and later Turkish intermediaries with the West escalated the fear and anxiety about the West even more. The West grew more distant from (sic!) Turkish state and society and, as a consequence, more than ever the object of myth-making. With international connections thus further attenuated the Turkish state could disregard the world at large and retire into its domestic cocoon, nursing its continuing fear and anxiety.⁶²⁴

It is likewise noteworthy that the elimination of the Christian minorities had opposite effects on the project of ‘becoming modern and catching up with Europe’: it advanced nation building but it severely decimated one of the groups that were among the most European, namely the Christian bourgeoisie.

⁶²³ Keyder (1987: 80).

⁶²⁴ Göçek (2011: 120).

Authoritarianism and Belief in Sudden Transformations

According to Toprak and Acar, every decade and every government since the CUP has created a bourgeoisie to its own liking by promoting its own rich and suppressing the opposition rich.⁶²⁵ One of the problems this created was that it gave the impression that “intellectual and economic assets of the country can easily be transferred or redistributed by government decisions.”⁶²⁶ This encouraged all later elected governments to make the same mistake. According to Toprak and Acar,

the tendency of each government to create its own rich indicates in fact how distorted and deficient was the political power elites’ perception of democracy and market economy. [...] distributing public resources among relatives and friends was regarded as a gift of democracy. [...] Accordingly, throughout the Republican period, governments preferred a comprador-intermediary class, rather than an independent capitalist bourgeoisie in its true sense.⁶²⁷

This is an interesting twist on the topos of the comprador bourgeoisie, which is always and unjustly associated with Armenians, Greeks and Levantines. Considering all the above, it does not seem too much to claim that the modernizing CUP and Kemalists did the greatest disservice to the country by eliminating the Armenians and Greeks. Though they successfully turkified the population, economy and society, their actions impoverished all of them and deprived them of developmental opportunities.

⁶²⁵ According to Toprak and Acar, the AKP promotes ‘its’ businessmen just like other governments before it: “Once directed against non-Muslims for decades, the same discriminating and isolationist policies were used over time against religious Muslim businessmen of different political views. As such, one can see similar tendencies even in the current government - whose ruling period is the second longest in the Republican era - with respect to its policies towards the business world.” Toprak and Acar (2010: 201). The divide between Turkish businessmen who are little religious, sceptical, areligious or antireligious on the one side and those for whom their faith is the centre of their being can also be seen in the existence of two interest organizations, TÜSIAD and MÜSIAD and the two banking associations, TBB and TKBB, for their respective clienteles. Toprak and Acar (2010: 199).

⁶²⁶ Toprak and Acar (2010: 201).

⁶²⁷ Toprak and Acar (2010: 195).

Conclusion

During Republican times, the ‘nationalization’ of the economy continued through continuous, low-key discrimination and a few instances of headline-making expropriation which went along with emigration. From the state’s point of view, this was necessary because the remaining non-Muslim bourgeoisie continued to play a significant role in Turkey’s or at least Istanbul’s economy. The economy was not fully turkified until the mid-20th century, after almost two generations of economic nationalism. The non-Muslim bourgeoisie proved surprisingly resilient and resourceful and its skills irreplaceable until at least the 1950s. Based on the memoirs of Sabancı, I argued that the cooptation of the business know-how of individual non-Muslims is responsible for the huge success of Sabancı’s, and possibly other Muslims’, businesses. Whether we regard the nation building that took place as more or less of a success, what is obvious is that it came at great cost, not only economically but also socially which threw the country and its society back for decades, if not longer.

8.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has aimed to show that Turkish nation building, like other cases of nation building, consisted in bringing out the ‘objective’ characteristics of nation, namely a common language, religion, economy and historic memory. It also resembled other cases in so far as it went along with the large-scale use of violence which was both a result of the nationalist ideology and which paved the way for the realization of further nationalist plans. That is the destructive side of nation building that nationalist historians prefer to overlook but that is often the precondition for ‘constructive’ nation building. Turkish nation building began a few decades before the final breakup of the Ottoman Empire. Muslims had been identified as the most ‘worthy’ subject population and the most deserving of support for some time. What changed under Sultan Abdülhamid II was that he took measures to further the Muslim population’s welfare, growth (and control over it). Within a relatively short time in the late 19th century, four simultaneous and interdependent developments occurred that sped up the process of Turkish nation building and that are crucial for understanding its course: i) the shrinking of the Ottoman Empire, ii) the threat of the Great Powers iii) the spread of the ideology of nationalism and iv) the presence of Ottoman Christians becoming seen as a problem.

i) The Ottoman Empire shrank because in parts of it, subject populations became either *de facto* independent or officially so when they established their own nation states. Some of the subject populations in the remaining part of the Empire, especially in Anatolia, were eyeing their own national independence. Nationalism was thus a threat from within to the viability of the Empire.

ii) To different degrees, all the Great Powers were involved in Ottoman affairs and sought to increase their share in political influence and economic profits. The Ottoman government feared that they would dismember the Empire if given a chance, and turn its parts into mandates or the like.

iii) The ideology of nationalism and nation building was part of a package of European ideologies, methods and ways of life ('modernity') that the Armenian and Greek Ottoman elites adopted before the Muslim Ottoman elites. Several minorities in Anatolia developed (Armenians) or had the potential to develop (Greeks, Kurds) their own national ambitions on Ottoman territory. Since their communities were intermixed in the East of Anatolia, they made claims to more or less the same land, which meant that in the event of one of them establishing a nation state, it would have to deal with those people that were not considered to be part of the nation.

Some Muslim Ottomans, having regarded nationalism as a formidable threat, came to see it as an opportunity, if only it were *Turkish* nationalism: The more homogeneous the population, the stronger the state and the more able to withstand external threats. Turkish nation building thus started in response to and in order to counter the threat posed by other nation building projects at a time when the Ottoman Empire still existed and with the aim of saving it.

The espousal of the national idea involved a redefinition of the people; from a heterogeneous subject population that only owes obedience to the autocratic government, it transformed into a homogeneous nation that has to conform to the state's wishes in many different ways. The population which the state viewed as having a legitimate claim to being in Anatolia was thus narrowed down from Ottomans, i.e. anybody who paid allegiance to the Sultan, to *Muslim Ottomans* to *Muslim Turks* which first excluded only Christian Ottomans and then anybody who was either not Muslim *or* not Turkish or *neither* Muslim *nor* Turkish.

iv) The Ottoman government perceived Ottoman Christians as increasingly troublesome and more and more profiting at the expense of the Muslim populations. This was a result of great-power meddling into Ottoman affairs under the pretext of protecting Ottoman Christians from mistreatment and massacres. It was also a result of the capitulations which privileged Christian members of the Ottoman bourgeoisie (through

bestowing foreign passports, tax exemption, foreign law). Finally, the trade-based affluence of the Ottoman-Christian middle class also played into ill feeling toward them. Privileges and income differences endangered Muslim Ottomans' continued status as 'ruling *millet*', led to ill-feeling towards Christians as a whole and, together with growing Armenian and Greek nationalism, produced a sense of anger and victimization among parts of the Muslim population.

The ten-year period of war (1912-23) witnessed a hardening of attitudes and a radicalization of thought and action. A few victories and many defeats made what was before unthinkable now imaginable, possible and even seemingly necessary. The loss of the Balkan Wars dealt a heavy blow to the ideal of Ottomanism and to the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. In World War I, the victory at Gallipoli was celebrated as a triumph over imperial Britain, but the defeat at Sarikamış against the Russian army put an end to plans of expansion into the Caucasus and beyond. This situation was compounded by fears of Armenian treason and rebellion in the eastern provinces and problems with refugees, disease, desertion and diminishing supplies. With the idea of Ottomanism (the coexistence of different populations under the Sultan's rule) having lost credibility, the national idea ("the more homogenous the population, the stronger the country") gained strength, for it seemed to offer a solution to the Empire's many problems. How it would be realized, however, was an open and disputed question.

In this overall situation, and as a result of ideology, events and their interpretation, the CUP's policy towards the population as a whole, towards minorities and Ottoman Christians in particular, worsened. Roughly speaking, the CUP made a distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims, with Muslims in principle being regarded as loyal, though more reliable when turkified, and Christians, in principle being regarded as disloyal, and Jews, though not Muslim, being turkifiable. In accordance with these views, Muslim communities were resettled all over Anatolia and dispersed so as to avoid potential disloyalty and in time to be turkified. A group's traditional leadership was settled far from the members of the group in order to weaken its community spirit. As this thesis has shown, these measures went beyond immediate military needs and were different from earlier clearings of border areas or their settlement. The scale (millions of people), method

(deportees must not make up more than five or ten percent of the local population) and purpose (nation building) of these resettlements were novel.

Christians were not so much resettled as eliminated through expulsion and killing. Depending on many factors (location, time, size, threat, risk of retaliation, etc.), the Christian communities (Armenians, Greeks and Assyrians) were dealt with differently: Armenians were mainly deported, killed and expelled, Assyrians mainly killed and expelled and Greeks mainly expelled. About 100,000 Armenians emigrated before World War I, hundreds of thousands fled during and after the Armenian genocide in 1915, 100,000 were killed in massacres, one million were killed during the genocide, and thousands more in the early 1920s. As for Ottoman Greeks, at least 100,000 fled the Aegean in 1914, about one million fled during and after the Greco-Turkish war, and more than 400,000 Greeks were exchanged in 1923, with the number of fatalities being unknown. During World War I, about half a million Assyrians were also massacred. The survivors of all three communities were forcefully assimilated, institutionally and non-institutionally, though in some localities they managed to maintain their former identities.

At the same time that all the above was happening, i.e. starting before World War I, the CUP also went about setting up a 'national' economy which consisted in restricting the business activities of the Christian bourgeoisie (ending their privileges, disadvantaging minority businessmen through boycotts, language laws, quotas and in other ways) and in setting up a parallel business infrastructure for Muslims only (banks, credit mechanisms, associations etc.). In addition to suppressing one side and encouraging the other, the CUP also had Armenians and Greeks expropriated either before or after their flight, expulsion, deportation or killing.

Armenian and Greek property, though in theory serving the state, the army, and particularly needy segments of the population, was distributed very differently and highly unevenly because of conflicting interests. Muslims everywhere in Anatolia and of all social classes took part in this plunder or profited from it indirectly. But the primary beneficiaries of Armenian property were the CUP members and Young Turk loyalists whose political leanings opened them opportunities for doing business or mere enrichment. Those who had wrongfully enriched themselves or had received presents had every reason to be loyal to the

CUP and, after its dissolution, to the nationalists. For it was they who fought against the return of the surviving Armenians to Anatolia and the restitution of their property. The important implication this had was that a link and overlap between the state administration and politics on the one hand and business on the other was thereby established. The two spheres were no longer separate, as they had been in Ottoman times when the state bureaucracy had been mainly staffed with Muslims and the commercial bourgeoisie had been more and more made up of non-Muslims. This overlap which came about in the 1910s may in the long run have had a negative impact on the development of civil society in Turkey. Under the CUP, many people also became wealthy through speculation which, far from serving the common good, or happening only at the expense of the deported Armenians, hit their fellow Muslims hardest, thousands of whom starved in the capital and in Izmir during 1915-17. All of the above was possible because it happened during single-party rule at a time of war and because laws appeared to legalize what was happening.

There was no blueprint for Turkish nation building, neither the Turkification of the population nor the Turkification of the economy, there was only a general idea of where it should head. There were also disagreements and different visions of the Empire's, Anatolia's, or the Turks' future. For four or five years after the end of the Ottoman Empire and CUP rule, nobody knew what the future of Anatolia or parts of it would be – a French or British mandate, an annex to Greece or an Armenian nation state. The last Ottoman government in Istanbul advocated a neo-Ottoman solution or heterogeneous population, while the nationalists who gathered around Ankara continued CUP policies. But eventually it was the nationalists who ended the Greek, Armenian, French and British occupation of parts of Anatolia and who also succeeded at the diplomatic table. Therefore, they got to decide what kind of nation would be built and how.

By the end of 1923, two million formerly Ottoman Greeks as well as two million Armenians were no longer in Anatolia. Their elimination had a huge effect on the two main goals of Turkish nation building – eliminating non-Turks from the population and placing the Turkish economy exclusively in Turkish Muslim hands – because these two groups had played an important role in both. Though they constituted less than one fifth of the

population, Armenians and Greeks made up the bulk of the non-Muslim population and they dominated the economy. With them, the great majority of Christian intellectuals and reformers, a big part of Ottoman artisans and the vast majority of the minority bourgeoisie had disappeared, which hit the economy badly. As I have shown, almost all the Armenians' and Greeks' substantial property (land, buildings, cash, financial property, businesses, factories, private property) had been taken or destroyed. At least one fifth of national property had changed hands which opened new opportunities for Muslims to rise in status and wealth, new loyalties (to the nationalists) and new enemies (those demanding restitution and the remaining minorities).

The Turkish Republic continued many of the CUP's policies even in name, by discriminating against Christians and Jews politically, economically and socially. This was the case because many of the people in power had a personal interest in continuing the earlier policies and because a modified Young Turk ideology was constantly reproduced and disseminated in the population at large. Early Republican times were therefore very much a period during which the anti-Christian frenzy cooled down, rather than a break with it. On a smaller scale, the expulsion, killing and expropriation of Armenians continued during the first ten years. As their persecution ended, and since the demographic make-up was determined and the borders established, the Turkish state got the chance to formulate and execute long-term nation building policies. Besides a change in emphasis, there was also a change in primary targets, as it was no longer Armenians, Greeks and Assyrians, but Kurds and later Jews who became the main victim groups.

The Turkish state sought to further homogenize the nation through the assimilation of prospective Turks, the expulsion and keeping out of non-Turks, and the settlement of populations deemed Turkish and willing to immigrate to Turkey. The 'Reform Council of the East' in 1925 and the laws of settlement in 1926 and 1934 all provided the basis for the forced resettlement, dispersion, punishment and assimilation of these groups. The discrimination against members of the Christian and Jewish communities (e.g. when they were made to work in labor battalions during World War II and when they were made to move from villages to cities and from there to Istanbul in the 1950s and 60s) were all geared towards confirming their secondary status and making them leave the country for

good. The denaturalization of thousands of Turkish Jews in the 1940s which led to their murder by the Nazis, the pogroms and war against part of its own population (Thrakia pogroms against Jews 1934, the suppression of Şeyh Sait rebellion in 1925, and the Dersim revolt in 1936-38) were meant to crush minority opposition to centralization and Turkification and to remove more non-Muslims from the economy. Language policies ('Citizen Speak Turkish' campaign 1928-1940s, law of family names 1934, phases of eventually comprehensive toponymic renaming), heritage policies (the destruction, neglect and reinterpretation of Jewish or Christian monuments) and educational policies (Law on the Unification of Education 1924), among others, contributed likewise to Turkish nation building by gradually eliminating linguistic diversity and other immaterial and material evidence of non-Turkish life in Turkey. This affected Armenians and Greeks in that they, impoverished and diminished in numbers, gradually concentrated in Istanbul. As survivors of their own peoples' catastrophes and witnesses to other peoples' oppression, they kept a low profile or emigrated, which was precisely the Kemalists' goal.

The much-reduced minority bourgeoisie nevertheless continued to play an important role in the economy, especially in Istanbul, until 1955. Up to that time there were actually two bourgeoisies, the minority one which was still weak and the 'national' one which was not yet strong. But the state's discriminatory application of the wealth tax in 1942-43 destroyed the financial basis of over 100,000 members of the minorities as well as their businesses, which was the state's aim. It totally deprived them of the means of existence and terrorized them so that thousands emigrated at the earliest opportunity or lay very low.

With the change in government (DP), new economic policies and American aid in the 1950s, a new Muslim or 'national' bourgeoisie came to the fore which consisted of landowning families, provincial merchants and technical experts. But there was still a concentration of non-Muslims in Istanbul. In the context of the Cyprus crisis, the Turkish deep state and the government organized a pogrom directed primarily against Turkish Greeks. This act destroyed the livelihood of thousands, forced them to emigrate, and totally destroyed the minority bourgeoisie. Based on the memoirs of Sakıp Sabancı, I argue that, deprived of the means of a competitive existence, the remaining minority businessmen and specialists were co-opted into working for Muslim companies. They played an essential role in Muslim companies' later commercial success because their special skills had still

not found a replacement five decades after the first attempt at eliminating the minority bourgeoisie. The expulsion of 11,000 Greek citizens and residents of Istanbul in 1964 and the emigration of 30,000 Turkish Greeks was the last act in the forced emigration of non-Muslims from Turkey. Like those who were expelled earlier, they had to leave virtually all their property behind.

Becoming national was thought to be part of becoming modern and whatever becoming national entailed was therefore thought to advance modernization. This thesis has suggested that far from aiding the country, the CUP, which was in power during the most momentous phase of Turkish nation building, and its policies regarding Armenians and Greeks threw the country back in its development for decades. The CUP's policies should be regarded as one of the factors contributing to the impoverishment of the population, the economic inability of the early 'national' bourgeoisie, excessive state intervention, the delay of industrialization, the weakness of labor rights, the vacuum in education and academia, a discontinuous Western orientation and the feeble and much-delayed development of civil society in Turkey.

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